



Sharing Peace

Pastor: John Huss – pastor@peacearroyogrande.com
Minister of Family Life/Preschool Director: Doris Angel –
director@peacearroyogrande.com
Administrative Assistant: Tricia Donaghe –
office@peacearroyogrande.com

A Weekly Update from Peace Lutheran Church & Preschool
peacearroyogrande.com

April 24, 2024

A Devotional Thought from the Pastor

"You set a table for me
right in front of my enemies."

This week we continue to ponder the words and message of Psalm 23. Out of nowhere, Psalm 23 having beautifully affirmed the providence of God as the loving Shepherd, suddenly mentions enemies. *Who are these "enemies"? And why on earth would the Shepherd prepare a table for us right in front of our enemies?*

There are frequent mentions of enemies in the psalms, and yet the psalms never identify exactly who the enemy is. Some of the psalms complain about specific things that enemies have done to the psalmist, but Psalm 23 doesn't even provide us that much help. Maybe it's enough to note that we are **steadfastly loved by the shepherd**, we may have a life free from serious need, and **yet we still have enemies**.

There are those who wish us harm and who work against us. They are at odds with us and it doesn't do much good to deceive ourselves; they really are our enemies.

In the context of this Sunday's focus on the "darkest valley," the "valley of the shadow" which we are interpreting as death, it could be said that the enemy (Paul calls it the very last, ultimate enemy, **1 Corinthians 15:26**) is death. Paul does not sentimentalize or explain away death. **Death is nothing less than the enemy.**

And what does Jesus tell us to do with our enemies? Ah, that's the problem, isn't it? *"But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who harass you"* **Matthew 5:44**. It's one of the most distinctive aspects of Jesus's teaching. Perhaps, in the context of Psalm 23, loving enemies is a matter of preparing a table for them? Is Psalm 23 saying that the way to treat our worst enemies is to invite them to dinner at the Lord's table? Maybe.

Can it be that when the Lord graciously invites us to his table, like in our church when the Lord’s Supper is celebrated, or when our congregation celebrates in the Fellowship Hall with snacks and coffee after Divine Service or maybe even a covered pot luck supper, that the Lord is also graciously inviting our worst enemies?

We have to note that there is no other mention or even subtle reference to these "enemies" in the rest of the psalm. The enemies disappear from view. Perhaps, when a table is prepared in front of enemies, and if enemies are invited to share in the meal, the enemies cease being enemies? In eating and drinking with Jesus, enmity dissipates and where once there was an enemy, there is now a companion. **The last enemy is done away with, transformed.**

An interesting side note is: the word "companion," as some of you may know, comes from the Latin, "to break bread together."

-Pastor William Metz

— Upcoming Events —

PRESCHOOL CHAPEL.....

CHOIR PRACTICE

LWML BOARD MEETING.....

BINGO NIGHT PRESCHOOL FUNDRAISER

BODY AND SOUL FITNESS.....

Thurs, Apr 25th, 9:15 am

Sun, Apr 28th, 11:30 am

Thurs, May 2nd, 10:00 am

Fri, May 3rd, 6:00 pm

on hold

CHECK OUT ONE OF THE BIBLE STUDIES AT PEACE THIS WEEK!

- Bible study, Exodus with Pastor Metz, **Sundays 8:30 am**, in the Parish Hall ~~and via Zoom.~~
Click this [LINK](#) to join the stream. ~~Or start Zoom and enter the Meeting ID and Passcode below. Or dial - 1 669 444 9171 Meeting ID: 860 6410 8815 & Passcode: 861083~~
- The Women’s Bible study, Starting a new Study of Romans, **Mondays 12:30 pm**, in the Parish Hall, All ladies welcome!
- Community Bible study, **Tuesdays, 7:30 am**, outside, near Red Dirt Café in the Walmart Shopping Center.

COMING SOON – A NEW E-NEWS

The Update is migrating to a weekly E-News. Add your email address to the list by visiting the website (peacearroyogrande.com). Scroll down to the bottom of the home page and you’ll find the spot to sign up. It looks like the image to the right →

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Our Response to God’s Love –

Last Sunday, April 21, 2024, Attendance: In Person 49; On phone 7; Online 3; Offering: \$322.00

SERVING SUNDAY, April 28, 2024 (Thank you!):

Elder:	Dirk Vavroch	AV Tech:	Dave Edwards
Ushers:	Ronnie Counterman, Don Hilliard	Counters:	Joyce Carpentier, Jan Huwaldt
Reader:	Mark Weintraub	Flowers:	Sandy Shaw and Mark Weintraub
Organist:	Leonard Lutz	Coffee:	Gene and Sue Offermann
Altar Guild:	Margie Schaaf, SuAnne Alessandro	Greeters:	Sue Offermann, Joyce Carpentier

Four Ways to Worship at Peace Lutheran Church	
In-Person – In the Sanctuary	Join the celebration, in person, Sundays at 10 am in the Peace sanctuary! Hearing assist devices are available. Printed worship orders are provided.
In the Parking Lot at Peace	Tune to 105.7 for an audio feed of the worship service (only available in the immediate vicinity of the church property)
Via a Live Stream on YouTube	Click here to go to the Peace YouTube page Or navigate to: youtube.com/@peacelutheranchurchvideose9201/streams Please email your attendance to: offermann2@yahoo.com or Pastor John (pastor@peacearroyogrande.com).
Via Telephone	Dial 1-612-746-7380. When prompted, enter the conference code: 872142. <i>Please mute your phone or cover the handset mouthpiece.</i> Either before or after the service, someone will ask for attendance.