

Open *the* Doors



# Open the Doors of Peace

## Step by Step for the Next Three Weeks Now

- Look over materials in this packet
- Put Prayer Tent Together and determine where to place it
- Continue “90 Days” of prayers

### Sunday, February 23

- Attend Wilderness First Steps Sunday; Listen to Spiritual talk at end of service
- Begin Wilderness Journey by reading, digesting materials in packet

### Sunday, March 2

- Attend worship; Listen to Spiritual talk at end of service
- Continue reading materials; begin to determine which spiritual exercises will be most helpful to your spiritual health
- Sign up for an hour or more of the prayer vigil
- Consider whether a fast will give you better focus as your “time in the wilderness” comes to an end
- Fill out Prayer Cards and turn into church; fill out Fast card and keep handy as reminder.

### March 8

- Complete your Spiritual Renewal Pledge Sheet to bring to church
- Participate in Prayer Vigil
- Begin fast if appropriate
- Attend Spiritual Commitment Sunday; listen to spiritual talk

### March 11

Call R.S.V.P. to Home Gathering Meeting  
Host

Remember, the campaign has  
two phases:

Spiritual: Now until March 9  
Stewardship: March 16 until May 4

[www.peacelutheranhastings.org/capital-campaign.html](http://www.peacelutheranhastings.org/capital-campaign.html)

Issue #2 February 18, 2014

## It's Time to Go “Into the Wilderness”

By now, you have seen the Case Statement for our capital campaign many times. The central theme is enthusiastically posted all over our building and on Kick-off Sunday, September 12, a group of children displayed the main words on large posters after worship.

The beautiful logo for the campaign, shown in the upper corner of this newsletter, serves as a wonderful visual representation of the theme. The entire Case Statement is printed below. We are now focused on the purpose of our capital campaign: we want to raise funds to expand our facility.

Before we start thinking about

fundraising, though, we want each of our members to make sure that they are spiritually ready to move forward.

That's why we chose to have three weeks of Spiritual Renewal, or “Time in the Wilderness” at the beginning of our campaign.

Everything in this mailing packet is geared to help you in your spiritual life. Please take as much time out of your schedule to ponder quietly on your spiritual life and all of the materials in the mailing. Then emerge, refreshed and renewed, for the second phase of the campaign!

### ***Open the Doors of Peace: Our Peace Case Statement***

This is an exciting time in our parish. We have two new pastors who are forward-looking and ready to grow with God's grace. While we desire to open our doors wide for the gifts of Christ to be shared with all, there are obstacles. We want to serve the gospel to all, but our church is not easily accessible to our guests and members. Many areas of our facility are difficult to access and we do not have convenient fellowship space large enough for all to gather.

To situate Peace for the next century, we need a building that accommodates all ages and cultures, inviting the generations to come into meaningful worship. God has opened the doors of heaven to us in the Divine Service, a foretaste of heaven on earth. A new sanctuary and improved fellowship space on the ground floor with better accessibility for all is where we are staking our future and growth. It is time to Open the Doors of Peace.



Open *the* Doors  
*of* PEACE



## What Are You Doing at 9 a.m. on March 8?

Our guess is you are available at 9 a.m. March 8, or 10 a.m., or 11 a.m. and so forth. We need your heart, your mind, and your folded hands for prayer at the *Open the Doors of Peace* Prayer Vigil on Saturday morning, March 8, into the evening.

The vigil will start at 9 a.m. on Saturday morning and go until 9 p.m. on Saturday evening.

The more people we have attending this moving event, the more we will be able to cast pleas for mercy before the throne of God in heaven for an effective capital campaign. God has told us that he is like a loving daddy who wants to hear requests from the heart of his beloved children.

*What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"* Luke 11:11-13

If you have never been to a vigil do not worry - there will be a host there to guide you. There will also be suggested pray-

ers provided along with some resources from the hymnal. Everyone will also be provided with prayer requests from fellow members.

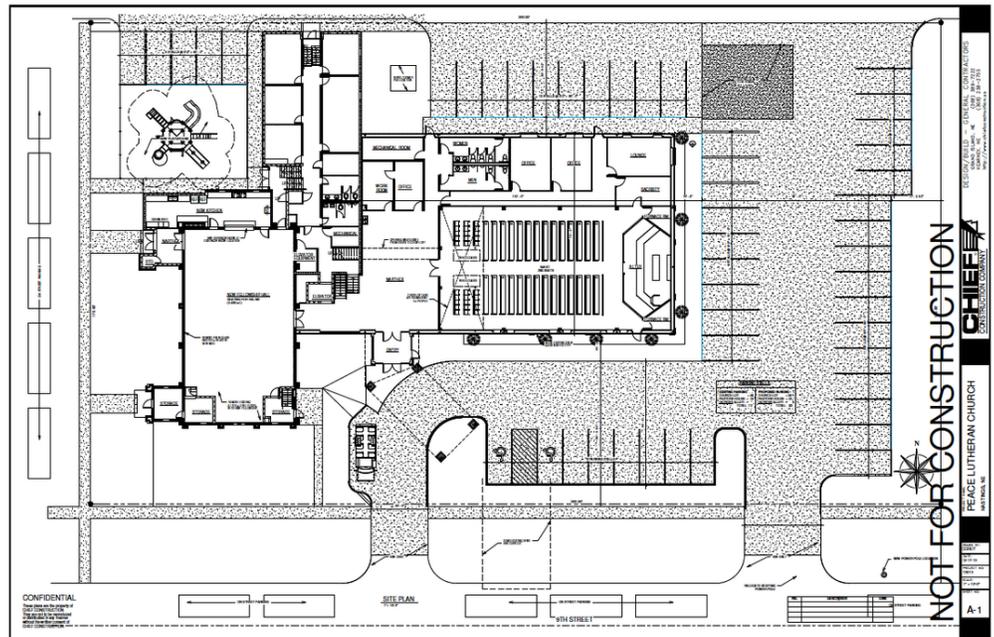
Those of you who have been to a vigil before know how meaningful it is and we hope you will join us. We will need some devoted people to come join us for the late afternoon and evening hours.

If you would like to conclude your "time in the wilderness" with a special time of reflection, consider fasting for all or part of the time of the Vigil—from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., or until worship time Sunday morning. Information and suggestions for fasting are on the prayer card sheet in this packet. Think of how joyful it will be to "break" your fast with the Lord's Supper during worship on March 9!



## When It's All Finished...

- ADA Elevator between all floors (incl. Choir Loft)
- First floor ADA restrooms
- Designated driveway with covered entrance, ADA parking, bus space and new parking areas
- Large Narthex with space for Library, Coffee Bar and Sanctuary Overflow
- New, larger Sanctuary, ADA accessible, with larger Communion Rail and aisles and add'l rows of chairs in the rear. Also a larger Choir Loft. Most of the current Sanctuary "furniture" will be used: pews, pulpit, lectern, altar, rail, font, stained glass, etc.
- New Offices and Conference Room
- Banquet Hall with full Kitchen (our current Sanctuary, Card Room & Narthex will be transformed into a beautiful Hall with wood floors for Receptions, Dinners, Presentations and Events). The new Sanctuary will duplicate the style and layout, with similar architectural themes. No other church in Hastings will have such matching space!
- A playground for our children
- Remodeled windows and some wall and floor-coverings in Education Wing
- Place for Youth in Church Basement
- Space for Sewing in Church Basement



These plans allow for excellent accessibility, multi-use areas, and desirable facilities that can meet our needs for generations to come. May God so bless us!



## Will Our Muscles Get Sore From Spiritual Exercises?

Many people have a physical exercise routine and those who don't wish they did. We have been reminded over and over again in our culture about the importance of good physical health. What we don't hear about is the need for spiritual exercises that lead to good spiritual health. Our *Open the Doors of Peace* program has a helpful prescription to that end.

Ultimately *Open the Doors of Peace* is about raising funds for our building program **but the Bible teaches that good stewardship grows out of spiritual renewal** and so the first phase of the campaign is all about assessing and addressing our spiritual health.

This newsletter is a part of the campaign

*Wilderness Preparation Packet*. For the next

three Sundays we are out into the wilderness, so to speak, as Jesus did when He began His ministry. The purpose is to take a few quiet moments out of the craziness of modern life and assess where we are in our personal spiritual exercise program and then build up the weak muscles and further strengthen the strong ones.

Where is your spiritual strength and weakness? Do you attend church regularly? If so, that is a strength. Does your mind wander when you are at **church**? That is a weakness that needs to be addressed. Do you own a devotional book? If so, that is great. Do you use it everyday? If not, that is another weakness that could be addressed. The enclosed *Spiritual Renewal Inventory* sheet will help you assess these and other spiritual strengths and weaknesses.

Here is how it works and the steps that each member is asked to take:

Read through the enclosed one page *Spiritual*

*Renewal Inventory* sheet. (There are two sheets in each mailing. If you need more for your family they are available in the church office.)

Use the three Sunday *Wilderness Period* (February 23, March 2, March 9) to assess your current spiritual exercise routine and pray for strength and commitment to increase it.

Sometime before March 9, check one or more areas of spiritual exercise on the *Inventory Sheet* that you will re-commit yourself to or that you will increase.



Seal your *Renewal Inventory Sheet* in the enclosed pledge return envelope.



going



On March 9, bring your sealed pledge envelope to church. After the offering, all members will bring their spiritual pledges forward in dedication to the Lord. (There will be copies of the inventory sheet available at church that weekend.)



If you cannot be in church on March 9, please mail your spiritual pledge to church or bring it to the church office.

These pledges of increased spiritual exercise will bring more of God's word and sacraments into our lives which will give us the spiritual strength to make meaningful financial pledges later in the campaign.

Blessings,

Pastor Tim Rossow



## Kick-Off Sunday

February 9, 2014



## Through the Wilderness

All this wilderness talk brings to mind the nation of Israel: God had freed His people with a mighty hand; He destroyed Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea even as the Israelites passed safely to the other side. But rather than remember God's word of promise, that they would be led to a good land, it was at the first sign of hardship that they called God an unfaithful liar. Israel underwent the wilderness suffering, but again and again they sinfully doubted God's promise. Nevertheless, God continued to speak, "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.

Not only did Jesus undergo such wilderness suffering in His life (suffering every temptation known to man only without sin), He underwent this in His death (suffering *our* death and damnation on Calvary's cross). Even in the face of starvation in the wilderness, and abandonment by God the Father, Jesus relied on the Word of promise spoken by the Father: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17). Even as Christ cried out, "*Eli, Eli, lema sabbachthani?*" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46), He confessed, "He has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard when he cried to him." (Ps. 22:24). God's Word proved to be true: Jesus survived the wilderness without bread; and He was raised from death on the third day never to die again.

As God's people, we are connected to Christ in Holy Baptism, and in Christ we too will survive our time in the wilderness. God has spoken His word to you that you are His beloved child. He comes to strengthen you through all your days by feeding you that word and strengthening your faith by the means of grace.

So as we wander together through this wilderness world full of tribulation and distress, feast upon God's gifts. And especially in these days and weeks ahead, make a renewed effort to hear, read, speak, and sing God's Word.

He'll get us through the wilderness: He won't let you down. —Pastor Siebert

