



Dear Friends in Christ,

One of my projects over the past few weeks has been to get ready for the fall educational programs here at Peace. I am always excited to get back into study groups. Let me tell you what I am looking forward to.

Confirmation. Five young people will be meeting with me over the next few weeks to prepare for confirmation on Reformation Sunday. We will go over their final exams, review their personal confessions of faith, and finish up their projects.

PACE (Peace After School Education). Classes begin on August 31. 5th and 6th graders will study the New Testament this year. 7th and 8th graders will study the Ten Commandments and the Apostles Creed.

ABC (Adult Bible Class). All adults are invited to hear some mission presentations and to join in conversations about hope from Thessalonians and in discussions about history, work, and community from The Truth Project.

Crossways. On Tuesday evenings beginning September 13, you are invited to join in a ten week study of Genesis through Numbers. Crossways is a great way to see how all the pieces of the Bible fit together. This first study focuses on the themes of creation and covenant in the Bible. Textbooks are \$10. Sign up in the church office so that we have enough material.

Heart of Prayer. Do you want some help and encouragement with your prayer life? Prayer has great potential to change our lives for the better. Prayer is so simple a child can do it. But prayer is also so profound that we never master the art of conversing with the God of the universe. On the second Wednesday of the month I invite you to join

a group of people who will meet for one hour to explore prayer and to encourage one another in our prayer life.

Brothers for Others and Simply Prayerful.

The new men's Bible study will be looking at the complicated issue of poverty in our world and what we can really do about it. The newest women's Bible study will be studying "Jesus, the One and Only".

With all of these opportunities for Christian education and spiritual formation, there should be something for everyone. There are two reasons to get involved in the group of your choice. One: you will grow in your faith. Two: you will be used by the Holy Spirit to help others grow.

There is more good news.

Youth Ministry Coordinator. Kristi Duensing has accepted our call to serve as our Youth Ministry Coordinator. Kristi is excited to help our youth stay engaged with service projects and to help them grow in their faith. She is also committed to encouraging parents to be involved in our youth ministry.

LCMC National Gathering. The 2011 LCMC Gathering is in Des Moines, right in our neighborhood. I am planning to attend and would welcome anyone who is interested to join me. See me soon for more information and registration.

Camp. I recently had a visit from Dave and Jason from NLOM (Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministry). They would love to see more kids from our congregation going to CJH (Carol Joy Holling). We used to have a large group go to camp. Camp can have a great impact on young people, especially when it is shared with a group of peers. The Men of Peace have funding available to make camp affordable for everyone. What can we do to encourage more parents to send their children to Church camp?

By the way, pick up a copy of the NLOM newsletter in the overflow and read Tim Koester's story about his journey from farmer to pastor.

Yours in Christ, *Phil Nielsen*