

# Peace Talks



Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

News for Our Community

Spring 2007

## Are you playing life in your “Sweet Spot”?

Prince tennis racquets had a great TV commercial some years back. It might have been borderline sacrilegious. It still made me laugh.

It showed a handsome, athletic-looking tennis player armed with a nice, large Prince racquet, getting ready for a match with...God. God's racquet was barely larger than the tennis ball. But, the commercial explained, if you're God, you don't need a large tennis racquet. Mere mortals, however, can benefit from one. (The sacrilegious part of the commercial came when the tennis player rocketed a forehand winner past the diving God, who grudgingly said “nice shot” while striking His opponent dead.)

Big tennis racquets provide big sweet spots. The sweet spot on a tennis racquet, baseball bat, golf club, etc., is the part of the equipment that average

athletes like me don't use nearly often enough. But on those rare occasions I do, the crisp feel of the contact in my hands and the result of the shot (an ace that catches the line, a home run, a soaring tee shot) combine to make me watch in amazement and say, “Sweet!” I think that's how the spot got its name.

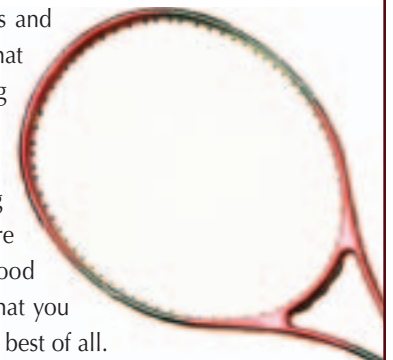
Your life has a sweet spot too. You've hit the sweet spot in your life when you do something that is meaningful, fulfilling and fun all at the same time - and you've done it well. Your sweet spot is found at the intersection of your personality, gifts, passions, talents, and life experiences. These factors come together to help guide you into all aspects of life. They can guide you into an occupation that isn't just a job but a life calling. They can lead you into volunteer work that is truly fulfilling. They can help you say no (without guilt) to worthy causes as often as they help you say yes. Knowledge of them will enable you to recognize and affirm the sweet spots of others.

My philosophy for my work as a pastor is to spend as much time in my sweet spot as possible. I try to spend the majority of my time doing the things I do well, the things that energize me, that make me excited about getting up

in the morning. There are other people who get excited about the things I don't, and can do them much better than I can anyway. At Prince of Peace, we believe that all the people in our church and community are here for a reason. We all have our distinct mix of gifts, our unique sweet spot. One of our main goals is to help people have that sweet feeling more often. We provide training and evaluative tools for people to assess themselves and find out that serving God can mean doing what you're really good at, and what you love to do best of all.

We provide training and evaluative tools through PLACE ministries that help help people to access themselves. For more information about how to find your “Sweet Spot” in life, flip to the last page of this newsletter or go to [www.placeministries.org](http://www.placeministries.org).

*Pastor Tom Lange*



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## Pastor's Message *Make Miracles Happen!*



*Pastor Tom Lange*

Can I tell you about a miracle? It was a miracle of healing. About 9 years ago I was out on the golf course. I gave the ball a mighty clout with my driver. Or at least I tried to. Immediately, I doubled over, a hot pitchfork of pain stabbing my lower back as if someone had mistaken me for a hay bale.

A few days later, it was my turn to preach at the big church I served at the time.

Moments before the last of my four sermons that weekend, I was in a room just off the sanctuary, lying down on the floor in a cold sweat, trying to stretch and get some relief from the pain. I barely got myself up in time to preach.

A physical therapist who was a member of the church came to my rescue. She gave me a twice-a-day regimen of leg stretching exercises. I had to wonder if leg stretches were relevant to my back pain. My answer came quickly. It was a miracle! Minor relief was immediate. Within three days, the pain was reduced to a dull ache. After a week, it was completely gone. A month of stretching regularly made my back feel better than it had when I was in high school. Okay, so it wasn't a miracle in the strict sense, but I was astounded by how great my back felt.

Now let me tell you about a much more important miracle in my life. It's similar to the first one, because it's about a new habit that has brought about surprising and far reaching results.

In January, Prince of Peace started an initiative; we're working our way through the Bible in two year's time. Each Sunday, I'm preaching on the week's section of readings, usually 10 - 15 chapters long. To prepare, I read through the week's selection very carefully and post reading notes on our web site. That means I'm spending a lot more time each week reading and studying the Bible than usual.

Let me tell you about miracles. Not knock your socks off, walk on water, raise the dead miracles, but transforming miracles that may seem small - but make a big difference. During these last few months, I have had better focus than at any other time in my career. I have been more conscientious, not only with the things I like to do, but with the things I need to do. I have been working as hard as I ever have as a pastor, yet with very little stress. I've even been more focused at home. My "to do" list of unfinished household projects is getting "to done." I've been more patient with my children. I've been nicer to the dog! I've gotten better sleep at night, and I've felt more energetic as a result. And all of this from reading the Bible?

I know what you're thinking. It could be coincidence. We all go through ups and downs. Maybe I just happen to be riding an upswing at the same time we've started this Bible reading program. I might be inclined to agree, except: this happens every time I get back into the habit of reading the Bible regularly. Every time. Without fail.

Yes, shocking as it may be, there are times when I, a pastor, get out of the habit of reading the Bible. Every time that happens, I experience less focus, less drive, less energy, I don't feel as good about myself, I can be irritable, and I'm more likely to struggle with assorted temptations. And every time I restart the habit of being in the Bible regularly, I change. For the better.

If you've been raised in the church at all, someone at some point in your life has probably encouraged you to read the Bible. You may have thought to yourself, "Why would I want to do that? I already know the stories. What possible relevance could it have for my life?" Hmm... I've experienced freedom from some bad habits. Might that help you? Would you like to feel better about yourself? Or be more productive? Or more pleasant and compassionate?

Maybe you've tried it before and it just didn't take. No miracles. Maybe even a little boredom. Try it again. Take your time. Don't try to get through it in a year. Or even two years. Don't set a goal to get through it at all, but set aside a daily time to let it get through to you. When you read, try to figure out what God wants you to know about Him. And about yourself. And His purpose for you.

If you feel like you need some help, go to our website - [www.poplcms.org](http://www.poplcms.org). There you will find notes on the daily readings and audio files of my Sunday morning sermons and teaching times (and it's all free). You can even email me a question through the web site. I will get back to you. (If you don't have a Bible, let us know. We'll give you one.)

By the way, I have a confession to make. I haven't kept up with my stretching exercises very well the last few years. Sure enough, last summer I had a little lower back pain again. Does that mean the stretching exercises don't work? No. It means I'm not putting in the work, and I can feel it. Trust me.

And there will probably come a time - a month from now, or two, or six - when my Bible reading time will not be as consistent, and the benefits I described might not be as apparent either. Does that lessen the miracle? On the contrary, that heightens it. It shows that I'm not the cause of the miracle, but something, Someone, outside of me - working on me through the Bible.



# Community Service

## Lutheran City Ministries in the City of Detroit



Prince of Peace has recently partnered with Lutheran City Ministries to help serve meals and collect gently worn clothing for the clothes closet.

Lutheran City Ministries, Inc. (LCM) is a Lutheran, gospel-driven, city ministry reaching out to the urban hearts and souls. LCM especially seeks to touch those who do not have a meaningful relationship with God, and to nourish them in body and spirit. Every activity is designed to carry God's Word to the places where people live, work and play.

LCM coordinates several ministries:

- Homeless, mentally challenged, battered, ex-offenders
- Outreach to children (girls after school)
- Clothing closets
- Boys and girls music education
- Food pantries
- Community youth and elderly outreach

Two pastors lead four churches and one store on a daily and weekly basis. They are supported by ministry leaders.

Please contact the **Prince of Peace office at 248.553.3380** if you would like to donate your time, food or clothing. For more information about Lutheran City Ministries, please contact them at **313.884.7644** or **LCMCentral@cs.com**.

# Bulletin Board



### Holy Week Service Schedule

Maundy Thursday  
April 5, 2007: 7:15pm

Good Friday  
April 6, 2007: 12:00pm - 3:00pm - 7 mini-services  
Evening service: 7:30pm

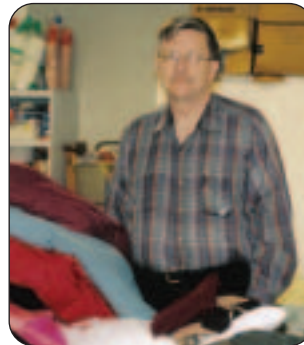
Easter Sunday Service  
8:15am and 10:45am

### Rummage Sale

May 4th and 5th (tentative)

### Children's Fine Arts Camp

An August date will be announced soon



Volunteers from Prince of Peace serve dinner for 60 people at Lutheran City Ministries in Detroit. The picture in the top left is "Pastor Jim"



# Ministry Focus

## What is PLACE?

**PLACE** is a process to connect people with their God-given purpose in life. It includes self-discovery and individualized coaching to help participants move into areas that emphasize their gifts. Through the **PLACE** process, people discover that God has created and gifted them with a unique capacity to serve others.

- The **P** in **PLACE** is for Personality Discovery. Participants use the unique assessments to discover their Personality based on the DISC model.
- The **L** represents Learning Spiritual Gifts. **PLACE** promotes a scripture-based, 16-gift model using our comprehensive 112 question assessment.
- The **A** stands for Abilities Awareness. Here, participants complete an assessment to discover the most effective environment for them to comfortably serve.
- The **C** is for Connecting Passion with Ministry. **PLACE**'s unique curriculum helps participants identify their passions for ministries and people, and discover how they best demonstrate passion.
- The **E** in **PLACE** deals with Experiences of Life. This session allows individuals to explore the effects of their past experiences and how those experiences play a vital role in finding their place of service.

## Why is it Important?

Today more than any other time in history, people have more choices as to how to give their time. They find themselves asking, "Where do I fit in?" "Why am I here?" and "What can I do to make a lasting difference in my life and the lives of others?"

God created each of us for a purpose. The **PLACE** process can help you discover how God has uniquely designed you, and it will help you realize His purpose for your life.

## PLACE at Prince of Peace

In most organizations, the leaders start with business goals, create an organizational chart to implement the programs needed to meet the business goals, and then recruit staff to fill the roles in the organizational chart. **PLACE** turns this model upside down.

**PLACE** assumes that God has "placed" each individual at Prince of Peace for a specific reason, for a special task. Our goal is to help each person identify their talents and tasks so that we can do the work that God has "placed" people here to do. Through the **PLACE** ministry, we help individuals grow in their God-given talents and abilities - and find ways to live in their "sweet spots". (see the feature article on Page 1 for more discussion about life's sweet spots.)

For more information about **PLACE**, or to take an on-line evaluation to help you find your special gifts, go to [www.placeministries.org](http://www.placeministries.org).



## MOVIE REVIEWS "Facing the Giants" (taken from [www.providentfilms.org](http://www.providentfilms.org))

**Never give up. Never back down. Never lose faith.**

From the award-winning producers of FLYWHEEL comes a new, action-packed, family-friendly drama about a high school football coach who draws up a new game plan for his team ... and himself.

In his six years of coaching, Grant Taylor has never had a winning season. Even the hope of a new season is squelched when the best player on his Shiloh Eagles decides to transfer schools. After losing their first three games of the season, the coach discovers a group of fathers are plotting to have him fired. Combined with pressures at home, Coach Taylor has lost hope in his battle against fear and failure.

However, an unexpected challenge helps him find a purpose bigger than just victories. Daring to trust God to do the impossible, Coach Taylor and the Eagles discover how faith plays out on the field ... and off.

**With God, all things are possible ...**

## A Church That Produces Movies!

Sherwood Baptist Church has a driving goal: "to reach the world from Albany, Georgia." Sherwood Pictures is the church's decidedly unique filmmaking ministry that has produced two films: FLYWHEEL and now FACING THE GIANTS.

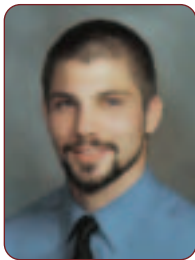
In all, more than 1 million people have seen FACING THE GIANTS in theaters. Now, this film is available as DVDs. Talk about reaching the world! For more information about this inspirational movie, visit [www.providentfilms.org](http://www.providentfilms.org).



# Family Nest



## Finding Your Children's Gifts



*Larry Yochum is the Director of Christian Education at Prince of Peace. He coordinates youth and family ministries, including Sunday School, Junior and Senior High Youth, Young Adults, Small Groups Ministry, and the Fine Arts Camp.*

The goal of parenting for most of us can be summed up simply: we want to raise our children to be good citizens. This usually includes:

- Teaching them good morals and ethics,
- Teaching them about faith (if it is part of our life), and
- Teaching them how to contribute to the community (through their careers or through volunteer service)

As parents, we want to help our children find their interests, skills and gifts. If we can steer our children toward the areas of their passions, they usually respond with enthusiasm and success - because they are "wired" for these areas.

I have seen the negative results of parents steering their children toward their own interests instead. Often this happens with sports - kids get pushed towards sports that their parents wanted to play, but did not get the chance, or did not get the chance to excel in. For instance, my parents pushed me to play football. I did not want to play football, and I was not good at football. I was terrible at football. I wanted to play baseball and basketball. Eventually, I did play these sports, and I excelled - because that was where my passion was.

This same thing is true about serving the community in our careers or in volunteer service - everyone has different passions and gifts. For our children to enjoy and excel in life, they need to find the areas where they belong. As parents, we

need to help them find their passions and unique abilities, and help them to focus on these.

Our children move through stages of discovery as they grow. When they are small, they emulate their parents and do whatever they see their parents doing. In middle school, they start testing their boundaries and explore new things that their parents may not have shown them. Once children hit high school and college, they form their own interests and emotions, and they are ready to make their own mark in the world.

Parents play important roles through each of these stages to direct their children toward productive and rewarding lives. A parent receives great joy from encouraging the growth of their child's unique interests and abilities.

To learn more about how to help your child find their unique passions and abilities, check out the resources below:

*Created to Learn*, by William R. Yount

*The Treasure Tree*, by Gary Smalley

[www.familylife.com](http://www.familylife.com)

[www.family.org](http://www.family.org)

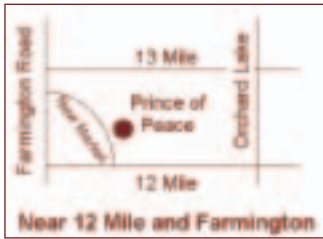
[www.placeministries.com](http://www.placeministries.com) , click on Assessments



# Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

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Farmington Hills, MI

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**SUNDAY, APRIL 8**

*Join us for our  
Easter Celebration!*

**Traditional Service: 8:15 am**  
**Family Service: 10:45 am**

*Go to [www.poplcms.org](http://www.poplcms.org)  
for more information about our church!*



**Check out our website!!!**  
[www.poplcms.org](http://www.poplcms.org)

This is a great personal resource for you and a great way to know what is happening at Prince of Peace!

Join us in a two year journey through the Bible - captured on-line! Each week we will post reading notes to help you understand the weekly passages, and include an instructional discussion and sermon on the week's readings.



## Sunday Worship Schedule

8:15 am: *Traditional Service* • 10:45 am: *Family Worship*

28000 New Market Road | Farmington Hills, MI | (248) 553-3380 | [info@poplcms.org](mailto:info@poplcms.org)