

The Peace Visitor



Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way your God has blessed you. Deuteronomy 16:17

On September 14th, I had the honor of giving the prayer of blessing at a new Habitat for Humanity build in St. Cloud. Stepping onto the sub-flooring with no walls around us, I offered a prayer as did the family's faith leader. We then held the back wall into place as carpenters armed with hammers nailed it into place. With minutes, other walls were lifted, placed and secured. Within an hour of my prayer, what had been a foundation was looking more like a house than an empty lot. It is amazing how quickly a house comes together when a team is all working together. If you are reading this you are part of the team that is Peace United Church of Christ.

We are entering that time of year where this church will be asking each of us to pause and consider what we can bring to our own home building. Our church, like any home, is built of many parts. Our giving is threefold. First, we each have talents that are unique. Some of us might not have thought how our people skills, computer skills, or maintenance skills might serve the community here. Secondly, we each have a portion of time we might offer to the church. An hour helping usher, a morning at Laundry Love or an afternoon raking the leaves off the garth; these form our community.

Finally, we each have a potential to share our treasures or financial offerings to the church.

That last piece—finance—is important. This year we are again facing a budget shortfall. Leadership of the church is looking at ways to address our spending and usage of our resources. But there is only so much that can be cut or reduced before we are no longer living into our mission and purpose in St. Cloud. Not only are we in the need to look ahead into 2018 for our planned giving, we must also look at our current condition. We must look deeply at what each of us might be able to add to our contributions.

On Sunday September 27, 2017, we declared ourselves a Just Peace church which will help anchor our foundational decisions. We also streamlined our governance to allow a swifter and more focused team to guide our direction. So, the foundation and the hammers are ready. We need each of us to come to the party ready to be part of the walls and the rafters. We need to be the pieces that drive the building to the church that moves us into the next 125 years. It is time to give and plan our giving as we look forward to **being the church.**



Pastor John

September 2017

Pastor John's Theology Word of the Month:

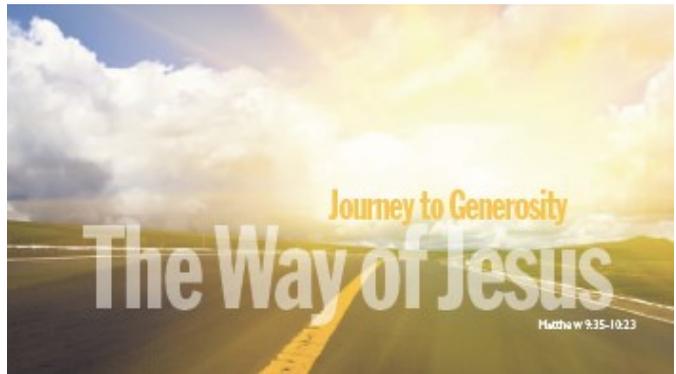
stew·ard·ship ['st(y)ooərd,SHip/] **noun:**

- 1:the office, duties, and obligations of a steward
- 2:the conducting, supervising, or managing of something; especially the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care: *stewardship of natural resources*

Stewardship in Christianity follows from the belief that human beings are created by the same God who created the entire universe and everything in it. To look after the Earth, and thus God's dominion, is the responsibility of the Christian steward.

We say stewardship around our giving campaigns, but it is also about how we use what has been given to us including creation. This year's stewardship theme, "Journey to Generosity: The Way of Jesus," takes shape from this passage in Matthew 9:35-10:23, when Jesus said to his disciples:

"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." (Matthew 9:37-38)



October 1—Family Activity and Story Time (FAST) from 9:15ish —9:45ish AM.

Join us for breakfast-y treats (starting at 9AM) and a lesson and project. Sunday school fun for the whole family! Approximate ages preschool through 5th grade. We're planning to have this time the first Sunday of each month through the school year.

Our theme is

Kid Heroes!

(Finding kid heroes
in the Bible, in stories, and in our world.)

The first session will talk about Bread, Communion, and Sharing for World Communion Day.



Council Minutes
Sunday, August 20, 2017

Call to Order:

Prayer – Pastor John Fiscus

Additions/Changes to Agenda – Approve Agenda

Receive Minutes from June 25, 2017 Church Council Meeting

Motion Curt, Second Bruce, **Passed Unanimous**

Pastor’s Report: Pastor John Fiscus was not in attendance but report was accepted
MSP Rick, Val, unanimous.

Treasurer’s Report: Brad Hanson Moved to new business—Finances

Financial Secretary’s Report: Michelle Dettmann reported MSP Rick, Val, unanimous.

Old Business

a. Updates:

Picnic was well attended, venues/details for Dec Lunch yet to come.

b. Clean up offices – Pastor office to be complete by 8/12

New Business

a. Finances- we are experiencing a gap between expenses and giving. A subcommittee of Ron S. Brad H. Bruce M. and Pastor John met for more strategy in August and reported back to council with recommendations. Several things are in process or under consideration to lower expenses and/or raise income

b. By-Laws—extensive line by line discussion. Brad Hanson looked at from legal standpoint and suggested legal changes. A corrected draft will be available throughout September and a meeting to discuss the proposed changes will be held with interested members of the congregation. MSP (Bev, Val) to accept the bylaws as corrected for presentation to the congregation at the Special Annual Meeting on September 24.

c. Just Peace – team: Jon Tufte, Deanna Steckman and Val Broste
MSP (Rick, Michelle) to send Just Peace statement to vote of the congregation at Special Meeting on the 24th.

Next Meeting: September 24, 2017 (Congregational Meeting)

Adjournment: Lord’s Prayer

BOLD were in attendance:

Moderator: Jon Tufte

Vice Moderator: Ron Seibring

Secretary: Linda Vierkant

Treasurer: Brad Hanson

Financial Secretary: Michelle Dettmann

Member at large: Curt Hutchens

Member at large: Val Broste

Trustees: Bruce Michaels

Mission: Rick Fine

TTT: Mark Hoff

ROSE: Beverly Tallent

Deacons: Jeryl Michaels

Shirley Hoff

Pastor John Fiscus

FAITH FORMATION—Our Civility Project

Make the World More Civil, Idea #65—Take time to recognize and appreciate the small things in life. Life is not much more than a long series of small events anyway.

The Day I Stopped Saying ‘Hurry Up’ - by Rachel Macy Stafford, *Hands Free Mama* blog

When you’re living a distracted life, every minute must be accounted for. You feel like you must be checking something off the list, staring at a screen, or rushing off to the next destination....

That was my life for two frantic years. My thoughts and actions were controlled by electronic notifications, ring tones, and jam-packed agendas. And although every fiber of my inner drill sergeant wanted to be on time to every activity on my overcommitted schedule, I wasn’t.

You see, six years ago I was blessed with a laid-back, carefree, stop-and-smell-the roses type of child. When I needed to be out the door, she was taking her sweet time picking out a purse and a glittery crown. When I needed to be somewhere five minutes ago, she insisted on buckling her stuffed animal into a car seat. When I needed to grab a quick lunch at Subway, she’d stop to speak to the elderly woman who looked like her grandma. ...

My carefree child was a gift to my Type A, task-driven nature—but I didn’t see it. Oh no, when you live life distracted, you have tunnel vision—only looking ahead to what’s next on the agenda. And anything that cannot be checked off the list is a waste of time.

Whenever my child caused me to deviate from my master schedule, I thought to myself, “We don’t have time for this.” Consequently, the two words I most commonly spoke to my little lover of life were: “Hurry up.” ...

And although the words “hurry up” did little if nothing to increase my child’s speed, I said them anyway. Maybe even more than the words, “I love you.”

The truth hurts, but the truth heals ... and brings me closer to the parent I want to be.

Then one fateful day, things changed. We’d just picked my older daughter up from kindergarten and were getting out of the car. Not going fast enough for her liking, my older daughter said to her little sister, “You are so slow.” And when she crossed her arms and let out an exasperated sigh, I saw myself—and it was a gut-wrenching sight. I was a bully who pushed and pressured and hurried a small child who simply wanted to enjoy life. My eyes were opened; I saw with clarity the damage my hurried existence was doing to both of my children.

Although my voice trembled, I looked into my small child’s eyes and said, “I am so sorry I have been making you hurry. I love that you take your time, and I want to be more like you.”...

“I promise to be more patient from now on,” I said as I hugged my curly-haired child who was now beaming at her mother’s newfound promise. ...

When my daughter and I took walks or went to the store, I allowed her to set the pace. And when she stopped to admire something, I would push thoughts of my agenda out of my head and simply observe her. I witnessed expressions on her face that I’d never seen before. I studied dimples on her hands and the way her eyes crinkled up when she



Mind Full, or Mindful?



smiled. I saw the way other people responded to her stopping to take time to talk to them. I saw the way she spotted the interesting bugs and pretty flowers. She was a Noticer, and I quickly learned that The Noticers of the world are rare and beautiful gifts. That's when I finally realized she was a gift to my frenzied soul. ...

The two of us had taken a bike ride to a sno-cone shack while on vacation. After purchasing a cool treat for my daughter, she sat down at a picnic table delightedly admiring the icy tower she held in her hand.

Suddenly a look of worry came across her face. "Do I have to rush, Mama?"

I could have cried. Perhaps the scars of a hurried life don't ever completely disappear, I thought sadly. As my child looked up at me waiting to know if she could take her time, I knew I had a choice. I could sit there in sorrow thinking about the number of times I rushed my child through life ... or I could celebrate the fact that today I'm trying to do things differently. I chose to live in today.

"You don't have to rush. Just take your time," I said gently. Her whole face instantly brightened and her shoulders relaxed.

And so we sat side-by-side talking about things that ukulele-playing-6-year-olds talk about. There were even moments when we sat in silence just smiling at each other and admiring the sights and sounds around us. I thought my child was going to eat the whole darn thing—but when she got to the last bite, she held out a spoonful of ice crystals and sweet juice for me. "I saved the last bite for you, Mama," my daughter said proudly.

As I let the icy goodness quench my thirst, I realized I just got the deal of a lifetime.

I gave my child a little time ... and in return, she gave me her last bite and reminded me that things taste sweeter and love comes easier when you stop rushing through life.

Whether it's Sno-cone eating—Seatbelt buckling—Ladybug watching—Sidewalk strolling I will not say, "We don't have time for this." Because that is basically saying, "We don't have time to live." Pausing to delight in the simple joys of everyday life is the only way to truly live. (Trust me, I learned from the world's leading expert on joyful living.)

Full article [HERE](#)

Faith Formation is not just Sunday School classes or a moment of the service. It's the day-to-day wrestling with how to be God's people, living in community in the world. A few more tips are printed on the Fridays of the calendar. Try them, then discuss: what small things felt big when you did them with an attitude of gratitude?

Let me know how it goes. —Michelle Dettmann, Faith Formation Volunteer

Return to Civility: a Speed of Laughter Project, John Sweeney & The Brave New Workshop. 2007

Moving Into the Future

Our New Constitution and By-Laws, Governing Board, and Member/Friend Covenants

At the Special Congregational Meeting on September 24, we did four things.

- ⇒ We ratified the new Constitution and Bylaws. (Highlights of the new document are listed below.) The new Constitution specifies that, henceforth, the Annual Meeting will be held in September of each year.
- ⇒ We adopted the Just Peace statement and are forwarding our resolution as a Just Peace church to the Minnesota Conference. This designation joins our Open and Affirming and Accessible 2 All as ways of proclaiming to the world what we stand for as a congregation.
- ⇒ We elected our new, smaller, more focused governing board (legally named the Board of Trustees, but known as “the Board” herein.)
- ⇒ We extended the current budget through 2018, while we make adjustments.

Highlighting the Changes

Governance

The new Board will be comprised of seven members, plus the Pastor as a non-voting member. The Moderator shall lead the meetings of the Board of Trustees, they will moderate all official church meetings, they will call official church meetings in accordance with the Bylaws, coordinate all church programs and activities, oversee activities of church officers, see that official decisions are carried out, and actively participate in the life and mission of the church.

The Vice-Moderator shall serve as Moderator of the Board in the absence of the Moderator.

The Clerk shall be responsible for ensuring the maintenance of official correspondence and church records, and for ensuring that accurate records are kept of all meetings of the Board of Trustees and of the Congregation. The Clerk is the officer authorized to receive petitions submitted to the Board of Trustees. The Clerk also oversees the keeping of records of membership.

The Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring the preparation and maintenance of all financial records. This shall include a monthly financial report to the Board and an annual financial report to the Congregation. The monthly and annual financial reports shall reflect receipts, disbursements, and outstanding financial obligations.

Each of the remaining three at large members will champion one area of the church’s needs. This will be; 1) Building and Grounds, 2) Worship and Congregational Life, and, 3) Mission, Evangelism and Witness.



Membership

During the rewriting process, it was found that the legal state definition of a member eligible to vote is one who has been active in the previous six months. With that information, we have slightly amended the criteria for membership and the process of re-view. A quick summary follows: for the entire text, request a full copy or pick one up at the church.

Any baptized Christian may become a Member by participating in the Rite of Membership. A Member in good standing is a Member who registers his/her attendance, provides identifiable financial support, makes a definite service contribution, and/or demonstrates interest and loyalty.

A Member who does not have registered attendance, identified financial support, definite service contribution, or demonstrated interest and loyalty within the preceding period of six (6) months to one (1) year may be removed from the list of Members in good standing and placed on a list of inactive Members.

The Board of Trustees shall notify this Member in writing that the Member has been placed on a list of inactive Members and is not eligible to vote at any business meeting of the church.

If the inactive Member has not attended, provided identifiable financial support, made a service contribution, or demonstrated further interest or loyalty for a period of two (2) months immediately following notification, the Board of Trustees shall have the authority, at its discretion, to drop any such Member from the local church membership roll.

The inactive Member may be restored to the list of Members in good standing by a vote of the Board of Trustees without a public reception into membership.

The inactive Member who is not restored during the period of two (2) months immediately following notification shall be considered a former Member.

A former Member may be restored to the list of Members in good standing after conversation with the Pastor and/or Moderator.

A person who, for one reason or another, feels unable to become a Member but who supports the goals of the church and wants to be a part of the work of the church may be designated as a "Friend of the Church." Friends may serve on appointed committees and may participate in all activities of the church. Friends may not vote at Congregational Meetings or serve on the Board of Trustees. Friends shall not be considered in determining the number of Lay Delegates.



Continued next page

So, what does this mean in practical terms?

You are considered an active member if you have committed to membership through the Rite of Membership, plus any one (or more) of the following:

- ⇒ Attend services, at least occasionally
- ⇒ Provide financial support
- ⇒ Work at Laundry Love, a Habitat for Humanity Wall Raising, Pride in the Park or other community event with the church
- ⇒ Attend meetings or other non-Sunday church sponsored services or gatherings (Lent or Advent, special dinners or celebrations, etc.)
- ⇒ Correspond with the church —providing address updates, comments on Visitor articles, responses to surveys, requesting visits, etc.
- ⇒ Significantly interact and share church news and events online, on Facebook or through the website.
- ⇒ Develop and keep a relationship with the church. Let us know how you're doing, what you think, what you want to do, what you need, when you're hospitalized, when your children are born, when you move, and other things you'd tell your friends and relatives! :-)

We want to stay in touch with you. You are an important part of the family of God and the body of this church. The Constitution is a tool: now we need to work together in community, as the church, to make it work for the glory of God. To that end, one more piece was added to the new Constitution.

We who enter these walls covenant:

To treat all people in ways that acknowledge their value and to refrain from treating them in ways that do not.

To be mindful that there are differences among us and to act and speak with kindness and respect.

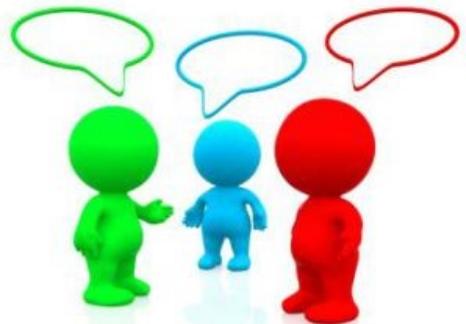
To choose our inquiries and voice our opinions with responsible attention to our church's shared principles, its commitments, and the diversity of our members.

To abide by our church's established policies and if we disagree with them, either accept them or try to change them through the democratic process.

To respect each other's spiritual journeys.

To keep the controversies that arise among us in perspective and to endeavor in good faith to resolve these issues equitably and compassionately.

To acknowledge that none of us is perfect and that we need each other.



Thought of the Month

Jesus said His followers are “salt” and “light” in this world. In what ways would you say your life represents salt and/or light in this world?

From *Table Talk: Creating Meaningful Conversation with Family and Friends*

Remember to let us know if you are ill or hospitalized. The hospital can't let us know you are there, due to HIPAA and other privacy concerns. The only way we know to put you on the prayer list and come visit is if you call the office and leave us the information.

Also, let us know if you **wish** to be put on the prayer chain or the prayer list in the bulletin. We want to know how much information you are comfortable sharing.

Thanks so much!

Remember to keep us up-to-date on your address and other contact info.

Did we miss your birthday on the calendar? Let us know!



Are you able to visit or send a note to members who are homebound or living in long-term care?

They would love to hear from you.

Marlys Burke

218 22nd Ave N
St. Cloud, MN 56303

Dolores Honl

2000 15th Ave SE # 217
St. Cloud, MN 56304

Bev Killeen

1115 4th Ave N NS 227
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379

Leif Larsen

1790 W Mill Street
Paynesville, MN 56362

Dorothy Matakis

2511 15th St N
St. Cloud, MN 56303

Gary Naegeli

Edgewood Sr. Living
12450 Cloud Dr NE, #128
Blaine, MN 55449
763-754-1723

PLANNING AHEAD

On the Anniversary Calendar:

Sunday, December 3, 10 AM—Formal Anniversary Worship with guest preacher Shari Prestemon, Conference Minister—A lunch at a local restaurant will follow. This will be an RSVP-needed event! More details as we get closer. :-)

The Sunshine Report—Joys and Concerns

Dorothy Matakis—sympathy for the death of her husband, Don



PEACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

402 – 8th Avenue South
St. Cloud, MN 56301

Staff

Minister: Rev. John Fiscus

Secretary: Michelle Dettmann

Choir Director: Roger Towler

Organist: Mark Ochu

Custodian: WACOSA

Conference Minister: Rev. Shari Prestemon

Cell: (320) 428-8686

Office: (320) 251-6289

Church Office Hours: Tu-F, 2 – 5 PM

E-mail: pastorfiscus@gmail.com

Peaceucc1908@yahoo.com

Associate Conference Minister: Rick Wagner

Board of Trustees (our new Governing Board)

Moderator: Jon Tufte moderatorpucc@gmail.com

Vice Moderator: Mark Hoff

Treasurer: Brad Hanson

Council Clerk: Linda Vierkant

Members at Large: Bruce Michaels, Val Broste, TBD