

December 5th, 2025

PEACE CONNECTION



Friday December 5th
Pastor Charlie's Day Off
6:00 pm Hanging of the Greens

Saturday December 6th
2:00 pm Organ Practice
5:30 pm Jazz Heritage Orchestra Concert

Sunday December 7th
9 & 11 am In Person Worship
10:00 am Blood Pressure Screening
10:00 am French Toast Breakfast

Monday December 8th
10:00 am Staff Meeting
2:00 pm Organ Practice
7:00 pm SOAP Bible Study

Tuesday December 9th
6:15 pm CrossFire Rehearsal
7:00 pm Peace Pavilion Meeting

Wednesday December 10th
2:00 pm Bible Study- The Chosen

Thursday December 11th
Sexton's Day Off
10:00 am Northwestern Conference Clergy Meeting
3:00 pm Organ Practice
7:30 pm Choir Practice

Friday December 12th
Pastor Charlie's Day Off

Saturday December 13th
10:00 am Parents Day Out
2:00 pm Organ Practice

Sunday December 14th
Final Day for Scranton Mitten Tree!
9:00 am - 1:00 pm Nativity Set Display
10:00 am Christmas Program Service
11:00 am Congregational Meeting
7:00 pm Council Meeting

Monday December 15th
10:00 am Staff Meeting
1:00 pm Comfort Quilters
3:00 pm Organ Practice
7:00 pm SOAP Bible Study

Tuesday December 16th
11:00 am Women's Discipleship Group
1:30 pm Watercolor Class with Mel
6:15 pm CrossFire Rehearsal
7:00 pm Peace Pavilion Meeting

*Grow in Faith * Serve In Love *
Live In Peace*

Scranton Mitten Tree

The Scranton Mitten Tree will once again be available this year! For this ministry, teachers from Scranton Elementary in Cleveland identify children with significant hardships. Each child will have a "Mitten Tag" which includes gift ideas for each student. These gifts allow us to make Christmas a little brighter for those who may not otherwise receive a gift!

The tree with the Mitten Tags will be available starting Sunday, November 23rd in the upper lobby. Volunteers will be present for you to sign out the tags. Coats, mittens, gloves, scarves, hats, and socks are also welcome! If you choose to participate, we ask that you wrap the gifts and attach the tags. The gifts need to be returned no later than Sunday, December 14th. The gifts will be delivered to the school the following week before Christmas. For questions, contact Diane Merhaut.



Annual Christmas Toast

Join us for our 3rd annual Sisters In Spirit (SIS) and Buds & Suds Christmas Toast.

We will meet on Tuesday, December 30th at 5 PM to 9PM. We will toast around 6:30 PM.

We will meet at: Between the Bun 34445 Center Ridge Rd North Ridgeville, OH 44039. We look forward to celebrating with you all!



Young at Heart

Please join us on Friday, December 12, 2025 at 12:30pm. We will be enjoying good food and fellowship at Moosehead Hoof and Ladder Restaurant, located at 7989 Columbia Rd. in Olmsted Falls. Please add your to the sign-up sheet in the lower lobby. Questions, contact Kathy Kettler at (440)825-2674.

Carlson Boots & Socks

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church is again accepting donations of socks and new or gently used water resistant boots of all sizes to benefit the men served at the Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries 2100 Lakeside Homeless Men's Shelter. This annual ministry began many years ago by POP members Jane and Jim Carlson and thankful to once again continue this important initiative in their honor. We will be collecting socks and boots starting November 2nd with plans to deliver to the shelter the week before Christmas. Please drop your socks and/or boots off at the donation station in the administrative wing by Sunday, December 21st. Donations of warm clothing are also accepted. If you have any questions, please contact Shawn Merhaut. Thank you!

Christmas Eve Children's Invite

We invite children who would like to share a musical offering before the 3 pm Christmas Eve service. Instrumental or vocal are welcomed. Parents can join in with the kids as well! We ask that your Christmas music offering focuses on Jesus' birth.

Please send your prelude information (your name or names ,song, composer, instrument) to Pastor Charlie at pccpopwestlake@gmail.com - use the subject "Prelude Christmas Eve"

Travel Quest Event

We will be going to hear The West Shore Choral and Orchestra's Annual
Holiday Concert, Joyful Voices, Jubilant Sounds!



The music includes, Coventry Carol, Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent, The Virgin, Mary Had a Baby Boy, And many more!

Sunday, December 7 at 7:30 pm at Rocky River United Methodist Church, 19414 Detroit Rd, Rocky River, OH Ticket \$20 – Students Free

Sign up sheet by lower doors! For tickets see, Sherry Weber, Fran Wilhelm or Diane DieKroeger

Bring Your Nativity!

Bring your nativity set from home and share your Christmas joy with others. On Sunday, December 14, a display of the nativity sets will be placed on tables throughout the fellowship hall. You will be asked to fill out a form stating your family name and any details about the set you would like to share (where it is from, how old it is, etc)

We ask that you bring these early on December 14 and keep them in the fellowship hall for a time of fellowship and sharing. A blessing will be given for these items before you take them home.





'TIS THE SEASON TO
SAVE THE DATE!

Upcoming events for youth and Christian education to mark your calendars for:

- **Saturday, December 6th:** Jazz Heritage Orchestra concert 5:30-7:00 pm
- **Sunday, December 7th:** French toast breakfast
- **Saturday, December 13th:** parents day out 10:00 am to 3:30pm
- **Sunday, December 14th:** Christmas Pageant
- **Sunday, December 21st:** Happy Birthday Jesus party 10:10-10:50 am
- **Sunday, Dec 28th and January 4th:** No Sunday school



Peace Pavilion Estimated Cost at Completion Status as of November 25, 2025

We have completed the Peace Pavilion and have absorbed some additional landscape costs within our budget. Our only remaining spend is interest related to our financing.

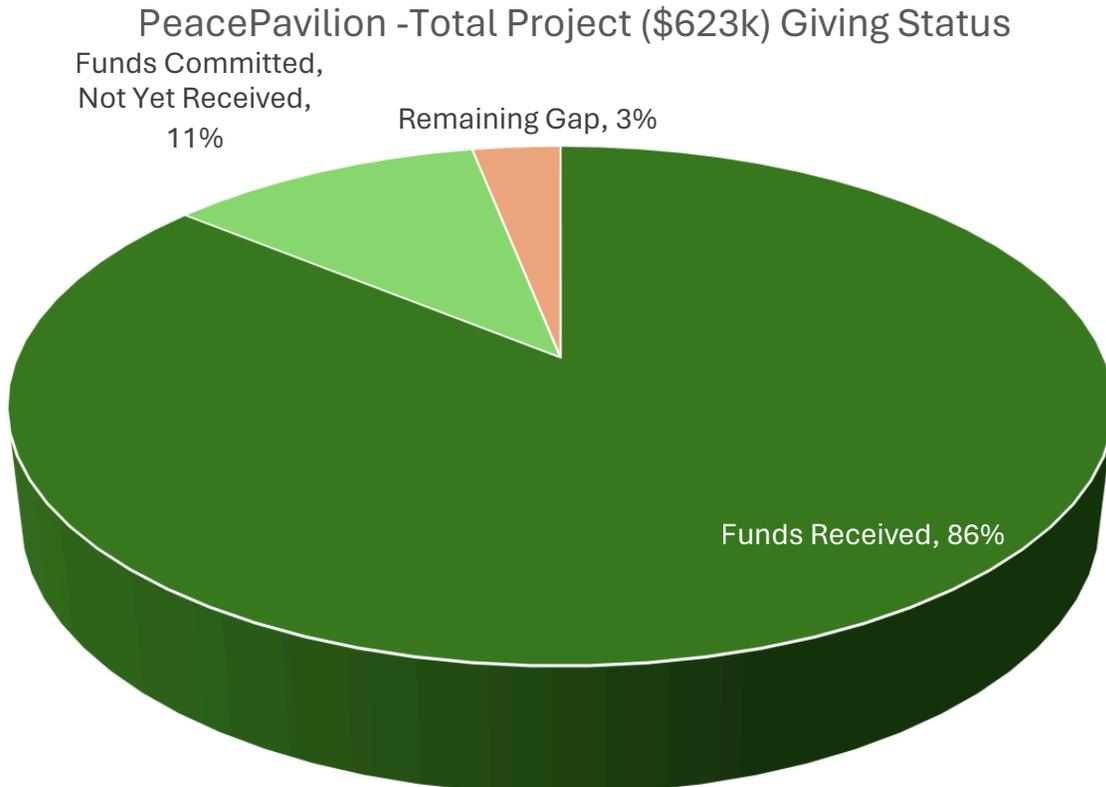
Sources of Funds (THANK YOU!)

- Giving to Date = \$489,888 *
- Future Pledges = \$69,434
- General Endowment Fund = \$20,000
- Ilene Hardy Memorial Fund = \$14,000
- Fund a Bench = \$8,800
- Altar Guild = \$3,240

TOTAL = \$605,362

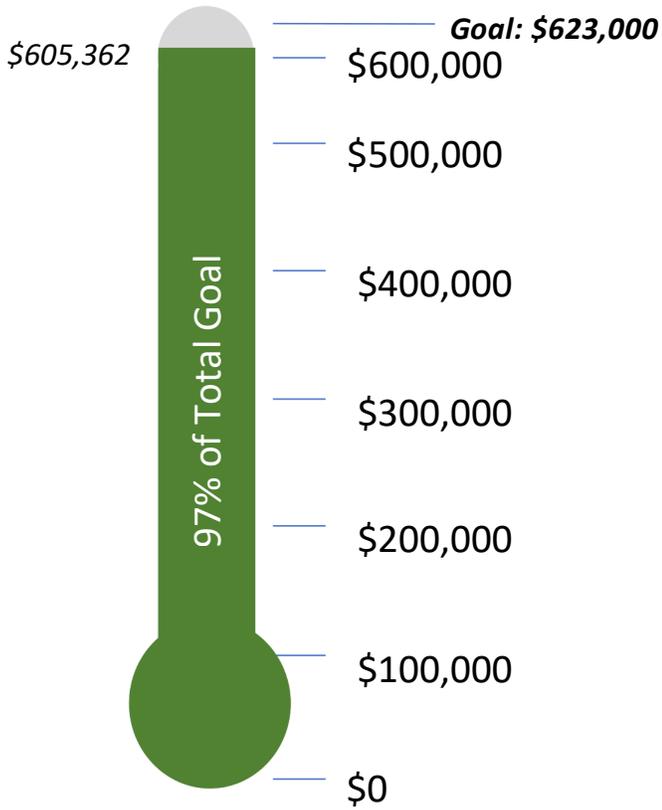
Gap = \$18,162

* Includes Anne Steinbrecher Memorial Fund, Mike Hosler Memorial Fund, and Direct Contributions to Finance Costs

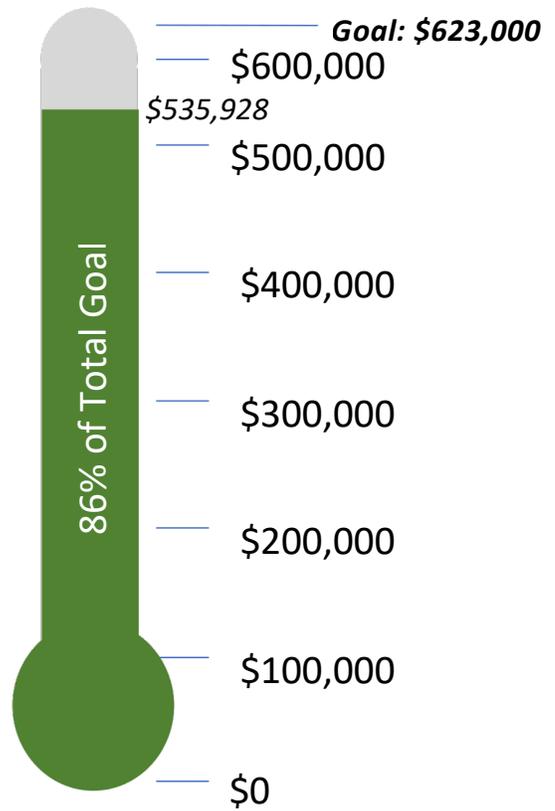


Peace Pavilion Capital Campaign Plus Status as of November 25, 2025

Total Commitment Status



Total Giving Status





Overview of the Phases of Transition

Key People Engaging

Phase 1: Saying Farewell

Council/President, Synod, Celebration and Worship Teams

- Pastor announces resignation or retirement
- Bishop meets with Congregation Council
- Plan for transitional leadership
- Conclusion of Pastor's ministry

Phase 2: Congregational Health & Identity

Transition Team, Synod, Council

- Discern Congregational Health, Sustainability, and Vitality
- Discern Mission & Vision: "Who are we - and what is God calling us to?"
- Identify staffing needed to engage the Mission & Vision

Phase 3: Entering the Call Process

Call Committee, Synod, Council

- Form Call Committee (and pass along findings from Phase 2)
- Assistant to the Bishop meets with Congregation Council and Call Committee
- Preparation of Ministry Site Profile
- Interview preparation
- Receive & Interview candidates

Phase 4: Primary Candidate

Pastor Candidate, Call Committee, Synod, Council

- Call Committee recommends candidate to the Congregation Council
- Congregation Council engages with recommended candidate & negotiates compensation
- Meet & Greet for candidate and congregation
- Congregation meeting with call vote

Phase 5: Welcoming & Celebrating

- Determine timeline for rostered minister's move and start date
- Facilitate rostered minister's move
- Schedule installation service with Conference Dean



December 1, 2025

Dear Members of Prince of Peace,

You are invited to our congregational budget meeting scheduled for

**Sunday, December 14th following the single worship service and
Christmas program in the Sanctuary (approximate start: 11:15 AM)**

During the meeting, we will

- Review our 2025 financial performance.
- Discuss the 2026 operating budget.
- Present the 2026 budget for approval.
- Update the Congregation on the Pastoral Transition Process
- Provide an update on the Peace Pavilion

A summary of the 2025 operating budget will be available for review on our website (www.princeofpeacewestlake.org) under the Members Only tab by Tuesday, December 2nd. Please contact the church office if you require a hard copy or want one emailed to you.

On behalf of the Church Council, I would like to thank everyone for your continued support of Prince of Peace. We are in a good financial shape and have wonderful opportunities to continue to share the Good News and expand our mission. We look forward to 2026 and beyond with exciting opportunities to Grow in Faith, Serve with Love, and Live in Peace.

We are continuing the tradition of showing appreciation for the outstanding work our Pastor and staff has done through the "Christmas Purse". The Purse is an opportunity for you to make a special financial contribution towards a Christmas gift. You can designate that your gift goes to a specific staff person (or persons) or it will go into a general pool to be shared by Pastor and the entire staff. Please write Christmas Purse in the memo line of any donation.

Have blessed Advent, as we approach the celebration of Christmas,

Mark P. Givens
Council President
Email: mpgivens@ameritech.net

Grow in Faith, Serve with Love, Live in Peace



Year End Giving

Smart Ways to Give Before Year-End

As we approach the end of the calendar year, you can take advantage of several tax-smart giving options. Your support helps us provide the ministries here at Prince of Peace.

1. Give from Your IRA (Qualified Charitable Distribution)

If you are 70½ or older, you can make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) directly from your IRA to Prince of Peace. A QCD counts toward your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). You pay no income tax on the amount transferred. You can give up to \$108,000 annually. Ask your IRA administrator to make the distribution directly to Prince of Peace and not directly to you.

2. Recommend a Grant from Your Donor-Advised Fund (DAF)

If you have a DAF through your financial institution or community foundation, you can recommend a grant to Prince of Peace. It's an easy, flexible way to support POP. You can make one-time or recurring gifts from your DAF. You may also name Prince of Peace as a beneficiary of your DAF to continue your legacy. Ask your fund advisor to direct your gift to Prince of Peace.

3. Gifts of Appreciated Stock

A gift of appreciated securities, such as stocks, bonds, or mutual funds, can provide meaningful support for POP's mission while offering significant tax benefits. You can avoid capital gains taxes on appreciated assets. You can deduct the fair market value of your gift. Prince of Peace receives the full value of your contribution. To make a gift of stock or securities or if you have any questions, contact Charlie Koch, Treasurer by email treasprinceofpeacewestlake@gmail.com or phone 440.478.9235.

Please consider making a year-end contribution today and help us to keep growing in faith, serving in love and living in peace.

-The Stewardship Committee

thanks
for your
support

THIS WEEK'S FEATURE

Diane & Shawn Merhaut



Diane was born in Meadville, Pennsylvania. She grew up in Linesville, Pennsylvania which is a small town on the PA/Ohio border. It is on the shores of Pymatuning Lake and her home was right down the street from the Spillway. The Spillway is a PA attraction where over 300,000 visitors stop each year to see "the ducks walk on the fish (Carp). She also spent much of her teenage years hanging out at Conneaut Lake Park which was 7 miles away. Linesville is also home to the "world's largest lighted tractor parade" which happens on the 2nd Saturday of December. After high school, Diane went to Slippery Rock University. She graduated with a degree in Elementary Education and Library Science. She received a Masters in Education from Ashland University.

Shawn was born in Cleveland, OH. He grew up in Brooklyn, Ohio but moved to Hinckley, OH when he was in 9th grade. He went from walking a block to his high school to a 45 minute bus ride. Shawn graduated from Highland High School and went to Baldwin Wallace University where he received a Bachelor of Science in Biology. He went on to Case Western Reserve University to receive a Masters Degree in Nursing as an Acute Care Nurse Practitioner. Diane had an older brother Paul who passed away in 2022. She has two sisters, Gayle and Sally. Shawn has three sisters – Tisha, Chris and Katy -- and one brother, Paul. They met ...in a bar... in Westlake called Jimbo's (formerly James Dominic's and where Sangria is now located) almost 20 years ago on St. Patrick's Day. They dated for 5 years and got married on July 16, 2011. Pastor Bishop married them in Diane's best friend's back yard.

Shawn worked clinically in nursing/nurse practitioner for 20+ years, specializing in cardiology/heart failure. Working in the medical device industry for the last 8 years, he is currently affiliated with GE Health Care.

Diane began her career as a Media Specialist in Ashtabula County. She had 3 Elementary Schools to travel to. She finished her career as a Media Specialist for the Cleveland Metro Schools at Scranton School.

Diane and Shawn have 3 children that include Son Brian and wife Juliet residing in Rocky River. They have 2 children, Sloane 3 years old and Colin 4 months old. Their daughter Laura and 8 year old granddaughter Kate live in Westlake. Daughter Emily and husband Jonathan live in Rocky River. They have 2 daughters, Charlotte age 3 and Natalie 4 months old. They have a 5-year-old Australian Labradoodle named Cooper who runs the house.

Diane was raised Catholic and Shawn was raised Lutheran (Good Shepherd in Brooklyn, OH). As they began planning on being married, they began "shopping" for a church. Diane was teaching at Scranton School in Cleveland when a former colleague, Myrta Holden, told her about POP. Diane had also noticed all the gifts being delivered to the children of Scranton School at Christmastime through the mitten tree. She was curious to learn more about this church, so she and Shawn came to POP. The rest is history. They joined in 2010!

Shawn and Diane have been very active in many ministries here at Prince of Peace. Shawn had served on the Church Council for 6 years and the "Call" Committee when searching for a new pastor. He chaired the Social Ministry committee for several years. He currently schedules most worship volunteers for the Traditional Services. Diane is presently on Church Council and enjoys Sisters in Spirit get-togethers. They are both involved in several activities including leading the Mitten Tree, Carlson Boots Collection, Cooking at the Men's Shelter, Sleep in Heavenly Peace and God's Work. Our Hands. They are also active in Tables for Eight.

Diane is a Co-President of The Herb Guild Garden Club, loves reading and talking about books, enjoys going to Broadway Series at Playhouse Square and gardening (or telling Shawn where to plant things). Shawn enjoys reading (but can't keep up with Diane), golfing, working outdoors, and live music. Both enjoy hanging out and spending time with their 5 grandchildren and their dog Cooper. Some things people may not know about them, Diane (even though most won't believe this)... She is shy. She calls herself an introvert/extrovert. And her favorite place to be is home! Shawn will sing and hum all the time... not well but he does it. And often doesn't even realize he is doing it.

This past summer, they were looking forward to a beach vacation with the family. But then both their daughter and daughter-in-law found out they were pregnant. So, sometime in the future they would love to reschedule that trip. Shawn says life is short! Being blessed with health via a 2nd kidney transplant, they realize they need to enjoy life and start to travel more. Europe (any countries but especially Italy and Ireland) are high on the priority list.

The Merhaut's have focused on reaching out to many underserved communities here at Prince of Peace. Their Faith is a shining example of the words we often hear "As we are blessed, let us be a blessing to others." Please take time to meet them at the Traditional Services.

By Tom Robinholt : Profile Reporter

PASTOR
CHARLIE'S
BLOG



Luke 3:1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, 2 during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. 3 He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, 4 as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord;

make his paths straight.

5 Every valley shall be filled,

and every mountain and hill shall be made low,

and the crooked shall be made straight,

and the rough ways made smooth,

6 and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

Prepare the way! Make the path a right of way for Christ to enter in, for He is the one who saves us. He is the one who gives us life. He is the one we cannot live without.

Hear again how the Gospel lesson begins (this is the Message translation)

In the fifteenth year of the rule of Caesar Tiberius—it was while Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea; Herod, ruler of Galilee; his brother Philip, ruler of Iturea and Trachonitis; Lysanias, ruler of Abilene; during the Chief-Priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas—John, Zachariah’s son, out in the desert at the time, received a message from God. He went all through the country around the Jordan River preaching a baptism of life-change leading to forgiveness of sins, as described in the words of Isaiah the prophet:

Thunder in the desert!

“Prepare God’s arrival!

Make the road smooth and straight!

Every ditch will be filled in,

Every bump smoothed out,

The detours straightened out,

All the ruts paved over.

Everyone will be there to see

The parade of God’s salvation.

John prepares the way for one who comes to save us, who is NOT the Roman Emperor, the Governor of Judea, the Ruler of Galilee, or the Chief Priests. The Word of God comes to John, to prepare for the one who will save us.

So we often turn to ourselves. We can trust ourselves, can’t we? We can do it by ourselves. We are justified before God by our good lives. We are pretty good people because we obey the commandments. We aren’t as bad as those sinners. And, if we find we are coming up short in some of these areas, we might reflect on our misdeeds only to discover ways that we can stop doing the bad things and start doing good things. The problem with this type of repentance is that it doesn’t seek outside help. The mind still thinks, “I can do it by myself.” It hasn’t changed.

I think that reason that Jesus had so much trouble with the scribes and Pharisees was because they were doing pretty well by themselves. They were living good, moral, obedient lives before God and neighbor. In contrast, the sinners and tax collectors were quite aware that they didn’t measure up to God’s or society’s standards. They knew that they couldn’t do it by themselves. They needed help. The call is to repent, and repentance is declaring to self and God, “I can’t.”

The other side of confessing “I can’t” is “God can.” God realized we can’t. That is why God sent Jesus. The reason for the season!

For the good news is that TODAY, salvation is yours. Today, hope is yours. Today, you are a forgiven child of God. Prepare for the coming of the Christ child into your life again, by putting aside the things that get away of God’s promise of love, life, peace and hope.

Let us Pray: Come, Lord Jesus. Enter into our world and guide us. Help us to let go of trying to do it on our own. I cannot. You can! Amen



Sunday, December 7th, 2025

Prayer Request - Long Term

(All prayer requests made after Thursday at Noon will be posted the following week)

Pam Rotella
Al Tielke
Angela Missig (Daughter of Gloria Starr)
Laura K (Friend of Deb Gibbons)
Bill Sweeny (Friend of Kathy McCollum)
Paula Collister (Sister-in-law of Liz Grider)
Daniel Reisner (Friend of James and Lisa Arrigo)
Jan and Larry (Friends of Dan and Barb Fronczak)
Monica Doptis (Grandchild of Dan and Barb Fronczak)
Liz Jones (Daughter of Dan and Barb Fronczak)
Robert Sieving (Brother of Chuck Sieving)
Lisa Piscoła (Friend of Jann Daniels)
Emily Saunders

Recent prayer requests received within the past 3 weeks:

November 23

Maria Marsh (Friend of Doug & Carol Leavens)
Lorraine Lutton

November 30

Craig Juhn
George-Ryan Grimes (Son-in-law of Mike and Sherry Weber)

December 7

Emily Saunders
Jenn Pitts (Daughter of Judy Kazak)

Happy Birthday

Attendance at Prince of Peace

12/01 Jackson Pogachar	12/11 Jann Daniels
12/01 Taylor Reisner	12/13 Ian Comnick
12/01 Ruth Ann Whitbeck	12/13 Ruth Mortensen
12/02 Charlie Koch	12/16 Joe Rowe
12/02 Dolph Rolik	12/18 Bud Zanders
12/05 Landon Beard	12/18 Justice Strieter
12/06 Franklin Kraps	12/18 Matthew Roman
12/07 Craig Juhn	12/20 Allison Peluso
12/08 Brian Gilbert	12/21 Diane Schlegel
12/08 Christie Wiedt	12/21 Matthew Wenham
12/09 Marge Jaracz	12/23 Jim Dickey IV
12/10 Laurel Covell	12/24 Uwe Susemihl
12/10 Lora Robinholt	12/26 Owen Marple
12/10 Monica Dragony	12/29 Roger Hauser
	12/31 Amy Hrouda
	12/31 Russ Bauknecht

<u>Date</u>	<u>Online</u>	<u>In Person</u>	<u>Total</u>
11/30/2025	63	163	226
11/23/2025	33	203	236
11/16/2025	52	191	243
11/09/2025	43	161	204

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- 12/11 John & Judy Cuciak
- 12/15 Kirk & Kate Hartung
- 12/17 Dave & Carol Novotny
- 12/19 Diane & Walter Diekroger
- 12/28 Lowell & Jane Dillon
- 12/29 Marge & Jim Jaracz
- 12/30 Robert & Mary Mayer

Second Harvest



The requested items for December are:
Cereal, Applesauce & Canned Soups

Giving Data

<u>Operating Giving Report</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>AVG/Week</u>
Total Giving as of Oct. 31st, 2025:	\$410,090	\$9,536
% of Annual 2025 Budget Received to Date:	82%	
Remaining Giving to meet 2025 budget	\$88,910	\$9,878
We need to average \$45,000 per month to reach budget!		
Please give abundantly & Cheerfully!		
Total Expenses Incurred through 10/31/25:	\$428,575	\$9,966



Follow Us!

Prince of Peace Staff

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Hailey Desmond, Marketing/Communications
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Ian Faleer, Contemporary Music Director
& Chancel Choir Director
ifaleer@gmail.com

Adrienne Patenaude, Office Administrator
princeofpeacewestlake@gmail.com

Hilary Lucas, Youth Director
poplutheranyouth@gmail.com



Ruth Williams, Organist
mrsruthwilliams@yahoo.com

Mark Givens, Church Council President
mpgivens@ameritech.net

Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 9-3

28455 Center Ridge Rd., Westlake, Ohio 44145
440/871-5565 • www.princeofpeacewestlake.org

Sunday Worship Services

9:00 am & 11:00 am in person.

Livestream

Christian Education - Sundays 10-10:50 am

Adult supervised child care for children 5 and under is offered for both services and during

the Christian Education hour between services.