

Findings of Peace

December 2015 Newsletter of

Peace Lutheran Church, Deshler, Nebraska

Office Hours: 9:00 AM Monday - Thursday (Closed Friday) ♦

♦ **Phones:** Office: 402-365-7746 ♦ **Preschool/Parish Hall:** 402-365-7855 ♦

♦ **Pastor Rich Stevenson installed on December 20** ♦

♦ **Marla Maschmann, Office Administrator** ♦ **Brendan Schardt, President**

♦ **Kristi Duensing, Youth** ♦ **Dee Jalas, Preschool** ♦

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CHRISTMAS
Joy


Joy! ~ Joy! ~ Joy!

Words of this Christmas song come to mind:

"This gift of God we cherish well
(That ever by our hearts shall fill)

How great our joy
(Great our joy)
Joy, joy, joy
(Joy, joy, joy)

Praise we the Lord in Heaven on high!
Praise we the Lord in Heaven on high!"

When was the last time you felt truly joyful? Christmas can be a hard time of year. Instead of love, we feel lonely. Instead of joy, we feel overworked. But the good news is that Jesus came to earth, born as a baby, to bring us lasting joy and peace. In the midst of your holiday preparations, take time to reflect on the true joy this season brings. Bring the whole family and celebrate the season with us at Peace. - It'll rekindle your Joy to the World!!!

Another joyful event at Peace in December will be the installation of our new pastor! We are excited to welcome Pastor Rich Stevenson and his wife, Anita. See the Highlights of December listed below and take part in our joy!

SUN. DEC. 13

1:00 PM - Peace Youth and Congregational Caroling Party

Hop on a Hay Rack and join us as we sing Christmas carols and deliver about 25 Christmas Stockings filled with goodies. See page 4 for details.

SUN. DEC. 20

9:30 AM - "The Unexpected Gift" Sunday School Christmas Program followed by the Installation of Pastor Rich Stevenson

Light Lunch following - S.S. families with last names A-L bring one dozen cookies / M - Z bring one dozen sandwiches. In anticipation of possibly a large crowd, other members are also welcome to bring sandwiches or desserts.

THURS. DEC. 24

**4:30 PM-Christmas Eve Candlelight led by the Youth of Peace
6:30 PM-Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship led by Pastor Rich**

FRI. DEC. 25

10:00 AM - Christmas Day Worship

Christmas Day Service of Carols with Holy Communion

Christmas Dinner - 12:00 Noon - *Join friends for a meal in the Peace Lutheran Parish Hall on Christmas Day! Details are on page 2 of this newsletter.*

THURS. DEC. 31

6:30 PM - New Year's Eve Service

NO Service on New Year's Day

Give the gift of life-giving water this Christmas... A Well

This is the information we received about the actual specific well that was drilled in June of 2015 at Mito-Mito, Uganda. If you gave your gifts in honor of someone, share this letter with them in their Christmas card this year. Water.....seems a simple necessity to us, but it's everything to them.

Dear Friends of Peace Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your determined dedication and open heart to restoring villages around the world with the gift of safe water! With your support, together, we'll be able to save thousands of lives from dysentery and other preventable diseases, all due from the contaminated water they currently drink.

We would like to introduce to you the villages you are restoring with safe water in 2015.

Village Profile: Mito-Mito, Uganda

Parish: Kitovu

Sub-County: Kityerera

County: Bunya

District: Mayuge

Current water source: Swamp

Population: 6000 Children; 5,200 Adults



MITO-MITO VILLAGE is located in the Busoga Region, Mayuge District in the subcounty of Kityerera, in eastern Uganda. The original inhabitants of this village are called "Basoga" and they are a Bantu-speaking tribe. Overpopulation initially brought these people from the Congo forests where they entered Uganda from the West. As hunters and gatherers they came in search of green pastures. The term "Busoga" translates to "swimming". It is believed this group of people swam across Lake Victoria to reach the land they occupy today. The staple food of these villagers is sweet potatoes and pasted groundnuts. Intermarriage is practiced with the surrounding tribes of Samia, Baganda, Bagwere and Banyoli. Classified by the Government as a "No Go Zone", boreholes are not being drilled in this area due to political conflicts and the water table. However, Water 4 Kids reaches into areas others will not, successfully drilling many wells.

The current water source of Mito-Mito was a swamp that is located 4.0 kilometers from the village. There are numerous dangers in and around these waters. The very water, the one element man cannot live without, that is collected at this source is also the element which brings sickness and even death. Because it is an open source, animals have access to it, tracking in mud and sediment when they drink and often going to the bathroom in or near the swamp. During the rainy season, water runs over the ground collecting pollutants and pours them into the source. The sight and smell of the water these people have no other choice but to use is a complete assault to the senses. Tragically, this swamp is a breeding ground for water-borne diseases such as typhoid and dysentery, which claim many lives each year. Although there are effective medications for these ailments, the cost of them is far beyond the means of most villagers. Not to mention they would need to take the medication with safe water. As the villagers laboriously trek to and from this source they will ultimately bring home contaminated water that will rob their families of health and life. Imagine the parents' grief as the suffering plays out over and over again, feeling helpless, as they are unable to stop their child's suffering.

Many children have perished in this swamp while trying to fill up their jerricans. Pastor Hillary Malo, Water4Kids Project Manager, spoke with several women from this village and each relayed different trials with this source. Two ladies Frumera and Gladys, both having used this source for more than 20 years, shared the heart-breaking story of how death has come from this source. Not only have children drowned, crocodiles have also mauled those fetching water from this swamp. Another woman named Mariam relayed how she barely survived the venomous attack of a black mamba snake that is seen along these waters. For those who can pay, a boat is available to rent. The villagers feel the water may be cleaner farther out where it is deeper. But this is also a deterrent for those who risk falling in and are unable to swim. There are so many people, so many stories and so many trials. The sweet people of Mito-Mito endure the dire consequences of trying to obtain water every day to live. They have simply never known the benefits of health and peace that come with readily accessible clean water.

Thank you for restoring the village of Mito-Mito, Uganda.

Because no one should have to drink dirty water, we are again this year accepting donations to drill another well in Africa. The cost average for one well is \$10,150.00. To date we have received gifts of \$2350 to our Christmas 2015 campaign. We are still awaiting for the specific information on the villages where our 2016 well could be. **Please make all checks payable to Peace Lutheran Church**, and mark "African Well". Gift cards are also available on the counter in the office if you'd like to give your gift as a Christmas gift to someone. If you need several gift cards please check early as we'd need to ask for more.