

Tidings of Peace



April 2026

Worship in April

In person/Livestream Worship at 9:30 am
<https://www.facebook.com/popnjchurch>



April 5
Easter

"The Resurrection of Lord
Christ is Risen Indeed!"
Pastor Peter Preaching

April 12
2nd Sunday after Easter
Outdoor Service Begins
"My Lord and My God"
Pastor Peter Preaching

April 19
3rd Sunday after Easter
"The Road to Emmaus"
Pastor Peter Preaching

April 26
Good Shepherd Sunday
"I Am The Gate"
Pastor Peter Preaching

Pastor's Page

My sermon for forty years is that Holy Week is a drama that needs to be experienced. If one does not accompany Christ from Palm Sunday to the upper room and the Last Supper on Thursday to the cross on Friday and finally to the tomb and the first proclamation of Easter at the Vigil on Saturday night, then Easter Sunday does not hold the same punch. There really is no resurrection without crucifixion.

So, for one last time, I encourage you to experience Holy Week. By the time you read this Palm Sunday has passed, but hopefully you are picking this up in time for The Three Days, Maundy Thursday to Good Friday to the Easter Vigil.

Maundy Thursday is central to our faith story. If you miss church on a Sunday in August, no big deal, but do not miss Maundy Thursday. The foot washing is the full revelation of the essence of Christ. Christ comes not to be served, but to serve. Acknowledging that the foot washing might be a little too much for many to participate in, the last few years we have offered a hand washing simultaneously during the reading of the gospel. This is easier and the point is still made.

In addition, communion on this night takes on a richer meaning. The cross is front and center. Eating the body and drinking the blood on the very night in which Christ was betrayed reveals the depth of this sacrament.

Tidings, the newsletter of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, is published monthly. Articles, story ideas, and comments can be emailed to rclarecarlson@aol.com.

Deadline for the May issue is Sunday, April 26th

Staff and Officers of Prince of Peace

Rev. Peter Froehlke, Pastor

Rev. Dale Selover, Director of The House Next Door

Dr. Doug Helvering, Minister of Music

Victoria Chow, Church Musician

Dorothy Safranek, Financial Secretary

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Martin Rexroad

Dunja Saleh-Zaki

Janis Haddock

Wayne Dougherty

Con Sweeney

Claudia Thompson

David Herrington, Secretary (non-voting)

Pastor's Page (Continued)

Finally, at the end of the service, the altar is stripped. Again the drama. The death of Christ is palpable as we see all color and symbols of life stripped from our worship space.

Good Friday is a much simpler service but no less powerful. The past few years we have heard different voices from the pulpit on the Seven Last Words of Christ from the cross. This year we welcome Pastor Fred Schott, Pastor Becky Resch, Chaplain Claudia Thompson, Pastors Peter and Dale, and friend of Prince of Peace Rev Kahlil Carmichael from Live Well Church in Windsor. Also, I am thrilled that Stephanie Cuddahy will offer a liturgical dance peace for "It Is Finished." God's words is expressed through many voices and also through the art of dance.

The Easter Vigil is the night of all nights. It does not hold the fanfare of Easter morning, but it better captures the mystery of resurrection. We begin by lighting the Christ Candle from the lit fire in our outdoor chapel. Fire is the basic element of life, and the catalyst that sets Christ's rising in motion. We then process into the sanctuary where the transformation from Good Friday to Easter Sunday unfolds within the service. Traditional vigils literally watch through the night hours to sunrise, but we cheat and complete our vigil in one hour.

Consider this your invitation to experience the drama of Holy Week. The liturgies shape our faith, give it meaning, and help us appreciate the mystery of death and resurrection. I hope to see you in church.

Pastor Peter

8:30 Outdoor Service Returns April 12th

The Outdoor Service returns with the arrival of spring. We meet in the Outdoor Chapel right outside the side entrance to the church. We will meet every Sunday through Pastor's retirement for a half hour service of word and sacrament.

Good Friday Noon Service

Pastors Peter and Dale have been invited to preach at Live Well Church for their Seven Last Words service during the noon hour on Good Friday. If you cannot make our evening service, or even if you can, consider Live Well's interfaith service at noon. Live Well is in Windsor, NJ. Parking is available one block south of the church.

Park in the Park on Easter Sunday

We rejoice as our musician Victoria Chow Shapiro and her husband Jordan are having their new born baby Jadon baptized on Easter Sunday. They have invited many guests so if you are able, leave the parking lot available for their guests and park in the park. This overflow parking option works well for big events. Take the road into Community Park and go the end by the ballfields. Look for the cones that will lead you to the path that will bring you out right by the Peace Garden. You will know the way from there.

You are Invited to Easter Fellowship



On Easter Sunday, all are invited to bring a sweet or savory treat to share for our Easter Fellowship which will take place immediately after worship! You can drop it off in the community room on your way to worship. Please provide a label with the name of your dish and the ingredients as a courtesy to those who have allergies. A recipe is even better!! Hot and cold drinks will be provided.

Adult Class

Join Pastor Peter in April as he discusses the book *For Such a Time As This, An Emergency Devotional*, by Dr. Hanna Reichel of Princeton Seminary. These are unprecedented times forcing the church to be bold in our advocacy for the marginalized of society. April 12th, Dr. Reichel offers a faithful, non-anxious word for the church to navigate its mission in the era of authoritarianism. Join us Sundays at 10:45 in the Double Classroom. Note there is no class Easter Sunday, April 5th.

An Augustinian Journey

Martin Luther was a faithful Augustinian friar before and after he was excommunicated in January of 1521. He knew the works of St. Augustine (354-430) and cited them often, including the *Confessions*. From November through February this year, several PoP members joined me in reading a big portion of this classic, the narrative of his life, and in sharing some passages with others in sessions of the Adult Class. We concentrated on his journey, like the Prodigal Son, away from God and his mother and the church, and then back again.

It is all a prayer. "You have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you" (Conf. I.1). He is writing about the shared human journey, not just his own. He did not say "my heart" as an individual; he did not say "our hearts" meaning various individuals. He said "our heart" in the singular as humanity's shared situation. As Luther noted, Augustine took no credit for the return part of the journey. It was God, through his mother and mother church especially a preacher named Ambrose, who brought him back even when he was uncooperative. "You called and cried out loud and shattered my deafness. You were radiant and resplendent, you put to flight my blindness" (Conf. X.27.38).

Paul Rorem, with thanks to Sean Cuddahy, Dave Herrington, David New, Con Sweeney, and Claudia Thompson, and to Pastor Peter for the encouragement to try this.

Easter Grocery Bags and Grocery Store Gift Cards for Families/Seniors Served by LSM/NJ Deeply Appreciated

Lutheran Social Ministries of NJ (LSM/NJ) was delighted to receive the **20 filled Easter grocery food bags, the 12 grocery store gift cards, the check, and the 10 greeting cards for distribution to the families and senior citizens in their care who are in need of food.**

All extra items beyond what was on the basic list were most generous.

Beth Gebhart, Director of Community Relations & Volunteers for LSM/NJ, picked everything up on March 24, 2026. She expressed deep appreciation for everything and said that LSM/NJ is very fortunate to have this and other support of their ministries from Prince of Peace folks.

Thank you to all who participated in this outreach ministry of Prince of Peace to help the hungry in our midst! Your generosity is being spread throughout the New Jersey Synod.

God's Work; Our Hands! A blessed Easter to all of you!

Appreciatively,

Berta Schott, for the PoP Social Outreach Ministry Team and Lutheran Social Ministries of NJ

April Food Donation for St. Bart's

Throughout the month of April we are collecting Peanut Butter & Jelly for St. Bart's. Please place your donation on the table in the narthex. If the church is closed, please leave your food offering in the bin outside the Community Wing entrance.

Peace and Cherry Tree Gardens: Ready for the 2026 Season!

The snow has melted and Spring has arrived, which means the gardening season has begun! Our team of dedicated volunteers began working in late March to clear the beds and prep for planting. Because of the hard work last season mulching the pathways and cleaning and covering the beds with salt hay, weeding has been minimal so far. The gardens look fantastic and are ready for planting! We are also happy to report that recent soil tests performed by the Rutgers Soil Lab show that our soil is in great shape, so we are hopeful for a bountiful crop this growing season.

This month we will be planting seeds for crops such as sugar snap and snow peas, carrots, beets, greens and radishes. In addition, we will be planting seedlings from PHS (Pennsylvania Horticultural Society) which will include lettuce, kale, collards, bok choy, onions and more. We also hope to receive from PHS potatoes, strawberries and 2 new blueberry bushes! It truly is a blessing to have their support as a part of their City Harvest Program.

Special thanks to Jen DiGioia for clearing out the shed so we can start the season clean and organized, to Joan Prins and Peter Perkuhn for cutting up and moving tree branches that had fallen around the garden area during recent storms, and to Joan New for volunteering once again to drive to Philly to pick up our seedlings this season.

We are off to a great start! However, April is a super busy time in the gardens and we can always use more help! If you enjoy being outdoors, love to garden, want to learn about gardening, or just want to get some exercise and enjoy some fellowship, **PLEASE JOIN US!** We are currently working occasional Tuesday afternoons from 3-5 and every Friday morning from 10-12, weather permitting. If those days and times don't work for you, we can provide a list of tasks that can be done at a time convenient for you. All are welcome and no experience is needed.

Be a part of this rewarding ministry of supplying fresh produce to the community surrounding St. Bart's! For more information or to be added to our email list, contact our Master Gardener Shari Rexroad (srexroad915@gmail.com) or Nancy Reyes (nancyauerreyes@gmail.com). Also, look for our Facebook page (Peace Garden) where you can follow along and watch our gardens grow. **Happy Spring!**

Book Group

*If interested in joining the book club,
please contact Phyllis Church at
609-799-0723 or p.church@mindspring.com
We meet once a month in the church lounge at 1
p.m. Please bring your lunch and/or snack for
others to share.*

**Thursday, April 9th at 1 p.m. in the
Lounge**

The Lion Women of Tehran by Marjan Kamali

This beautiful story of the friendship between two Iranian women begins before the fall of the Shah and continues to 2022. Seven-year-old Ellie meets Homa on the first day of school and the two become friends. They are separated when Ellie becomes a popular student in Iran's best high school for girls.



Years later they come together again and come of age as the political turmoil in Iran builds to a breaking point. They are determined to become lion women despite the obstacles they face. A devastating betrayal, however, has enormous consequences.

**Thursday, May 14th at 1 p.m. in the
Lounge**

My Friends Fredrik Backman



Eighteen-year-old Louisa is entrusted with a beautiful work of art that depicts three tiny figures sitting at the end of a long pier jutting into the ocean. She is so moved by the painting that she decides to learn all she can about its

origin. Her journey takes her to the seaside village where twenty-five years earlier a group of teenagers from troubled backgrounds find love and friendship in each other's company. This beautiful story highlights the transformative power of friendship and art.

Council Corner

Prince of Peace has saved \$103.89 on the electric bill for the House Next Door thanks to the Solar Community project. I know this is not a lot but every little bit helps – both our expenses and the environment! Several POP disciples have also joined this and report monthly savings. Anyone with a PSE&G account can sign up through the POP link -www.NeighborhoodSun.Solar/POPNJ.

The Synod Assembly – the yearly meeting of the NJ Synod – is coming up at the end of May with the theme Water and Witness. Con Sweeney, Mo Clarke (the under 30 voting member), and Joan New along with Pastors Peter and Dale will be voting members. Arundel Clarke will also be attending in his role as the Vice President of the Synod. We will be attending the District meeting on April 11 (2 pm at Hope Lutheran Church, Freehold)

where we will elect a select number of synod council positions and hear from Bishop Compton. Anyone interested is invited.

The council heard from the Finance team that giving is a little down from expected, primarily due to the snowstorms. Snow removal expense is greater than planned for the same reason. What a winter!!

The council also continues to discuss the 2026 spending plan, specifically how to address the NJ Synod mission support and the House Next Door Director stipend.

It was reported that the plans for the Immigrant Job Training Program, funded by the Fund for Mission grant from the NJ Synod, are progressing.

Council Corner (Continued)

The plan is to hire an I-Rise client from Trenton for 12 weeks to do various cleaning and maintenance tasks around our campus. The hope is that we can do this three times during the rest of 2026 starting in early April.

Pastor Dale reported on an opportunity for the House Next Door to be a part of a Lily Grant

application along with the NJ Synod and Crossroads Camp. It has already been exciting to brainstorm about partnerships and possibilities! More to come in the months ahead.

Peace,

Joan New, Council President

Parish Care - April 2026

Continuing to Share Our POP Care with others

Happy Easter

Our Easter cards for our homebound members have been mailed and may even been delivered. Sending Easter greetings to those who can not be with us in church brightens their day and lets them know they are in our thoughts.

Thank you for your messages to our "young at heart" members and friends that cannot be at church regularly.

Just another huge Thank You for your generous support of the **Valentine Care Box and bag Project**. Many thanks for all the monetary donations to make our Care box and bag project so successful. Thank you notes are still arriving.

We are gathering information about our **graduating high school seniors**. We would like to have a graduation blessing/celebration in June during our church service. Please let us know of who is graduating and what your plans are for the future.

Transportation

A few folks are in need of rides to and from Sunday church services. If you can help with the driving please let us know.

Ongoing

We continue our monthly mailings to our families that have lost loved ones and to families with new babies. If you know of someone to include in our mailings, please let me know.

Care notes and other church information is available in the breezeway. Many thanks to Chris Wethe and Ginger Reiersen for their continued support of these projects. Take and share with others.

If you know of anyone to include in our projects let me know.

We would like to update our list of folks that can help with providing meals as needed, transportation, and to help with some receptions/events held at the church. If you can help, please let me know.

Continue to share your POP Care. Anyone interested in helping with any of our efforts please let us know.

Martha Winder
609-799-7280
maw14jpw@aol.com

Racial Justice

This past month we were reminded that we often talk about America as a land of immigrants, but we should be mindful that NOT ALL Americans came from immigrants. Some are Native Americans who've always been here despite colonizers trying to eliminate the ancestors and culture of our indigenous neighbors. Many Black Americans are descended from enslaved individuals who were forcibly brought here. To both of these groups, it is offensive to erase that history by saying we're all immigrants, as if they were never here or had any choice. While we have been sharing our family history and discussing our immigration history, we should keep in mind that while many of us have ancestors who made the choice, even if as refugees, to come here, EVERY group and individual is a child of God. We are learning about our neighbors' history to enrich our own lives, not to diminish or erase the often deliberately hidden or distorted history of many Americans.

After reminders that Mary, Joseph and Jesus migrated and were even refugees early in his life, we asked you to think about sharing your own families' journeys to this part of the world. During February and March members and friends were invited to post and share interesting facts they knew about their families. After being rescheduled several times, those attending the sharing forum brought such items as a Pennsylvania Dutch birth certificate/baptismal certificate artwork, beer steins, family Bible, a handmade dust cloth, cutwork pillowcases, news articles, photos and more. More stories were shared and included a couple finding that Queen Elizabeth was their common ancestor (each in a different generation, more than 10 generations back) while another member discovered being related to Hubert Humphrey. Some shared how family names (or their spellings) had changed over time or how records and artifacts were written in almost illegible script making research more difficult or finding the reasons fascinating. We learned how diverse our congregation is in many ways! Our ancestors' nationalities (which you can see on the map still up in the narthex) included people on at least 5 continents. Our known ethnicities include German, Irish, British, Native American, Danish, Dutch, Spanish and more. Shared religions of ancestors included Mennonite, Catholic, Jewish, Anglican, Puritan, Methodist, Lutheran, etc.. Known occupations include farmers, preachers, carpenters, coopers, brewers, seamen, chefs, bankers, teachers, healers, and more.

We also finally hosted Catherine and Tim Foley of The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints (also known as Mormons or LDS) who shared the scriptural basis for their church's emphasis on genealogy because of the importance of family and honoring your ancestors in the Bible. They shared examples of their own findings, family trees and books developed by relatives to pass down to generations, and some of the many free services available to those researching their own ancestry through Family Search (see familysearch.org).

A quick list of just a few recent important legal changes re immigration

Lawsuits against changes in Temporary Protective Status (TPS) have paused the end date for several groups...for Haitians and Syrians, for several months at least (for Somalia only temporarily, and for Yemen, still ending in May as of this week). Lawsuits against the order that refugees can be arrested and deported for not getting Green Cards (Permanent Residence) within a year of coming to the US has paused those orders as has being allowed to arrest and detain refugees just to re-vet and reinterview them.

Updates from Interfaith RISE (I-RISE)

With the past year's changes in immigration policies, very few refugees have entered the US in the past year, so I-RISE (part of RCHP-AHC which has been helping marginalized populations for 20 years now) has reorganized many of their services and obtained grants to help not just new refugees, but many more immigrants whose needs may have changed because of canceled or expired and non-renewed work permits or immigration issues. If you know ANY immigrants (asylum seekers, TPS, HP, LPR, etc.) who have been in the US for less than five years, I-RISE may be able to help them as well. In addition to providing free ESL classes and child care during classes, basic computer training and financial coaching, helping with school and employment resources, matching mentors with 19-26 year olds, mobile health services and referrals, food, clothing, baby needs and household items to those who are struggling, they now have grants to help pay for renewing work permits and applying for asylum....and much more! See the attached blue and yellow flyer (or see it on interfaithrise.org home page in 6 different languages to share with those you know). Newest in the family of services related to I-RISE through the Reformed Church of Highland Park is CAN!

Racial Justice (Continued)

I-Rise is also supporting families separated by detention or deportation. Anyone who would like to get involved with aiding such families please reach out to bella@rchp-ahc.org.

Volunteers are still welcome to work with our Haitian family or other immigrants after just a few hours of virtual training. Take them shopping or on an outing, invite them to spend time with your family, or help the parents or teens improve their English or practice driving (they've had 6 hours each of professional lessons already). Contact Nancy Reyes (nancyauerreyes@gmail.com or 609-273-1239) with questions or to volunteer.

SAVE THE DATE: Monday, May 11 from 7-8:45 - Virtual Program on Christian Nationalism sponsored by the NJ Synod ELCA Anti-Racism Team.

INTERFAITH RISE
RACIAL JUSTICE AND IMMIGRANT SERVICES

Refugee Support Services

I-RISE PROVIDES AN ARRAY OF WRAP-AROUND SERVICES TO OUR REFUGEE SUPPORT SERVICES (RSS) POPULATIONS. THOSE SERVICES INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Case Management
- Public benefits access/assistance
- Medical referrals & resources
- Housing assistance
- Financial management

ADDITIONALLY, WE PROVIDE REFERRALS FOR ALL RSS SET ASIDES SUCH AS:

- Youth mentoring
- School impact
- Employment
- English Language Learning (ELL)
- Senior services

ELIGIBLE CLIENTS INCLUDE: CUBAN/HAITIAN ENTRANTS, ASYLEES, REFUGEES AND SPECIAL IMMIGRANT VISA HOLDERS, WHO HAVE ARRIVED WITHIN THE LAST 5 YEARS.

ELIGIBLE CLIENTS CAN SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH A CASE MANAGER USING THE QR CODE

SCAN ME

QUESTIONS? 732-357-0590 INFO@INTERFAITHRISE.ORG

Prince of Peace Lending Library

The Prince of Peace Lending Library has a new addition this month:

From Here to Equality: Reparations for Black Americans in the Twenty-First Century: by William A. Darity & A. Kirsten Mullen – donated by Nancy Reyes:

Racism and discrimination have choked economic opportunity for African Americans at nearly every turn. At several historic moments, the trajectory of racial inequality could have been altered dramatically. Perhaps no moment was more opportune than the early days of Reconstruction, when the U.S. government temporarily implemented a major redistribution of land from former slaveholders to the newly emancipated enslaved. But neither Reconstruction nor the New Deal nor the civil rights struggle led to an economically just and fair nation. Today, systematic inequality persists in the form of housing discrimination, unequal education, police brutality, mass incarceration, employment discrimination, and massive wealth and opportunity gaps. Economic data indicates that for every dollar the average white household holds in wealth the average black household possesses a mere ten cents.

In *From Here to Equality*, William Darity Jr. and A. Kirsten Mullen confront these injustices head-on and make the most comprehensive case to date for economic reparations for U.S. descendants of slavery. After opening the book with a stark assessment of the intergenerational effects of white supremacy on black economic well-being, Darity and Mullen look to both the past and the present to measure the inequalities borne of slavery. Using innovative methods that link monetary values to historical wrongs, they next assess the literal and figurative costs of justice denied in the 155 years since the end of the Civil War. Finally, Darity and Mullen offer a detailed roadmap for an effective reparations program, including a substantial payment to each documented U.S. black descendant of slavery. Taken individually, any one of the three eras of injustice outlined by Darity and Mullen--slavery, Jim Crow, and modern-day discrimination--makes a powerful case for black reparations. Taken collectively, they are impossible to ignore.

If you have any suggestions or would like to discuss ideas or resources for the library, please contact Kathy {kathynowak@verizon.net} or Greg Nowak {gregsnowak@verizon.net}.



177 Princeton-Hightstown Road
Princeton Junction NJ 08550

Church Office: 609-799-1753

E-Mail: email@popnj.org

Website: popnj.org

Sunday Schedule

Worship at 8:30 Outdoors

9:30 am (in person/Livestream)

Office Hours

Tuesday through Thursday, 9 am - 2 pm

Latest details can be found in the Sunday bulletin