

History Timeline - Peace Lutheran Church, Hutchinson, MN

- 1865** Friedens (Peace) Lutheran Church was founded by Rev. Henry Braun.
- 1891** Pastor Braun laid the first cornerstone for Friedens (Peace) Lutheran Church on Franklin St. and 4th Avenue
- 1893** Pastor Frederick Koehler was ordained, becoming the first resident pastor of Friedens congregation (1893-1899)
- 1896** The congregation bought a house on the corner of Glen St and 4th Ave South for a parsonage
- 1898** The Ladies Aid was organized, the earliest group within the congregation.
- 1899** Pastor G. E. Fritzke was installed in February (1899-1920). The Young Ladies Society was organized. The badly needed school was built and necessary improvements were made to the parsonage.
- 1902** As a result of continued growth, the congregation decided to add a cross section to the church building.
- 1920** Friedens congregation called Pastor Alfred Bauer of Cedar Mills to serve as a vacancy pastor, which he did until January 1921.
- 1921** Pastor W. J. Schulze assumed pastoral duties (1921 - 1945).
- 1925** The Dorcas Club was organized.
- 1926** The ground breaking for the new church building was on July 27.
- 1927** The new church building was dedicated on October 23. The architect was August Gauguer of St. Paul, and the twelve painted glass windows show events in the life of Christ. German services and classes were discontinued and all religious instruction has been conducted in English since that time.
- 1928** A new 3-manual electrified pipe organ was installed in the new church.
- 1938** Young People's League was started, replacing the Young Ladies Society which disbanded that year.
- 1941** As a special project for the 50th anniversary of the congregation, the interior of the church was decorated with stenciling by artist, C.A. Christiansen of Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- 1945** Pastor Arthur Koehler was installed (1945 - 1952).
- 1950** Peace congregation voted to join the Missouri Synod after 59 years of membership in the Wisconsin Synod.
- 1952** Pastor Martin Kirsch was installed.
- 1953** Forty-five families were granted a peaceful dismissal in order to organize Grace Lutheran congregation.
- 1954** The Christian Education Building was dedicated on April 4th.
- 1955** Deaconess Julie Hennig was installed on February 13th and served one year.
- 1956** Deaconess Gloria Jungemann was installed and served until 1958. Pastor Donald Buelow was installed as Assistant Pastor on July 8.
- 1957** Twenty families were granted peaceful dismissal in order to establish daughter congregation, Our Savior's Lutheran Church.
- 1959** Pastor Donald Buelow was installed as Senior Pastor and his father, the Rev. Julius Buelow, as Assistant Pastor. Mr. Jesse Bye was called to serve as Director of Education and Music, and later retained as Senior Organist.
- 1963** Mr. Gerald Rabe was called as Director of Education and continued to serve until November of 1965.
- 1964** Pastor Richard H. Raedeke was installed as Senior Pastor.
- 1965** Seminarian Henry Berg was commissioned as Vicar on September 1. Pastor Julius Buelow retired from the full time ministry on September 1, but continued to serve the congregation as Visitation Pastor until his death on March 21, 1966. The Rev. Walter D. Marth was installed as Assistant Pastor on August 29, and later was named Associate Pastor.
- 1966** The Rev. Otto Kuehl was engaged by the congregation as Visitation Pastor. On September 18, the congregation observed it's 75th anniversary.
- 1973** Miss Cynthia Schlegelmilch was installed as Director of Christian Education. On January 14th, the Ladies Aid celebrated it's 75th anniversary.
- 1974** The Glen Street parsonage was moved to the corner lot in November. Rev. James Marshall was installed on June 30.
- 1975** Dorcas Club celebrated its 50th anniversary on January 12. Paul Berg became our new Minister of Education on March 15th.
- 1976** A new sound system was installed in the church proper, a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Ed Hoerner.
- 1977** Rev. Otto Kuehl celebrated his 50th year in the ministry in August and retired as Visitation Pastor at that time. Rev. Herman Buenting, Litchfield, became our new Visitation Pastor on December 1st.
- 1978** Rev. James Lauer was installed as Executive Pastor on July 2. Norbert Malenke was installed as Minister of Music on September 17. Rev. Martin W. Lieske joined the staff as consulting pastor.
- 1979** In January, approval was given to the trustees to carpet the church and remodel the basement, as well as the education hallways. The basement was air conditioned and a new ventilation system installed in the education building.

- 1980** The voters accepted the challenge to participate in the \$40 million Synod mission project during the first half of 1981.
- 1981** The Franklin Street parsonage was sold for \$4,200. The choir loft was remodeled. On August 6, 1981, bids were opened for the construction of the Peace Center, offices, ramp ways, and library.
- 1982** Pastor Gary Galchutt was installed as Associate Pastor on June 6th in the service immediately before the dedication of the new building. The new Lutheran Worship hymnal was introduced. Melva Plath was hired as part time secretary and later became full time.
- 1983** James Streufert was hired as Director of Music. A computer was purchased for the office. Little Lambs Christian Preschool was organized with Debbie Koglin as the teacher.
- 1984** A commitment was initiated to give 10% of the unified budget to missions.
- 1985** Pastor Marth accepted the call to serve again at Peace. Paul Berg accepted a call to serve as "Dean of the Christian Learning Center in New Hope" in July. The Williams Sound Corp. Hearing System was installed for the hard-of-hearing. Pastor R.W. Koepp began work as Visitation Pastor.
- 1986** Pastor David Anderson accepted the call to Peace and started here October 1st. Marlys Haag was hired full time as Director of Youth. The church exterior was tuck pointed. A trained group was established to tape services for cable TV.
- 1987** Pamela Doebert was hired to join the Peace staff as Director of Music. The church was insulated, the roof resingled and a new sound system was installed.
- 1988** The Peace Church library was completely redone by Ruth Hagen and Verna Henke.
- 1989** Paul Berg accepted our call to return as Minister of Education. The Peace Center kitchen was completely furnished and air conditioning was installed in the Peace Center.
- 1990** Paul Otte accepted the call to be Minister of Music. A large replica of the first Friedens Church was built by Gary Wurdell and placed in the church to begin the Centennial activities. A security system was installed.
- 1991** Centennial celebration. The celebration continued throughout the year, with special reunion for those who were confirmed and/or married at Peace. Sunday School enrollment is the highest it has been in over 20 years. The church pews were refinished by Chet Maki, new hymnal racks were made, and the light fixtures in the church were rewired. The property at 345 Glen Street was purchased for \$35,000 for the purpose of future development.
- 1992** Worship services were begun on Saturday evenings. Dr. Huebert donated a 100' x 325' parcel to the cemetery land.
- 1993** A special voters' meeting approved the planning and implementation of Prince of Peace Senior Living and the establishment of a nonprofit corporation. An Organ Fund was established and many fund raisers were held.
- 1994** Construction of Prince of Peace began and Paul Berg was named facility manager. It was decided to purchase a 3-manual tracker action organ from J. W. Walker & Sons, Organbuilders, of London, England for a total cost of \$379,204. Greg Ewing was hired as our new Youth Director in December. Parish Services was begun with Marlys Palmer as director.
- 1995** The first residents moved into Prince of Peace on April 1st. Pastor Gerhard H. Bode accepted the call to Peace and was installed June 11th. Pastor Marth retired July 2nd after serving 1965-1977 and from 1985-1995 at Peace. It was decided at a voters' meeting to call a seminary graduate from St. Louis seminary. Jonathan C. Rathjen was ordained and installed at Peace on August 27th. The Parish Nurse program was established, headed by Shirley Wurdell.
- 1996** A pictorial directory containing photographs of over 600 families was published. A lot at the corner of Franklin and 3rd Avenue SW was purchased.
- 1997** The new J. W. Walker pipe organ was installed with dedication on March 16th.
- 1998** Pastor Walter D. Marth returned to Peace as Visitation Pastor. On April 2nd the Ladies Aid at Peace celebrated its 100th year of service to the Lord. The group decided that this would be the final year as an organization. The bell tower was repaired and refurbished.
- 1999** Vision Peace 2000 and Beyond was approved by the congregation. Committees in the areas of Facilities, Focus Ministries, Parish Structure, and Finance were established. Greg Ewing left the staff for a position at Hutchinson High School. Pastor Layton Lemke joined the staff as Visitation Pastor.

- 2000** Ted Stroming joined the staff as Minister of Youth and Family. Sandra Hall joined the staff as Director of Children's Education. Jerry Haag joined the staff as Property Manager. The parish purchased a home on Franklin Street as part of the long range plan for mission and ministry development. The "Word of Life" property at 346 Franklin was purchased with the lot being cleared for a new parking lot.
- 2001** In the spring of the year, our stained glass windows were refurbished, cleaned, and protected with new exterior glass. Pastor Eric Goodwin accepted the call to Peace to serve as Associate Pastor. Purchased the property at 336 Franklin with the house being moved to the NE corner of Franklin and 5th. Tuck pointing of the church began in spring of 2001.
- 2003** Peace acquired the former Hantge Funeral Chapel on 400 Glen Street and changed the name to Peace Place Activity and Outreach Center. Little Lambs Christian Preschool celebrated their 20th year of ministry to children and families. The Guardian Angel Program was established as part of the confirmation program.
- 2004** A vision statement was adopted, "Touching lives of others with the love and saving knowledge of Jesus."
- 2005** Volunteers from the congregation cooked and served at the Country Diner during the county fair as an opportunity to serve the community and support missions. Michael Fuchs was hired to do a feasibility study regarding the proposed remodeling & construction program.
- 2006** Alan Klas, a consultant for "Mission Growth Ministry" was hired to review and make recommendations regarding the ministry structure and constitution. The Worship Committee produced a book of Advent Devotions written by members of the congregation.
- 2007** The new constitution was presented to the congregation for approval. Elections were held for the new "Mission and Ministry Council" which was established under the new constitution.
- 2008** A capital campaign "Let Us Arise and Build" was launched for the purpose of raising funds for the projected remodeling and building needs. The congregation purchased the 326 Franklin Street property. With the purchase of this property the congregation accomplished its plan to acquire the six lots on the 300 block of SW Franklin for parking and future development. The congregation approved a remodeling/building project not to exceed \$4.1 million with construction to begin in June. Pastor Goodwin accepted a call to St. Paul Lutheran in Hilton, NY. Little Lambs Christian preschool was recognized for 25 years of ministry to the community and congregation. Sunday Night Live, an alternative worship, was added providing the 5th opportunity to worship during the weekend.
- 2009** Work continued on the remodeling/building project so that it opened in time for fall Sunday School. A two day celebration and dedication of the new building was held on September 19 & 20. Vicar Ben Vogel joined the church staff in August and Sandy Kephart accepted the position of Director of Children's Ministry.
- 2010** Pastor John Pasche accepted the call to serve as Associate Pastor focused on outreach and new member ministry. Vicar Ben Vogel returned to the seminary for his last year. The Matthew 14:16 ministry was begun, which provides a nutritious meal once a month to those in need.
- 2011** Chad Kirchoff was installed as a deacon. An all German Easter service was held on April 16th. Pastor Chris Bode delivered the message and Pastor Bode served as liturgist, Paul Otte as organist, and Lawrence Biermann as song leader. Chad Kirchoff was installed as a deacon. Construction was completed on the Little Lambs Childhood Center (LLCC) with dedication September 10 and 11. The child care part of Vision Peace 2000 had been fulfilled and the LLCC ministry to children and families was officially launched. Sandy Kephart accepted the position to serve as Director of Children's Ministries and Little Lambs Christian Center. A new website and facebook page were launched in the fall.
- 2012** Sandy Kephart took her clown ministry to the "Bless India Orphanage" for another time. Holly Niska was hired as director at Little Lambs Christian Center. Sandy Kephart was hired as full time elementary youth director. The vision statement for Peace is "Touching Lives with the Love and Saving Grace of Jesus". LLCC hosted the first summer childcare program and plans to continue providing this ministry. Peace member, Adam Koglin, was ordained at Peace on June 24th. A Life Stage Ministries team was established.
- 2013** Lonnie Kohls accepted the Peace Cemetery superintendent position as Arnold Nass stepped down effective January 1, 2013. LLCC playground equipment was installed. Ted Stroming, Youth and Family Minister, resigned and Erika Durham was hired during the summer as Youth Director for Grades 6 -12. Prince of Peace Retirement Living purchased the 3 lots east of their facility from Peace. With the passing of Elaine Black, Circle of Care was discontinued at the end of the year. Circle of Care was organized in 1983 by Pastor Galchutt and Elaine Black.

- 2014** Holly Niska resigned as Director of LLCC and Laura Wendland was hired. The congregation adopted four Core Values which help support and implement the Vision Statement. These Core Values serve as a guide as to what activities and/or ministry events the congregation will invest the gifts, talents and resources God has given the congregation. The four Core Values are: Authentic Relationships, Empowering Growth, Energized Serving, and Creative Worship. Chad Kirchoff was ordained as a Specific Ministry Pastor (S.M.P.) on July 20th and worked on the creation of a ReDO Fitness Center. Paul Otte, Minister of Music, retired from his many years of service to the Lord, the last 25 at Peace, and was celebrated on Sunday, September 7th. Dr. Joan DeVee Dixon was hired as Director of Music Ministry in October.
- 2015** Dorcas: Women in Mission celebrated its 90th Anniversary on January 25th with a "Happy Birthday Lunch" for the congregation. Lisa Kirchoff was hired as Coordinator of Early Childhood Ministries. An ad hoc committee was formed to study AV updates for the sanctuary. A recommendation was approved in November for a new Audio-Video system to be purchased and installed as soon as funds are available in 2016. Jerry Haag, Director of Facilities, retired on December 31st.
- 2016** Peace's 125th anniversary was celebrated. The theme was "Celebrating 125 Years Built on the Rock". Pastor Adam Koglin, Pastor Chad Kirchoff and Pastor Layton Lemke preached at services the beginning of the year. Doves for all people baptized at Peace, as well as current members, were made and displayed in the sanctuary. In August a Living History Tour was held at Peace Cemetery: Wallace "Wally" Kurth (portrayed by Jim Kurth), Rev. Richard H. Raedeke (portrayed by George Quast), Clara Laurene "Tot" Marth (portrayed by Kathy Hanneman), George A. Boller (portrayed by Franklin Boller), Milburn Henke (portrayed by Jake Henke). A celebration weekend was held September 17 and 18 with dinners and polka music. Pastor Jeff Miller, District President Dean Nadasdy, and former Pastor at Peace, Dean Marth, were guest speakers. Pastor Jonathan Rathjen, Norb Malenke and other former staff members at Peace participated. Nearly 70 singers of all ages participated in the 125th anniversary choir, plus Hosanna Handbells and brass. Laura Wendland resigned as Little Lambs Christian Center Director, and Rhonda Rokala, former Assistant Director, was hired as the new director. Several repairs were made during 2016 – new roof on the parsonage, new furnace for Peace Place, new carpet in the chancel area in the sanctuary, new carpet in altar area and stage edging in the Peace Center, repaired roof on the Peace Center.
- 2017** This year, Peace celebrated the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. In April, a dramatic presentation on the wife of Martin Luther was presented by Pati Katchel titled, "Katie Did It All!" A special Reformation service was held on October 29 featuring a mass choir. Eleven members of Peace celebrated the Reformation in Wittenberg, Germany ON REFORMATION DAY as part of a European tour led by Paul and Barb Otte. New pew cushions were purchased and installed in memory of Eldor and Leona Kohls and Kenneth Petersen. Jerry Janicke, custodian part-time custodian since 2008, passed away, as well as his faithful volunteer helper, Larrie Schulz. Each month, a special presentation was made in our worship services focusing on the various ministries of our church. Pastor Bode and Pastor Pasche switched roles with Pastor Pasche becoming Senior Pastor. Our Parish Health Committee continues to coordinate the Red Cross Bloodmobile on the 2nd Tuesday. A new P/A System was installed in the sanctuary. Among other things, it enables Peace to offer Live Streaming of our worship services. Our youth groups reached out with summer mission trips to Alaska, Wisconsin, and Idaho. Pastor Pasche was married in June to Nancy Rickert. The congregation joined them in their celebration. In August, the congregation celebrated Pastor Bode's 50th Anniversary of his ordination.
- 2018** This year, members are being encouraged to read through the entire Bible with a special two-year plan which Peace made available. Peace's youth groups made mission trips to Minneapolis, Duluth, Los Angeles, Haiti, and Alaska. A new telephone system was installed at the church enabling direct dialing of staff members and departments. Dr. Phil Johnson from our Minnesota South District Office began a process called "Mission Formation" to help us become a church more actively pursuing mission in our community. Peace continues its 14-year ministry to children in India under the direction of our Director of Children's Ministry, Sandy Kephart. She also made a mission trip to Wales, U.K. Rebecca Stark was hired in May as a part time church secretary. In October, renowned Dr. Paul Maier gave a seminar at Peace on "Christianity and World Religions". On August 5, a farewell event was held for Peace's Youth Director, Erika Durham who has served Peace faithfully for five years. Leslie Korngiebel was hired to be a Children's Music Director at Peace. Plans were announced to add a second preschool daycare room to the Little Lambs Christian Center. In order to do this, preschool education ½ day programs will no longer be offered in the fall of 2019. Changes in the needs of the community and the opportunity to have children in a Christian environment more hours each day prompted the decision.

2019 Melva Plath retired as church secretary after 38 years of outstanding service to Peace and to the Lord. Our youth groups made several Mission Trips: 6th Grade to Lutheran Island Camp, Middle School to Kenosha, WI, and High School to the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis. Peace started a Mission Formation Consultation Process with Dr. Phil Johnson from our District Office to better understand God's mission for His church and how we fit into that mission. The current half-day preschool program will end in May 2019, with the transition to two preschool daycare classes divided by age groups and kindergarten readiness embedded in the daycare classroom for older preschoolers starting in September 2019. Debbie Koglin was honored in January for 36 years of service as our Little Lamb's Preschool Teacher. Becky Pucket was hired as a part time youth leader. Merline Duering, Executive Director of Prince of Peace Retirement Living announced the plan to add 11 more apartments, garage stalls, and commons areas. Sandy Kephart made another mission trip to Wales in October. Also in October, Peace celebrated with thanks and praise the retirement of Pastor Bode. Stacy Miller was hired part-time to manage Preschool age Sunday School. Lisa Kirchoff was hired as the Communications Director. Members enjoyed a group tour to Branson in November. Little Lambs Christian Center has been named Hutchinson Leader Readers' Choice Award Winner for the THIRD year in a row! Congratulations for making LLCC a wonderful mission for Peace Lutheran.

2020 A new Vision statement was adopted: "We are a loving community called by God's grace, that all know the Peace of God". Peace mourned the loss of Paul Berg who passed away on February 3 after a short illness. He served PLC faithfully for a total of 41 years as a DCE and Minister of Operations. Unprecedented measures were taken as the Covid-19 pandemic struck. In March, all services and activities at the church were suspended. Worship services and education programs were provided online. In person worship resumed in June with services held in the parking lot with worshipers in their cars listening on their car radio. In July worship resumed inside the church. In August, Shannon Campbell was hired as a full-time Youth Director (grades 6-12). In September, the Prince of Peace Retirement Living expansion opened new apartments, garages and community rooms. A new Peace Church picture directory was completed and issued in October. In November, Heather Pagel took over as director of Little Lambs Christian Center.

2021