

**Annual Meeting of Peace United Church of Christ  
February 6, 2025**

**Agenda**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Opening Prayer**
- 3. Approval of Minutes from 2024 Meeting**
- 4. Pastor's Report**
- 5. President's Report**
- 6. Secretary's Report**
- 7. Committee Reports**
  - Peacemakers**
  - Buildings and Grounds**
  - Christian Ed**
  - Mission**
  - Fall Festival**
  - Endowment Fund**
  - Finance**
- 8. Old Business**
  - A. Discussion of 2024 Financial Report**
- 9. New Business**
  - A. 2025 Budget**
  - B. New Officers Announced**
  - C. Recognition of Out-Going Council Members**
- 10. Concerns of Peace Church**
- 11. Adjournment**

## **Peace UCC Annual Meeting, January 28, 2024**

The meeting was called to order by Jay Moser, Council President, at 9:40 am with an opening prayer by Pastor Paula Anderson. There was a motion to approve the 2022 Annual Meeting minutes, seconded and approved.

The Annual Report was distributed to the members.

There were no additional comments from the Pastor's Report, President's Report, Peacemaker's Report.

**Buildings & Grounds** - Gary Kuehl was complimented on snow removal, helping with elevator repairs and his help over the year. Gary stated that the most important repair ahead is the tuck pointing needed on the South wall (by the alley). There is also a slight leak by the bell tower.

**Stephen's Ministry** - members are encouraged to become part of this ministry (currently 14 active).

**Christian Ed** - Jane Metcalf stated that a vibrant church brings more kids and hopes to increase youth attendance.

**Missions** - There was a major drive for the Clayton County food shelf and anticipate another one in 2024. Bruce Landis thanked Missions for supporting UCC. Diane Findley gave an update on the Christmas dinner as there was no written report. \$1412 was raised and donated to elevator repair.

**Worship** - Lucy Sharp thanked everyone for supporting her over the past 3 years.

**Memorial** - Many repairs and purchases have been funded by Memorial money. A request was made to provide a report on where funds go and what is needed.

**Fall Festival** - A fun and successful event led by an outstanding committee. Plans are already underway for next year.

The Endowment, Financial and Budget reports were reviewed. Noted that a correction to Buildings & Grounds for the full year payment of real estate taxes.

Other comments included the need to contribute to UCC support programs; to determine how much to allocate early in the year; to raise additional money for building and grounds repairs. Suggestion that Mission Committee give a presentation on the UCC committees that we support. Bruce Landis noted that corrections need to be made to taxes and insurance which affects end of year budget totals. Pastor Paula "donated" her travel expenses and her health insurance is covered by social security and UCC. There was no approval of the budget.

Jay thanked the Council members: Mike Anderson, Jane Metcalf, Marlis Huinker, Elaine Martin-Knoke and Lucy Sharp for their service. Elaine and Lucy are going off this year and new members are Steve McCorkindale and Theresa Freitag. There was a motion to accept the new members, seconded and approved.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m. A potluck luncheon followed.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucy Sharp

Church Council Secretary

## PASTOR PAULA'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024

*Record for 2024: planned and conducted 53 Sunday and other worship services including an outdoor worship service; planned and conducted 12 Elkader Care Center Worship services; 2 young people confirmed; receiving of 2 new members; 1 transfer out; 0 Baptisms; 0 Weddings; 10 funerals; 1 private family viewing for deceased; coordinated 1 Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service, 1 May Breakfast; assisted with Grace Café; worked with Stephen Ministers; did hospital and other visitations; coordinated secretarial duties in church office; coordinated Kid Central after school program use of church facilities; worked with Association/Conference leadership as needed*

### **A WORD, A REFLECTION, A PRAYER**

Excerpt from Luke 4:14-21:

Jesus came to Nazareth, went to the synagogue on the Sabbath and read from the scroll of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Jesus turned to those gathered in the synagogue and said, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

A reflection:

It is quite the fragile god who needs political power to preserve and enforce their will. It is quite the powerful God who partners with peasants, is born in poverty, washes feet, heals the sick, advocates for the oppressed, is unjustly killed and still changes the world.

Rev. Ben Cremer

### **A Franciscan Benediction**

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half truths and superficial relationships; so that you may live deep within your heart. May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people; so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace. May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war; so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and turn their pain into joy. And may God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you make a difference in the world; so that you can do what others claim cannot be done to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.

**AMEN**

In conclusion, at Peace UCC, there will be many opportunities and challenges in the year ahead as we live our life journeys individually and together. Perhaps this advice from a man named Paulo Coelho will encourage us in the days ahead. He writes: "Maybe the journey isn't about becoming anything. Maybe it's about unbecoming everything that isn't really you, so that you can be whom you were meant to be in the first place."

And, lastly a woman named Elaine S. Dalton writes, "If you desire to make a difference in the world, you must be different from the world."

Let us go forth and make a difference!

Blessings, Pastor Paula and the PK—Preacher's Kitty—Nov

**United Church of Christ Local Church Report  
For the Year Ending 12/31/2024**

**Membership Report:**

Membership end year (2023) - 360

Membership end year (2024 - 354

**Church Attendance - 2704**

**Average weekly attendance - 52**

**Sunday School**

Attendance - K-4th grade - Inactive

Bible Study - 4

Confirmation - 0

**Additions during the year**

1. Confirmation

2. Letter of Transfer - 4

**Baptisms - 0**

**Marriages - 0**

**Losses during the year**

1. Deaths - 10

2. Letter of Transfer - 0

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT - 2024**

Since this is my last report because I'm going off the council, I thought I would write an eight to ten page report, but vacation changed my mind. Most of the council members will have their own reports, so I'll just do highlights.

Diane and crew did a super job for the Christmas Dinner, Penni and her group did a great job for fall festival, JoAnn and her help had wonderful Grace Cafe meals, Memorial committee provided some great upgrades and. The Endowment Committee provided scholarships and other help to the community. Thank you to all of them and also everyone. I'm sure I didn't remember many other people like Sue Stott and her work. I would also like to thank Laura for figuring out how to quiet down the organ so the streaming people can hear the congregational singing. I also believe Anne is doing a great job weigh the choir and bells.

Things we accomplished over the year: We got the elevator going and licensed, the back wall of the church tuck pointed, a new deck on the parsonage, a new useable safe, upgrade to the copy machine , a new microphone to enhance the choir and much more.

I realize the memorial committee have funds, but they can't sustain providing the church with money for all the needed projects. I know the other three sides of the church need tuck pointed and the bell tower needs work. We need to address the water coming into the hall. The stair well near kitchen needs taken care of. The phone system needs upgraded, the furnace and kitchen are due for some new equipment and we don't have the funds to address all these problems. But, Paula made me aware of something even more important I hadn't thought about. If you look at the average of the congregation we probably have no more than ten to fifteen years before this church ceases to exist. We need to figure out a way to bring young members back to church and also recruit more young members. I know it's a tough task, but if we don't come up with a plan, we will be in trouble. We will be like the Methodist Church in McGregor, a community center now. On all those happy notes I'll move on.

I forgot we are still looking for a secretary.

I also want to recognize the two people who were always there to come to my rescue when one thing or another needed taken care of: Pastor Paula and Gary Kuehl were there to help figure out what had to be done. Its amazing how many big and little things come up in a year's time. Much thanks to them. I also want to make sure everyone is aware of the council members: Mike, Steve, Theresa, Jane, Marlys and along with me . Give them a big thank you.

I'm sure I've forgot a number of things but I tried. It's been a very interesting year with some interesting ups and owns.

Thank you for putting up with me and now I'll sign off and say god-bye. Jay

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS 2024**

### **PEACEMAKERS 2024**

In 2024 the Peacemakers gave two high school graduates from our church a quilt and one quilt was donated to the Shepherd of the Hills. Several members of our group donated sewn/quilted items for the fall festival.

Submitted by Lois Storbeck

### **BUILDING AND GROUNDS 2024**

The building and grounds committee is in charge of maintenance of the church building and parsonage. They to day activities are handled by Gary Kuehl. Gary has been available during the week and weekends to fix or check on everything to make our church run for many years. I would like to thank him again for his time and efforts.

Jeff Keane does the cleaning of the church and educational wing and has done a good jubilee keeping our building neat and tidy. Projects this year were few but consuming. The elevator was the most notable for everyone but now we have found a company for yearly maintenance and inspections (Sounds good right Donna?). We also found out we had to have a state license and inspection annually and have that worked out. The alley side of the church was tuck pointed last fall by Mark Keumpel of Guttenberg. This project was long past due. Al Mitchell Construction repaired the sidewalks and replaced curbing around the building to make it safer for all. He also did a lot of grade work and repaired tile lines between the church and parsonage to help with the water drainage in that area. Last fall Dave Dennler tore off the old porch on the back of parsonage and replaced it with a much better looking and safer deck.

Upcoming projects are eliminating and filling in the church basement door near the kitchen. That entryway has become unsafe and unused for many years. Continued work on the church's tuck pointing is a priority project also. I would like to thank Jay Moser, Gary Kuehl and various church members for helping with projects this year.

Mike Anderson

## 2024 STEPHEN MINISTER'S ANNUAL REPORT

The year of 2024 was a very busy and fulfilling year for our Stephen Minister's.

We continue to provide support and comfort upon request to any member of our church community.

Through visits, phone calls, cards and letters our twelve trained caregivers reach out to those in need. We continue to assist Pastor Paula once a month with communion at the Elkader Care Center and meet as a group on a monthly basis.

As always we are looking to increase our membership to meet continued requests of our church community. Paid training will be provided to anyone interested. Feel free to contact Pastor Paula, Fran Derhammer or Gwen Dettarn.

Our prayers go out to our pastor , our caregivers and receivers, our church leaders and all our church members.

May God bless us all in the New Year.

Thank you,  
Gwen Dettbarn  
Stephen Leader

### CHRISTIAN ED Annual Report Peace UCC 2024

I was privileged to work with 4 students in Bible Study during 2024, Hunter Berger, Elektra Anderson, Rylie Kuhse, and Cooper Burns. Our study started with the Old Testament books of Law. Due to an injury and my recovery in Des Moines for several weeks I was blessed with the caring help of Arlene Reimer who finished teaching the class for me. I received many cards and notes from the class while recuperating! Bible study resumed in September of 2024 with the Old Testament books of History. These students give me hope in their interest and enthusiasm in attending our tiny group.

We have no students in confirmation this year. Gather Round is not active due to only two students old enough to attend. We have no teacher for these students  
As I leave the church council, I would like to spend time and energy exploring ideas/activities that would welcome students to Peace. We have a caring congregation. If anyone is interested in joining this endeavor, please contact me. Thank you.

Submitted by Jane Metcalf

## GRACE CAFE/MISSIONS 2024

Grace Café monthly meal in 2024 served between 45-85 people. We received enough in donations to provide help with our monies to a variety of missions of Peace Church. Our committee feels very blessed to be able to do this. The basket set on our table is voluntary, if you decide to give, we only take out of the funds to pay for food costs and necessities. We purchase our food used, take-out dishes, roaster liners, paper plates and silverware. This last December we had a generous monetary gift of a \$1000 given us for which we are very thankful. This will help us buy the extras stated above in the coming year. Thank you everyone.

In 2024 we gave to the following missions:

Eli Belser family - \$225

Peace Church Member and family - \$300

Jonah's Journey - \$142

Peace Church Stove Fund -\$150 (Grace Café uses the stove more than any group)

Shepherd of the Hills Back to School - \$250

Central School Caring Closet - \$140

Central School After School Program - \$200

UCC Hurricane Relief 2024 - \$200

Shepherd of the Hills Christmas Toy Drive - \$250

Pizza for our Peace UCC Carolers - \$66

Christmas Care Baskets - \$340

Total monies donated in 2024 were - \$2063

Grace Café Committee/ workers are Elaine Knoke Martin, Gene Glawe, Sheri Glawe, Cheryl Scott, Jerry Koons, Jane Wilke, Pastor Paula, Kim Felder, Dean Gray and Joanne Gray.

This team of workers have volunteered to serve as mission Committee also for 2025.

## CHRISTMAS DINNER 2024

Peace Church once again hosted the **Christmas** Day Dinner. The menu was ham, cheesy and sweet potato casseroles, frozen fresh corn, rolls, salads, desserts and beverages. (All food was donated by members or purchased from Wilkes). People were very generous with the free will offering. We served about 150 people, including carry outs. Also had plenty of helpers, some wise men, some angels. As this was my last year, it has been a pleasure preparing this celebration, thanks for all your help throughout the years, a tradition that

I hope will continue. Diane Finle



**PEACE CHURCH MEMORIAL FUND**

**Annual Report for 2024**

**The Peace Church Memorial Fund committee met six times during 2024.**

<b>Balance 12/31/23</b>	<b>\$91,210.93</b>
<b>Income: interest</b>	<b>\$96.23</b>
<b>Income: donations</b>	<b>\$2,545.00</b>
<b>Projects:</b>	<b>\$10,246.45</b>

**The following requests were funded:**

**\$100 from Denise Grau Nelson transferred to Jonah's Journey**

**\$799.29 Blinds for Pastor's office**

**\$1,194.42 Hanging display for narthex**

**\$6,788 Kuempel Masonry**

**\$178.11 Altar Cloth**

**\$1,186.63 Lifeline**

**Balance December 31,2024                      \$83,605.71**

**Members: Sue Gnagy, Elaine Knoke Martin, Penni Leonard and Sue Stott.**

**Council Representative: Theresea Freitag**

**Respectfully Submitted, Sue Gnagy**

**Mission Statement: The Memorial Committee of Peace United Church of Christ, Elkader, accepts gifts for purposes that will help the church further and fulfill its mission and that support its programs and special projects.**

## 2024 FALL FESTIVAL COMMITTEE REPORT

In 2024, we tracked five separate categories for the Fall Festival. Below is a breakdown of each:

### Kick-Off Projects

In October, we began the festival with two special "kick-off" projects.

1. **Roger Buchholz's Trellises**

Roger approached us with a generous offer to sell trellises he had created, with the proceeds going to the church. We successfully raised \$140.00 from this donation.

2. **Diane Finley's Hats**

Diane Finley donated 115 handmade hats, earning \$1,150.00. Of these:

- 20 hats were purchased by Exit Realty in Elkader and donated to the Family Resource Center in Guttenberg.
- 85 hats were purchased by my extended family, who then donated them to the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital. Diane, my sister Juli, Kenny, and I personally delivered these hats to the hospital, where the staff was incredibly welcoming. The hospital planned to sew tags on the baby hats, while the larger hats were shared with a different department. We received a thank-you letter from the hospital, which also acknowledged Diane's contribution.
- The remaining hats were purchased by our church members.

### Donations

In November, Peace Church members were sent a letter encouraging a \$25 minimum donation per household, or whatever they could contribute. Thanks to their generosity, we raised \$2,590.00.

### Luncheon

The luncheon, organized by Barb Chandler and Lois Storbeck, served 126 meals, including 45 take-out orders and 6 deliveries. The free-will donations for the luncheon totaled \$2,051.71. Additionally, the Silent Auction committee offered free meal tickets to any non-member who donated to the Silent Auction, and 13 tickets were redeemed.

### Silent Auction

The Silent Auction was another major success, with a committee consisting of Paula Anderson, Diane Dennler, Gwen Dettbarn, Gene Glawe, Sheri Glawe, Michelle Gifford, Kim Frentress, Marlis Huinker, Susan Johnson, Penni Leonard, Nancy McClure, Cheryl Scott, Sue Stott, Lois Weber, and Jane Wilke.

The committee began planning in March, when five members created two Diamond Art projects to kick off the year. Meetings resumed in August to brainstorm ideas.

In total, we had 144 amazing items available for bidding. Of these, 28 items were purchased by Peace members, and 41 by non-members. The Silent Auction raised a total of \$14,288.00.

### Expenses and Reimbursements

We applied for and received two \$250 Thrivent cards—one for the Kitchen Committee and one for the Silent Auction Committee. We also reimbursed Grace Café \$16.00 for takeout containers.

### Summary of Funds Raised

Category	Amount
Roger Buchholz's Trellises	\$ 140.00
Diane Finley's Hats	\$1,150.00
Donations from Church Members	\$2,590.00
Luncheon Donations	\$2,051.71
<u>Silent Auction</u>	<u>\$14,288.00</u>
<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>\$20,219.71</b>
Reimbursement to Grace Café	<u>\$- 16.00</u>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$20,203.71</b>

### Acknowledgements

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of this year's Fall Festival! Whether you volunteered your time, made a donation, or supported us in any other way, your efforts helped us reach this fantastic total.

If you're interested in joining the 2025 Fall Festival Team, we'd love to have you! New ideas are always welcome.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Penni Leonard

Luke 6:38: "Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full."

## PEACE CHURCH ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

### Annual Report for 2024

The Peace Church Endowment Committee met once during 2024 on February 15 to review accounts and decide how to allocate the 2023 distribution.

A report on all account activity and performance for 2023 was reviewed and discussed. During 2023 the Endowment received \$139 as a final distribution from the Elaine Syverson Estate and withdrew \$6,844 which was the 2022 distribution. At the end of 2023 the balance of the Endowment was \$207,834. The distribution for 2023 based on 4% of the average of the last three years' year-end balances was \$7,724. Distributions as per bylaws were spread across four different categories (minimum of 10% of total distribution to each category per bylaws).

#### **i. SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS**

i. Peace Church high school graduate Hannah Koehn \$ 500

ii. Milly Burns for FFA trip to Ireland iii. Ayden Schutte for Spanish Class trip to Costa Rica \$ 250 \$ 250

#### **B. MISSION PROJECTS**

i. Elkader Care Center (sound system) \$ 500

ii. Ronald McDonald House fbo Eli Belser \$ 500

iii. Children's Hopechest via Jamie Wingert \$ 500

iv. Int'l Health Project / Tanzania \$ 500

#### **C. LOCAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

i. Peace Church Stephen Ministries \$ 200

ii. Jonah's Journey \$ 500

iii. Community Mental Health Initiative \$ 500

iv. Central School lunch negative balances \$ 500

v. Central School Nurse (to help students in need) \$ 500

vi. Central School Summer Lunch Program \$ 500

vii. Elkader Day Care \$ 500

#### **D. BUILDING AND GROUNDS**

i. Tuckpointing \$1,524

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#### **TOTAL DISTRIBUTIONS: \$7,724**

During 2024 The Endowment received \$184,945 from the Lynn Hall estate and withdrew \$7,724 which was the 2023 distribution. The Schwab brokerage account gained 9% during 2023, while the Central State Bank account gained .2% in interest. The brokerage account utilizes socially responsible funds in accordance with the Investment Policy Statement. These funds screen out stocks in negative-impact industries such as weapons and tobacco, focusing on those companies working to make a positive impact on society and the environment. At year-end the overall allocation was 60% to stocks and 40% in bonds and savings, in line with our Investment Policy Statement.

Kurt Dennler audited the 2023 records at no cost and found everything to be in good order.

At the end of 2024, the balance of the Endowment was:

**Schwab Brokerage account: \$ \$381,621**

**Central State Bank Savings: \$ 10,852**

**Total \$ 392,473**

**Current members & terms (3 yr):**

**Fran Derhammer (2nd term expires 4/1/28)**

**Janis Lerch (2nd term expires 4/1/28)**

**Arlene Reimer (1st term expires 4/1/26)**

**Ann McCorkindale (1st term expires 4/1/26)**

**Susan Johnson (1st term expires 4/1/27)**

**Jay Moser (1st term expires 4/1/27)**

**The Board will be meeting in February to decide on how to allocate the 2024 distribution which will be \$10,186. If you have any suggestions on how Peace Church should allocate these funds, please contact any board member. Also, if you are interested in learning how to donate to the Endowment through your estate or retirement investments, please contact Ann McCorkindale.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Ann McCorkindale**

## **2024 FINANCE REPORT**

Looking at the past year 2024, the finance committee put together a budget for 2025 based on pledges from the congregation and needs of various committees. At the end of 2023, the church showed a profit.

Over the course of 2024 the following was implemented:

Elevator licensed and inspected (inspection to be done annually)

Tuck Pointing was done on the west side of the church. (Completed by Mark Kuempel)

New deck on the back of parsonage. (Completed by David and Virgil Dennler)

New Copier was purchased for church office.

New kitchen stove for church.

The main fundraiser for the church is the Fall Festival. With this event it brought our annual income over the budgeted amount. Therefore, the year ending of 2024 with a gain (profit).

Upcoming projects possible for 2025, will be tuckpointing of another side of the church. Yet to be decided upon. The fixing or elimination of the one stairway outside of the church closest to the alley way.

The finance committee would like to thank the membership of Peace UCC. We live in a community that supports our businesses, school, and churches.

God works in wondrous ways.

Marlis Huinker  
Finance Committee