



Newsletter January 2015

Dear Church Family at Peace – Deshler,

I'm writing on the 11th day of Christmas and my heart is full of thanks!

What a joy it has been to celebrate this Christmas season with you. Throughout the weeks of Advent and these nearly 12 days of Christmas:

I've seen the heart of Peace beating strong, opening up in praise and worship, music and merriment. The services of God's house have been many, all of them memorable and uplifting. For the many gifted folks who planned, practiced, decorated and set up, led, and rearranged to accommodate a full schedule of ministry activities – Thanks be to God and to you!

I've seen the resilience of Peace shining as we laid three dear friends to rest in Christ in just over two weeks, from December 15th to 30th. In the midst of church and family holiday celebrations, so many stepped forth to make sure that funeral services were well prepared, lunches served, and mourners comforted as only a church can do. For all who went the extra mile to make this happen, know that Christ was born anew in and through your Christian thoughtfulness and service. Again ... thanks be to God and to you!

I've seen the generosity of Peace in the pile of cards and gifts that have been appearing on the desk in my study. Trays of Christmas cookies made up for the time I didn't have at home this year for baking, and what you all made was far better than my baking would have been! Your cards and messages, well-wishes and words of support for my ministry, were so encouraging. Your other assorted gifts, from cash and gift cards to other treats, hand-crafted items and surprises, made for a bountiful time of gift-opening. And again ... Thanks be to God and to you!

Heart. Resilience. Generosity. These are just three of the Spirit-formed gifts that mark Peace as a holy community and make you a beacon of hope for Deshler and the surrounding countryside. May these gifts continue to abound in the future, as the Lord of Christmas and of all times leads us forward to a new year, towards the call of a new pastor, and into adventures beyond our imagining.

In Christ,
Pastor Cathi

PS – Watch for the January-February edition of Connections Magazine in the racks in the narthex. It's going to include an article by me on “Sticky Grace” and the future of Christian education.