

The Peoria Christian

May 2026
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May's monthly worship theme is When Neighbors Feel Like Enemies. This theme asks us to consider how our faith instructs us to engage with those who we don't like or don't like us.

It is relatively easy to extend love or grace or compassion to someone you already care about, one who you see as worthy of your affection - a good neighbor. But it is a whole other experience to love knowing it won't be reciprocated or appreciated or respected or maybe even acknowledged at all. Loving your enemies may even be seen as just another form of attack.

Love feels good when it is reciprocal; love feels right when there is the balance of giving and receiving in return. To love an enemy is to offer love without expectation of reciprocity. And for those without much experience in loving their enemies, it is a wholly other experience of love. It can feel exhausting and overwhelming to respond in love to violent words, to side-step the invitations into shared cruelty, to bless the origin of a curse.

But Christ's instruction is clear. Love is the way to make neighbors of enemies again. Nothing else will do it. Only love is the antidote to our fears, our anxieties, our anger and pain. Love is God's healing balm. Love resets the score and levels the playing fields of our lives. Love is holy.

The world seems to cultivate enemies, when the gospel is cultivating neighbors. Let us be very careful upon which side of that line we choose to stand.

I hope you will choose to continue the journey of Loving Our Neighbors this May as we focus ourselves on those we'd otherwise rather not focus on. May the peace of Christ be ours, always and forever. Amen.

Always Yours,
Pastor Adam



Food Pantry

In May, items donated will be going to Redeemer Lutheran Church. Any non-perishable items are much needed.

Thank you!



April Giving

DMF	\$1258.33
Easter Offering	\$895.50
Week of Compassion	\$700
CI Center for the Blind	\$250



Stewardship

You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you.

- John Bunyan



Creation Care

When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.

- John Muir

Loving Our Neighbors



2026 Worship Theme

01

JANUARY

What Is Love?

02

FEBRUARY

Learning to Love Yourself

03

MARCH

Lent:
Learning to Love the Dust

04

APRIL

Who Is Our Neighbor?

05

MAY

When Neighbors Feel
Like Enemies

06

JUNE

Love Wins

07

JULY

Pursuing a
Liberating Love

08

AUGUST

God's Unbreakable Love

09

SEPTEMBER

Stewardship Campaign:
When Love Is Enough

10

OCTOBER

A Just Love

11

NOVEMBER

Responding to Love

12

DECEMBER

Advent:
Love Embodied

You Are Here



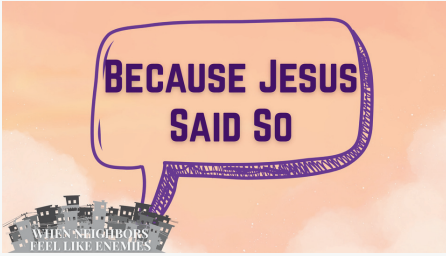
LENT- REBUILDING FROM THE DUST

May 3, 2026

Scripture: Matthew 5:43-45

Sanctuary Choir: *Can't Carry These Burdens Alone* - Parker/Barrett
Rev. Adam Bradley, preaching

It may be one of the hardest commandments that Jesus gives us, to love our enemies. I think many aren't even sure what that means, how it's (safely) done, and what are the implications of treating even your enemies in love. Maybe it is that our imaginations are big enough to conceive of what God can do with our love offered in response to another's hate, in the face of the fear that is so prevalent in our culture today. Maybe love unlocks much more than we know.



May 10, 2026

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:16-19

Jubilate Ringers: *I Love to Tell the Story* - arr. Bill Ingram
Rev. Adam Bradley, preaching

Who has to change for the work of reconciliation and redemption to be realized? Is it always them, is it always me, is it always both? What am I willing to give to get back to a state of peace? What parts of me are incapable of growth? What parts of me are steadfast to who I am? What am I willing to let God make new in me? What will forgiveness cost? What will forgiveness gain me? Who will I be when they are no longer my adversary? Who am I in peace? Must I feel so afraid? Questions of the faithful.



May 17, 2026

Scripture: Ephesians 4:17-27

Sanctuary Choir: *Dig a Little Deeper* - arr. Larry Shackley
Rev. Adam Bradley, preaching

There are times in every life, when you will be pressed to decide, often against the cultural currents, where your boundaries of belief and behavior will be. The world today seems to be addicted to anger. And of course, as people of faith we know that the root of anger is our fear. How much fear one will allow to motivate their mind and heart is a fair indication of their discipleship. Will they know you are Christian by your love? Setting faithful boundaries in love usually will cost you something - because standing on principle wouldn't be so inspiring to the rest of us if it wasn't in some way a sacrificial act. Jesus carried his own cross, that's the bar. It's easy to be angry, it's faithful not to let the sun go down on your anger.



May 24, 2026

Scripture: Acts 2:1-17

Praise Team: *Holy Spirit, Rain Down*
Rev. Adam Bradley, preaching

The briefest of the liturgical seasons, Pentecost marks the coming of the Holy Spirit. An advocate to aid us in our journeys of faith. We will tell the story of the Spirit's coming as told to us in Acts, and spend time considering how the Spirit has been our advocates during our lives of faith. May the Spirit of God be with you always!



May 31, 2026

Scripture: Romans 14:13-19

Rev. Adam Bradley, preaching

"Peace Begins With Me" is a mantra we use with my special needs daughter to help regulate her before heading into school, or really any transition into a new environment. It is a reminder that she has the power to choose her responses. An effort to give her back the power over her own emotional state. Peace, begins with me. It is true not only for the special needs folks, but for all of us. Our own sense of peace, always begins with how we will show up and how we choose to keep showing up. Too often we look outward to find reason or blame, when the truth is most of what needs fixing is within.



2026 Summer Camp



Do you have a child, grandchild, or even just know someone who has finished kindergarten through 12th grade? If the answer is yes, then they can go to church camp!! This Sunday, we will be making a big push to get our youth registered for camp. During the potluck, there will be plenty of information about dates and costs. We will support any youth who wants to attend! You can also contact Linda Williams for more information.

Sunday Morning Study *The Book of Hebrews* led by Frank Wheeler



During the month of May, we will be studying the life and work of William Tyndale and his translation of the New Testament. This year marks the 500th anniversary of William Tyndale's New Testament, the first translation directly from the original Greek. Tyndale lived and worked just as the English Reformation was beginning. His theology as well as his translation of the New Testament into English were declared heretical by the Roman Church. We will look at his life, his teachings, and his New Testament which became very influential over later English translations, including the King James Bible. His determination and courage continue to be an encouragement for all who face challenges to their faith and beliefs. All are welcome.

Responders Class led by Becky Sisk



In the Responders adult Sunday School class, we use Wired Word lessons each Sunday, 9-10 am. We examine current events from the point of view of the Bible and our faith. Come join us!

Weekly Bible Study



Pastor Adam is leading a study and deep dive into the book of Revelation. All are welcome to join!

Graduation Party



River Kinser is Graduating May 17th from ICC! You are invited to her graduation party that we, FCC, are hosting for her. It is May 17th beginning at 5pm at Jalapeños in the Metro Centre. Please sign up in the Church Center App or at the information desk if you would like to attend. We do need a solid headcount for the restaurant, so please sign up by May 10th.

Glen Oak Community Meal



May Community Meal will be the FIRST Thursday on May 7 from 5:00-6:30. The menu will highlight Tacos. Nachos and accompanying sides as Cinco de Mayo will be on Tuesday, May 5! We begin preparation at 3:30, serve at 5:00 and cleanup at 6:00. We also need individuals to welcome guests and join them for dinner as we develop fellowship and food. Please consider being a part of Community Meal!

Greater Peoria Honor Flight



There are many ways to serve. One way in the Peoria area is to be a donor or a guardian for a veteran's flight. This flight consists of one day, leaving early in the morning from Peoria International Airport, landing in a Washington D.C. airport, and returning late the same day to Peoria. Veterans and a designated guardian will fly together and stay together for the day. The day consists of touring the D.C. monuments, spending time with the other veterans, receiving mail call on the return trip, and landing to a hero's welcome at PIA. If you are interested in supporting this effort, please look at their website to see if this is a good fit for you. Also, if you know someone who would qualify for a trip, that is also linked on their website.

FELLOWSHIP

May Birthdays

Linda Williams	5/2
Emily Williams	5/6
Peter Hinshaw	5/9
Roger Spielman	5/12
Brian Woods	5/19
Mike Buckley	5/27
Sandy Surface	5/27



May Anniversaries

John & Margaret Goulden	5/5
John & Jenny Tripses	5/25



Disciple Women May 12th @ 12pm

In May, we will be going to Avanti's for our end of the year lunch! Please sign up so we know how many to reserve space for.



Tasting Peoria Last Chance Bar & Grill May 14th @ 6pm

For over two decades, Last Chance Bar & Grill has been a cornerstone of the Peoria community, serving up the coldest beer in town, delicious home-style cooking, and an atmosphere that feels like home. They're more than just a bar and grill—they're a gathering place where friends become family and memories are made.



Book Club *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane* May 21st @ 6pm

The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane follows the parallel lives of a mother and her daughter across decades and continents, connected by the legacy of Pu'er tea.



Movie Night *Sully* May 28th @ 6pm

When pilot Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger lands his damaged plane on the Hudson River in order to save the flight's passengers and crew, some consider him a hero while others think he was reckless.



May Potluck - 4/31

Please sign up if you can help with prep and/or cleanup. Bring your own tableware to help reduce waste.



SERVING SCHEDULES

Date	Elders	Deacons	Lay Reader	Acolyte	Greeters	Counters
5/3/26	Beth Smittkamp Linda Rex	Geraldine Runkle Tim Dougherty Ange Bertucci Natalie Woods	Becky Sisk	Natalie Woods	Debbie Presenell Geraldine Runkle	Jim & Beth Smittkamp
5/10/26	Connie Sinn Dave Sinn	Geraldine Runkle Tim Dougherty Ange Bertucci Natalie Woods	Liz White	Natalie Woods	Debbie Presenell Geraldine Runkle	Steve West Ralph Tegg
5/17/26	Beth Cox Kevin Wolfe	Geraldine Runkle Tim Dougherty Ange Bertucci Natalie Woods	Cheryl Davis	Natalie Woods	Debbie Presenell Geraldine Runkle	Roger & Vickie Baker
5/24/26	Kevin Cheatham Steve West	Geraldine Runkle Tim Dougherty Ange Bertucci Natalie Woods	Sandy Surface	Natalie Woods	Debbie Presenell Geraldine Runkle	Mike & Laura Buckley
5/31/26	Chere Peters Jenny Tripses	Geraldine Runkle Tim Dougherty Ange Bertucci Natalie Woods	Larry Weber	Natalie Woods	Debbie Presenell Geraldine Runkle	John & Lisa Best

Date	Friends with Jesus	Growing Disciples	The Open Table
5/3/26	Jenny Tripses	Be Gibson	Frank Wheeler
5/10/26	Chere Peters	Be Gibson	Frank Wheeler
5/17/26	Jenny Tripses	Be Gibson	Frank Wheeler
5/24/26	Linda Rex	Be Gibson	Frank Wheeler
5/31/26	Katie Fitch	Kathleen Wheeler	Frank Wheeler

An Illinois Valley Cluster Event

JOIN US FOR A TRIP TO

TIPPY CREEK FARM

(28080 SHILOH RD., OUTSIDE OF HOPEDALE)

A 26-ACRE SPECIALTY FARM, WITH APPLE AND PEAR
TREES, WOODS TO HUNT MUSHROOMS
AND AN APIARY WITH
HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF HONEYBEES

Monday, May 18, 2026
10:00 a.m. to noon,
followed by lunch at
Jack's Café in Tremont

We will...

- Walk through Tippy Creek's woods with old growth walnut trees
- Learn about the flowers and trees that the bees utilize
- Visit the education center for freshly baked cookies and a video lesson on bees
- Walk to the apiary to see the bees
- Rain or shine – Indoor options if rainy
- Peruse the honey and beeswax items that are for sale
- Take up a collection to support their community outreach projects (There is no charge for this event.)

Please pass the word and bring friends, arranging your own transportation.

Please reserve your spot **by May 10** (space is limited) by calling Jane Cahill at 309-645-1388.

