



Faithfully Forward
Prince of Peace 2025

December 19, 2024

Greetings in the Name of Christ!

I've been reflecting in my first month at Prince of Peace, and in Advent, on what it means to be a church and what the church means to us. *Our church has a way of being there at our most important life events.* We get married in church. We get our children baptized in church. We hold the funerals of our beloved family members in church. And we also spend our most important holidays- Christmas and Easter- in church.

Our church is pretty important, isn't it? Church is where most people connect with God and others who share their deepest values. We are the church. Prince of Peace is us.

We have transition now at Prince of Peace. Pastors Chad and Natalia are gone, and I'm here. On staff, we've said goodbye to Nikk VanLiew and Karina Higareda. We welcome Nate Boucher, who is taking both Karina's position and the Business Admin. position (currently served by Treasurer Rachel Henderson). *Nate has a master's degree in finance and trained in administrative efficiency, so we're blessed to have him! Volunteers are stepping up to take Nikk's place on Sunday morning.*

Katie Rykal will continue to do a fantastic job in Children, Youth and Family ministry here. Musicians Alys Nelson, Paul Koopman and John Myszkowski, as many volunteer musicians, are staying (and are wonderful). Jaime Cortez remains in place and has no intention of leaving. Our Prince of Peace Council is outstanding and delightful for me to work with. Lastly, I'll be here until your next permanent pastor. With your help, we can bless future generations through all our ministries, both new and continuing.

So many good things are happening at Prince of Peace. Your response to the starting weeks of my ministry here has been tremendous! We are seeing familiar faces and many new ones, and I've been approached by someone about joining Prince of Peace.

I am your new interim pastor and I've been welcomed so graciously by members. I've enjoyed greeting you before and after worship and listening to your hopes and dreams for Prince of Peace Lutheran, both in your homes and at my office. **You are a remarkable, blessed people of**

God! *If you'd like to connect more with me, please contact the church office at (763) 560-8958 to set up a time.*

I'm here to see you get an outstanding pastor to help carry on the work of this amazing congregation and make any changes Prince of Peace might need to thrive in the future.

Our October stewardship drive, *Faithfully Forward*, was paused for the celebrations for Pastors Chad and Natalia. This letter marks the end of that drive. For those of you who have given already during the stewardship drive or Give to the Max Day 2024 last month, thank-you, *Thank-You, THANK-YOU!* **For those who have delayed giving, don't wait! For those of you who might consider an additional gift to the ministry of Prince of Peace, consider yourself thanked twice.**

You are an important part of the church. This church of God's people, in this building, would not exist without your time, love, prayers and support.

What does this church mean to you?

We want our church to stay strong in the years ahead. *We want this church to be a hopeful place for all.* And honestly, all of us are in need of hope.

Caring for the community has been what this church is known for. *When people need help, they often turn to Prince of Peace Lutheran, and we are there.*

In the months ahead, searching for a pastor, we have two paths to choose. We can choose to give the same or less to our church and watch it slowly shrink. *Or we can strengthen the ministry of this church as never before so Prince of Peace Lutheran church will always be there for Brooklyn Park and beyond, and for you, its members.*

Most likely, you already give to Prince of Peace's ministry. When enough of you *give generously*, it means we can hire the pastor(s) this church needs, regardless of cost. I believe that's both possible and doable. **Thanks for all you have done for this church and all you will do in the years ahead.** The best years of this church can be ahead.

What's the easiest way to give? That depends on who you are and how you're used to giving. You can simply send a check in the enclosed return envelope.

Another possibility for giving is on our website. You can sign up to have money given monthly from your checking or credit card. **Go to www.princeofpeacechurch.org** and then to the Simply Giving page *or simply scan the QR code at the end of this letter* to go directly to our online giving platform. *Give this way*, and even if you can't make it to church the ministry of this church can continue strong.

Our parents and grandparents taught us faith and built and supported the church for us. **Now is our turn.** We can **give generously**, and our grandchildren, and theirs, will thank us for what we've done. **Again, thank you for all you have done to make and keep Prince of Peace Lutheran strong.** I believe God will sanctify your gifts and do tremendous good. I know God already has.

Blessings,

Pastor Glen Bickford

PS **Don't give right away.** (Really? Yes.) Before you give, I ask you to take some time to prayerfully *consider the mission of this congregation and what you can offer* of yourselves, your money and your volunteer time in this interim, this liminal season of Prince of Peace, on the threshold of a new era of church life (and I believe a great one). *This church needs you at this crucial time of change, and because of you, wonderful things are happening* and will happen in the months and years to come.

2 Corinthians 9:7 "Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not regretfully or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

