



November 26, 2024

Dear Siblings in Christ,

In Philippians 1:3-5 we hear Paul giving thanks to the people who share in the ministry of the Gospel. *“I thank my God for every remembrance of you, always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.”*

I want to convey my thanks and deepest appreciation to the council and the congregation of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. I especially would like to convey my gratitude to Council Members Ann Davison, Kate Isom, Winnie McDermott, Elaine Bennet and Debbie Helsley as they have shared their gifts of leadership. There are others in our church who work diligently giving of their gifts to continue Christ’s ministry in the community and world.

I would like to address the recent rumors and miscommunication that are being passed around the community concerning Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. The rumor is that the Prince of Peace is \$30,000 in debt and voted in our November 17th congregational meeting to close.

This rumor is false, and I pray for whomever miscommunicated what happened in our meeting. I ask that we all pray that the correct information provided below will be shared more quickly in our community.

Following worship on November 17, the congregation met to conduct two items of business. The first was to vote on and approve the updates to the constitution of Prince of Peace. The work of making the updates and changes began in January of 2024. The council presented the draft constitution to the congregation in May 2024. Hearing no concerns or questions, we forwarded the constitution to the Virginia Synod of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. In September 2024 we received notice from the Synod that the constitution updates were in order and approved.

The Council again presented the draft constitution to the congregation two weeks in advance of the meeting. The constitution was approved unanimously by those in attendance and [posted on our website](#).

The second order of business was to provide an update and hold a conversation regarding work initiated in August with the Synod to consider a partnership in ministry. This is being explored because, despite over \$72,000 in pledged giving for the current fiscal year, it has become increasingly challenging to maintain the operating budget required to sustain a full-time pastor without tapping into cash reserves, which we prefer not to do.

The sole purpose of this agenda item was to get congregational feedback on ministry activities most important to our members. By planning and considering [a ministry partnership](#) with another congregation, Prince of Peace will have the resources to maintain our critical ministry in this

community for years to come. We are acting now to ensure our ability to provide ongoing Pastoral care in the Basye/Orkney Springs community.

I prayerfully ask all of you who are baptized or confirmed members of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church to continue to worship, commune, pray and study the Word of God together as a community. I also request that if you hear false information, that you correct it immediately.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving week and give God thanks for the blessings that has been given to you.

In Christ,

Pastor Sherrie Hofmann

The Reverend Sherrie Hofmann
Pastor, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church