

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen

“they were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. And they were not given authority to kill them...”

Revelation 9:4-5a

It seems every year we begin it with the greatest expectations of what that year will bring. Perhaps we have something in mind that we will finally achieve, or a place we will finally get to visit, or a relationship that will finally become what we've always wanted it to be.

The years tend to fly by and yet we always believe that the important things in life can wait another day. We focus on tasks that seem very important in the present. There are, however, tasks that are important in the present which make a difference for eternity.

Prior to these verses in Revelation, the apostle John sees what looks like a swarm of locusts pouring out of an abyss. Notice however, this swarm does not attack the vegetation as is the case with the natural locusts. This swarm will not indirectly affect humans. Rather this swarm will attack the unbelievers in this world. They are not allowed to kill those without Christ. But are allowed to torment them.

We might wonder why God would allow demons and the devil a time to afflict people? God allows it so that these people will recognize their need for a Savior. He allows it temporarily to occur so they will turn to him and be saved. He doesn't want any one lost.

Unfortunately, many don't realize there is an alternative to this type of suffering. Some don't realize it because no one has ever told them that Jesus died for them. Others don't realize it because they don't think the message is for them. Some dismiss the message because they don't think they need God. Then there are those too, that rather than believe the truth, attempt to analyze the truth to show they are superior to it.

In his memoir, *Crossbearer*, Joe Eszterhas, talks about his spiritual journey to faith. He was a Hollywood script writer whose scripts wear dark, graphic, and violent. He was addicted to drugs, alcohol, and was a smoker. By his own words and descriptions, to say he was unkind would be an understatement of massive portions. But God would not give up on him. And Joe would be brought so low that he would call out to God. And God would change his life. Change his life to the point that as Hollywood would call on him to produce scripts of the type he'd written in the past he would refuse. The faith that the Holy Spirit had worked in his heart now made him steadfast to create films that would be consistent with the will of God.

What would the New Year and every new year mean to us, if in the new year and every year we were able to help one person, each of us just one, to move into the category of those who have been sealed by God.

I recently saw a slogan that read “Giving up on humanity one person at a time.” If it is not already our purpose as individuals and as the body of Christ, let **our** slogan be “Reaching out to humanity one person at a time.”

May God grant you a very blessed new year and may He make it our most successful, reaching one person at a time. Amen

SDG,

Pastor

If you have a prayer need or praise to share, please contact Pastor or Amy Betts in the church office anytime at 570-703-0607.

News of Lutheran Education!

Working in partnership with God's people to raise up a new generation of faithful Christian men and women!

The Lutheran Academy Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF) hosted a Gingerbread House building/decorating event on December 10th. Seven houses were constructed and were on display at the school for voting during the week of December 13-17, as well as virtually on the school's Facebook page. At the end of the week, one winner was announced with the most in person votes and one gingerbread house received the most online votes. Thank you to all who voted and to the 7 families who participated in this fun event. We hope to make it an annual tradition.

To view ALL the houses, visit the school's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/lutheranacademyscranton/

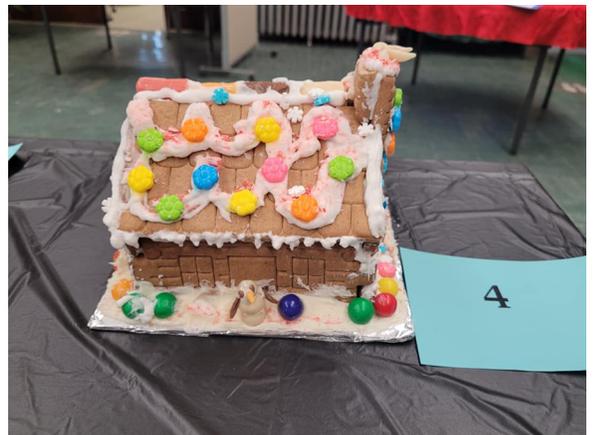


Receiving the most in-person votes, #2 created by the Betts family.

A Holiday History Showcase and Open House

On December 14th, we held our Holiday History Showcase and Open House. We are pleased to share 29 people attended the day, including a prospective family with both a 4th and 5th grader.

This event replaced the annual Christmas Tea, and those who stopped by found it a unique and COVID-safe way to celebrate the great things happening at The Lutheran Academy.



Receiving the most on-line votes, #4 created by the Coles family.



There were a few interactive parts to the event. Each classroom decorated a tree to illustrate part of their history era. The 7th & 8th grade class depicted Medieval Legends and received the most votes. You will notice the tree has a dragon circling it and a castle wall at the base. ALL the classes did a fantastic job!

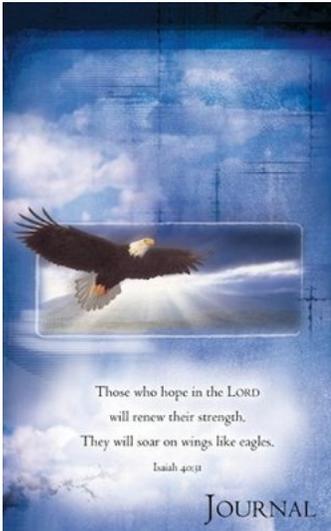
Attendees were able to vote for their favorite gingerbread house (see article above), guess how many marbles were in the jar on the 4-6th grade display table, and enjoy TONS of information and art projects.

We are so thrilled with all the hard work and time the students and staff put into the Holiday History Showcase. If you were unable to attend but want to see all the photos posted, please visit our school Facebook page or school website.

The Lutheran Academy offers open enrollment, which means as long as a spot is available in a classroom, a family can apply at any time during the year. Please continue to spread the word of our school.

Pray without ceasing - I Thes. 5:17

Remember to ask: "How can I pray for you?"



Last month you were asked to think about the question: **Does your life conform to what you said you believe?**

How did you answer the question? Did you surprise yourself with what you wrote? Was it a response you were proud of? Does the way you live reflect how you responded or was how you answered very different from how you live?

Your question for January is: **What questions or life style changes do you need to**

wrestle with so that your life reflects your beliefs?

Make sure to place the date and your thoughts on the page. If you would like to discuss them with Pastor that would be great! If you want to keep them to yourselves that is fine as well. You may also want to note whether you prayed for anyone that day and whether you read the Bible at all that day. Don't worry about how few or how many pages you use each day. At the end of the challenge, Pastor will ask you to share some insights from the challenge anonymously for inclusion in the newsletter.

(The questions I am asking you are inspired by Questions on the website of the New Jersey District of The LCMS written by Rev. Dr. Anthony Steinbronn, author of a book on worldview.)

JANUARY

Birthdays

Tammy McClure 3

Baptism Birthdays

Nora Betts 2

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School classes are offered for children ages 4 through adult. Sunday School begins at 9:30am. Hope to see you there.

+ HYMN OF THE MONTH: **By All Your Saints in Warfare #517**

The author of verses 1-10,12-13,15-23, 25-26, 28, for this hymn was Lord Horatio Nelson who lived to the age of ninety. A relative of the English naval hero, he was a layman educated at Trinity College at Eaton. He was the son of Thomas Bolton, nephew of the naval hero. He assisted Bishop John Kible by compiling a hymnal in 1857. The hymnal was very popular. In 1864, Nelson published a hymn for all Saints Day, "For All Thy Saints in Warfare." Among his other published works were a prayer book and a calendar of lessons.

The hymn tells of servants of Christ and the faithful service they rendered to God and his church during their lifetimes. Nelson recognizes in the chorus of the hymn that it was not by the saints activity or merit that causes them to enter the realms of heaven but rather because of the victory Jesus achieved and the activity of the triune God to whom alone we ascribe power, glory, and praise alone.

*By all Your saints in warfare,
For all Your saints at rest,
Your holy name, O Jesus,
Forevermore be blest!
For You have won the battle
That they might wear the crown;*

This first verse reminds us not only can we not earn heaven no matter how great our zeal and commitment to Christ but neither should we forget that the same Lord Jesus is the reason we too shall enter heaven. In giving us this hymn we also are made to realize we will one day join the list laid before us.

Like those who passed before, may God make us truly worthy of joining their company through living the life He wants us to live and in letting others know about all He has done. Amen

Happy Retirement Chuck Mercer



After 50 years with the company, Chuck Mercer retired as the CEO of Mercer Sales & Service on December 31, 2021.

Pictured above are a few members of Peace who attended the surprise party hosted by his business partner Jeremy.

May God bless you Chuck in this new chapter of your life.



Thank you to Grace Babbitts, Faith Babbitts, Alfred Betts, and Mathew Miller, who added dramatic monologues to the Christmas Eve Family Service.

They each added their own flair to the parts assigned. A recording of the full service can be found on our church Facebook page.

Life at Peace



Soup Fellowship!

Come join us on **Sunday, January 9th at Noon** for a soup potluck. Everyone is invited to bring the soup they make best and share as we spend some time in fellowship! Maybe you have a soup you haven't tried but would love to. Maybe you want to bring bread or crackers, or a dessert. There is no cost, all you need to bring is a good appetite!



The coloring page in the newsletter each month can be turned in and we will send them to the residents at The Gardens at Greenridge where our beloved Audrey Russell lives.

God Bless You! From your friend _____ at Peace Lutheran Church.



Beat the winter blues...



Chicken BBQ Dinner Fundraiser

**Saturday, January 22nd
4:00-6:00 pm**

**Peace Lutheran Church
2506 N Main Avenue
Scranton, PA 18508**

\$10 each

Eat in or Take out

Get tickets by calling the office
at 570-703-0607
or visit www.yourpeace.org

**Dinner includes:
1/2 Chicken, Potatoes,
Baked Beans,
Corn, Roll & Cookie**



Proceeds to benefit the work of Peace Lutheran Church and the community it serves.

JANUARY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 HAPPY NEW YEAR No 5pm Worship
2 8:15am Worship Service with communion 9:30 - Sunday School 10:30am - Worship Service with communion	3	4	5	6	7	8 1pm Christmas Tree Removal 5:00pm Worship with Holy Communion
9 8:15am Worship Service 9:30 - Sunday School 10:30am - Worship Service Noon - Soup Fellowship	10	11	12	13 6:30pm - Council Meeting	14	15 5:00pm Worship with Holy Communion
16 8:15am Worship Service with communion 9:30 - Sunday School 10:30am - Worship Service with communion	17 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR DAY	18	19	20 4pm - TLA Board Meeting	21	22 4-6pm Chicken BBQ Fundraiser 5:00pm Worship with Holy Communion
23 8:15am Worship Service 9:30 - Sunday School 10:30am - Worship Service	24	25	26	27	28	29 5:00pm Worship with Holy Communion
30 8:15am Worship Service with communion 9:30 - Sunday School 10:30am - Worship Service	31	/----- National Lutheran Schools Week ----- /				

