

# MESSENGER

A Newsletter of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church & Preschool

“WORSHIP ❖❖❖ CONNECT ❖❖❖ SERVE”

September 2020

## Grace

*Love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Romans 12:10*

Do you ever have a day filled with a-ha moments? For me that day was today. I had a conversation with someone this morning who said that one of the side effects of working from home is losing track of time during the day, coupled with the occasional inability to remember which day of the week it is. This afternoon I had a phone call with someone who wondered, with anger in her voice, why every conversation inevitably turns to the current pandemic, no matter what the original subject matter happens to be. As I drove home, listening to sports talk radio, the host talked about the burden of teaching his 16-year-old son how to interact with law enforcement so as not to get shot, and the overwhelming worry he carries with him every day. He broke down crying and I wanted to reach through the airwaves to give him a hug.

The stress we are living through right now is not only incredibly high, it is changing us and not for the better. None of us is operating at 100 percent right now. How could we? At the very same time, we are losing patience with each other, especially when we disagree on even the smallest issue. Confusion is out-sized and so are the expectations we foist upon other people. Tempers are short and so is our capacity for empathy. Fear is a constant and unwanted companion and

so is our unwillingness to forgive.

My a-ha moment? The world needs more grace. The USA needs more grace. Arizona needs more grace. I need more grace. Especially right now.

Grace has been a Lutheran buzzword since 1518. We use it in mission statements and sermons as if we understand exactly what it means. Today I realized I needed a refresher course. Martin Luther defined grace this way: “Grace means the favor by which God accepts us, forgiving sins and justifying freely through Christ.” Writer Philip Yancey describes grace as “the last, best word.” A verse many Lutherans learned in confirmation is Ephesians 2:8 that reads: “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God — not the result of works, so that no one may boast.”

Did that help? Here is my definition of grace: Love without limits. God loves us despite our human insanity. God invites us to love the people around us the same way. This changes everything about how we view others. Suddenly we aren’t competitors or enemies or caught in the trap of a thousand stereotypes that do nothing but divide us and fill us with hate. We simply love others because God loves us.

Grace pushes us out of our comfort zones to reach people who live far differently than we live. Grace demands that we stop pointing fingers at

others for the same things that we do. Grace invites us to release our guilt and love ourselves. Grace counteracts selfishness and hatred. This does not mean that we go through life as walking doormats to be abused but as courageous individuals who stand up for ourselves and others with the goal of counteracting evil with good.

Most of all, grace means that we recognize God’s creative thumb print in each other no matter how much we disagree or how much we fight or how much we dislike one another.

This is what the people around us are crying out for now more than ever. Grace is in our DNA as Lutheran Christians and the more quickly we rediscover how to extend it to others, the more joy we can deliver to the world. I’m not naive. I know this grace is diametrically opposed to the direction of our current culture. Forgiveness is difficult. Viewing others in the best possible light is a dying art. In so many aspects of our public discourse, empathy is equated with weakness. When we extend grace we are most definitely swimming upstream.

It is also a great opportunity to show that God is alive and goodness is active in this world. Let’s not miss it.

Peace,

*Pastor Rick*

Return to worship in the sanctuary on September 13 at 9:30 a.m.

## **Join Us on Zoom**

### ✓ **Theology Pub**

**Tuesdays at 7 p.m.**

Study the scriptures with a beverage in your hand from the comfort of your own home. ZOOM "meeting ID" 953 1912 0349.

### ✓ **Wednesday Bible Study on Zoom**

**Wednesdays, noon**

Zoom ID 676 989 5017

### ✓ **Women's Bible Study (M&M's)**

**Tuesdays on Zoom  
9:30 a.m.**

Mary & Martha's continues to meet Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. via ZOOM (<https://zoom.us/j/6769895071>), led by Paula Sturgeon. We meet for fellowship, connection and friendship. Currently, we are studying different religions, using the book *Honoring Our Neighbor's Faith*. We always end our time together with prayer requests. We would love to have you join us!

## **Kristin Engstrom Update**



Pastor Kristin Engstrom, missionary to Senegal, is now furloughed home to the United States due to COVID. Kristin virtually visited Prince of Peace several months ago and shared stories of her missionary work in Senegal. She plans to return there when the threat of COVID is under control. You can read more about her work and YAGM (Young Adults in Global Ministry) at <http://yagmsenegal.wixsite.com/blog>.

## **Pastor Rick's Office Hours**

Pastor Rick is now available for in-person visits in his office. Call the church office, 480.945.9527 or Pastor Rick, 408.472.0529, to schedule an appointment.

THE MESSENGER is printed monthly for the purpose of informing members and friends of upcoming events, for sharing good news about our members and for sharing the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ through word and action.

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Tracy Fish, Vice President/Personnel  
Abby Brown, Vice President/Preschool  
Kris Kainass, Secretary  
Tony Hammond, Treasurer  
Nancy Stevens, Financial Secretary  
Martha Weld, Brenda Johnston  
Gwen Jacobs

# *New Worship Opportunities during the Pandemic*

September 2, 2020

Dear Prince of Peace Family:

As you have probably heard, in-person worship services will return to Prince of Peace on September 13, 2020 with safety protocols in place. Please see the list on this page!

The Church Council has spent a considerable amount of time researching and debating these issues and has not made the decision lightly. Please thank them for their amazing work in leading Prince of Peace through this difficult time.

The decision to resume in-person worship has been made to address those individuals who are feeling disconnected and to fulfill our human need for social, emotional, and spiritual connection. The goal is to provide options. Online worship and Zoom Holy Communion will continue, and you are asked to only come to in-person worship if you are healthy and comfortable doing so.

The safety protocols for in-person worship at Prince of Peace were developed following current CDC and Maricopa County Health Department guidelines. We have also reached out to other congregations to learn more about best practices. We anticipate the in-person worship service will last between 35-40 minutes.

The key for in-person worship to work is for all worshipers to follow the safety protocols outlined by Church Council. Even with all the planning and preparation, things will not go perfectly. Please pray for patience, wisdom, understanding, and forgiveness!

We look forward to serving you with in-person and online worship. Our goal is to thrive during this pandemic and to continue to point to God as our creator, protector, and savior.

Peace,  
Pastor Rick Sherrill

## **To keep our worshipping community as safe as possible, please:**

1. **Stay Home if Ill.** Please do not attend in-person worship if there are any signs that you might be sick or if you are taking care of someone who is sick. Please do not assume you are suffering from allergies or a harmless snuffle! Please act out of an overabundance of caution for the sake of all.
2. **Wear Your Mask.** Masks or other face coverings are always mandatory on the Prince of Peace campus except for the brief moments when consuming Holy Communion.
3. **Observe Physical Distancing.** Social distancing of six feet or more will be enforced. Pews will be marked accordingly. Families are invited to sit together. Once seated, please stay in your seats for the entire worship service.
4. **Safely Greet One Another.** We know you will be glad to see many of your fellow parishioners, but please do not congregate in the narthex. Please do not offer hugs or handshakes (a wave and a smile go a long way!)
5. **Wash/Sanitize Your Hands.** Please wash your hands before arriving on campus and when you arrive home. Hand sanitizer will be widely available, and you are encouraged to use it.
6. **Forgive the Smell of Disinfectant.** Professional cleaning/sanitizing of the sanctuary will be conducted before and after each worship service.

## **What to expect when you attend in-person worship:**

1. **Come Right In... the Front Door.** Please enter from the front doors into the narthex. All doors may be used for exiting the sanctuary to avoid social clumping.
2. **Table of Stuff.** When entering the narthex, please stop by the table to grab a single-use communion kit, drop off any offering, and sanitize your hands. Extra face masks will also be available. A single "super-greeter" will be there to welcome you and answer any questions you may have (from a distance!).
3. **Screens, Not Bulletins.** No bulletins will be utilized. All worship info will be projected on the screens.
4. **Reflecting, Not Singing.** Live or recorded music will be a part of each worship service. However, hymns will not be sung. Worshipers will be invited to listen, reflect on hymn lyrics, and/or pray.
5. **Unspoken Participation.** No "call and response" liturgical pieces will be utilized. Worshipers will be invited to whisper the Lord's Prayer.
6. **Holy Communion.** Holy Communion will be celebrated in the pews using the single-use communion kits available in the narthex.
7. **Children's Message.** We will re-introduce children's messages as families begin to return to in-person worship. Children will remain in their seating areas and will not be invited to the front of the sanctuary.
8. **After-Worship Access to Pastor.** The pastor will be available in the front of the sanctuary for greeting and conversation after the worship service. Please maintain social distancing guidelines.
9. **Related Ministries.** Coffee hour, the nursery, Sunday School and in-person youth meetings will continue to be on hold until further notice.

## Children, Youth and Family NEWS!

The goal of Prince of Peace's Children, Youth and Family Ministry is to create space for Christ to work in the lives of all youth and their families. The space we focus on is faith formation, community building and service.

### **POP Sunday School is coming to your house!**

We will not be meeting in person just yet, so we will bring Sunday School to you! We are working on Sunday School activity bags. Over the next two weeks, we will drop off activity bags at the homes of all our Sunday School families. Then each week following the Sunday School, families will get an e-mail with the activity for that week. We are excited for the next part of our ministry!

### **Meet Sam Garcia, Our New Youth & Family Ministry Director**



Sam is a lifelong Lutheran who was born and raised in Fort Worth, TX. He recently graduated from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, WA with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication and a minor in Nonprofit Leadership. He brings a wide breadth of experience in youth, outdoor, and family ministry.

During his college years,

Sam gained valuable youth ministry experience as a counselor and program director at camps in Colorado and Texas. In addition, Sam served as the youth coordinator at Trinity Lutheran Church in Parkland, WA for two years. During his senior year, he served as the Worship and Music coordinator for PLU's on-campus student congregation. Sam also plays the guitar, raps, sings, and writes original songs as a way of spiritual reformation. In 2018, Sam performed original music at the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston, TX for 30,000 Lutheran teenagers. You can listen to his music on Spotify where he uses the name Sam Noble.



Although most of our ministry will be virtual in fall 2020, Sam would still love to safely meet you all in person! Here are a few options your family can consider:

- ✓ Come visit Sam in the church office! (Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.)
- ✓ Invite Sam over for dinner! (Call or text 817.903.7323)
- ✓ Socially-distanced sweet treat delivery! (Call or e-mail Sam to schedule a time).

#### **Service Opportunity**

### **Feed My Starving Children**

**September 16, 3-5 p.m.**



Join us for our first service opportunity of the new school year! Sam, Pastor Rick, and eight volunteers will head to Mesa (1345 S. Alma School Road) for an afternoon of service, fellowship and meal-packing. Spots are limited so please RSVP to Sam (817.903.7323) before September 13.



### **Youth Band ... Musicians Wanted**

Are you a musician? Tired of the same old hymns? Looking for a way to be more involved in worship?

Prince of Peace is forming a NEW contemporary praise band! All ages and musical experiences welcome!

Contact: [sam.garcia@popphoenix.org](mailto:sam.garcia@popphoenix.org) for more information!

Preschool has been off to a great start. From POPIT to Preschool to Connection, it has been wonderful to have smiling faces back on campus.



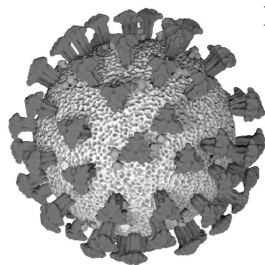
PRINCE OF PEACE  
LUTHERAN CHURCH AND PRESCHOOL



# Coping with the Stress of Covid 19

by Beth Schneider

The Covid-19 pandemic, combined with the record-breaking heat, has resulted in summer 2020 being one that most people would prefer not to repeat. The extreme heat is likely to end before the pandemic, but both have presented challenges for maintaining physical and mental health. The longer each prevails, the greater the challenge. However, there are activities that can help restore physical and mental health while remaining safe through social distancing and wearing a mask. Engaging in activities that allow for socialization within the recommended guidelines is particularly important.



## COVID-19

First, anyone who has not done so should watch the video of the August 9 Prince of Peace worship service. Pastor Rick's sermon offers hope and encouragement for the current time ... hope and encouragement that is needed. It might be helpful to periodically watch and re-watch it.

After weeks of sheltering in place, most activities that involved cleaning out closets, organizing cupboards, baking, Netflix binge-watching, etc. have lost their appeal. However, there are activities that involve engaging with other humans and even our companion animals that can help reduce the isolation many are feeling. First, rediscover the telephone call. Texting is a great way to communicate but it lacks the personal contact of a live voice. Even video chats aren't the same. Phone calls benefit the caller and the one called. Phone calls are especially meaningful for those who still must shelter in place because they are a reminder that the one called has not been forgotten. Surprise a friend or family member whom you haven't seen or spoken with lately with a phone call to catch up. A phone call isn't the same as a hug, but it says "I care."

While reviving forgotten forms of communication, consider connecting with snail mail and dropping a note or letter to a friend or family member. Stamps may be purchased online so a visit to the Post Office isn't required. Many nursing homes are recruiting pen

pals for their residents. Volunteering may result in new friendships. If your handwriting is less than readable, typing is permissible. The goal is to connect in a personal way that isn't possible with e-mail. A letter doesn't have to be a literary masterpiece. It is just a way of saying, "I'm thinking of you." Almost everyone enjoys receiving mail that doesn't fall into the

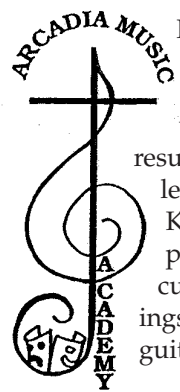
classification of "junk," likely because it happens so rarely ... and you'll be helping support your local Post Office.

Remember the tradition of the Sunday afternoon family drive? With gas prices relatively low, it is a safe way for family members to get out of the house together and discover new places or revisit favorites. There are many places that are within an afternoon's drive from Phoenix. Visit a neighboring community such as Wickenburg or Payson or drive through the Salt River Canyon or to the Arboretum. As difficult as it may be, leave the screens at home and simply enjoy the ride and scenery.

Look for things to do outside. Physical exercise is particularly important now that comfort food may have become a staple of our diets. Consider taking an early morning walk, run, or bike ride on the canal. Invite a friend to join you. Canals offer space for social distancing. As temperatures fall, it won't be necessary to be out before sunrise. If you're not a morning person, take an evening stroll through your neighborhood. Look at the night

sky or check out your neighbor's new landscaping. Take the dog with you for company. As fall approaches, consider trying your hand at gardening. If space is limited, many flowers and vegetables can be grown in pots.

The uncertainty associated with Covid-19 has raised stress levels, impacting both physical and mental health. We worry about family and friends, hope for the development of a vaccine or treatment. Stress like Covid-19 is not going to magically disappear, but reaching out to others while caring for ourselves benefits us all.



POP's Arcadia Music Academy has resumed private lessons! If you would like to sign up/resume in-person or virtual lessons, please contact Keri or Maria at [ama@popphoenix.org](mailto:ama@popphoenix.org). We currently have openings for violin, piano and guitar!

### News of Members and Friends

**DEATHS**

July 19	Pat Lindberg
Aug. 3	Dick Neibaur
Aug. 19	Sam Ward
Aug. 24	Eleanor Zoellner
Aug. 31	Michael Darland

### Monthly Attendance and Revenue Report

as of July 31, 2020

	July 2019 <i>(4-week month)</i>	July 2020 <i>(4-week month)</i>
Monthly Attendance*	360	0
Monthly Offering	\$36,068	\$57,005
Monthly Offering Budget	\$38,384	\$54,913
Variance	(\$2,316)	\$2,092

\* Worship during July has been virtual due to the pandemic.

**Thank you to everyone who has continued to send in their contributions or donate on-line.**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<div style="border: 3px double black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>SEPTEMBER 2020</b>            AA, nightly, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Arcadia Room 12            Survivors of Suicide,            2nd &amp; 4th Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m. Room 1, AMA Pod            * indicates virtual only         </div>		* Mary & Martha- 9:30 am * Theology Pub- 7 pm	* Bible Study- noon			Quilters- 9 am
* Virtual Worship- 9:30 am	<b>Presidents' Day</b> Church Office Closed No Preschool or Day Care	* Mary & Martha- 9:30 am * Theology Pub- 7 pm	* Bible Study- noon			Quilters- 9 am
In-person Worship in the Sanctuary- 9:30 am * Virtual Worship- 9:30 am	Boy Scout Troop #6- 7 pm	<b>October Newsletter Deadline</b> * Mary & Martha- 9:30 am * Theology Pub- 7 pm	* Bible Study- noon Feed My Starving Children- 3-5 pm			Quilters- 9 am
In-person Worship in the Sanctuary- 9:30 am * Virtual Worship- 9:30 am	Boy Scout Troop #6- 7 pm	* Mary & Martha- 9:30 am * Theology Pub- 7 pm	* Bible Study- noon			Quilters- 9 am
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***Prince of Peace is on Facebook, Instagram, our own Website, YouTube ...  
to sign up for our news, e-mail us at office@poppPhoenix.org email.***

## ***Table of Contents***

✓ Pastor Rick's Message . . . . .	1
✓ Join Zoom Meetings/Kristin Engstrom Update/Pastor Rick's Office Hours . . . . .	2
✓ Worship Opportunities during the Pandemic . . . . .	3
✓ Youth and Family News . . . . .	4
✓ Preschool . . . . .	5
✓ Wellness: Coping with Stress of Covid 19/Arcadia Music Academy News of Members and Friends/Monthly Attendance and Revenut Report . . . . .	6
✓ Calendar . . . . .	7