

The Visitor

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**University Lutheran Church of Hope
is a welcoming, Christian community of faith
centered in God's grace and
called to demonstrate God's love for the world.**

Shirley's Share

"We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake."

These words from I Thessalonians express so well my feelings and the feelings of the leadership of this congregation toward all of you, the people of University Lutheran Church of Hope.

Though much of what I have to say in this article concerns money, the dollar giving in turn represents the commitment and joy found in the people of this place. First of all, thanks to all of you who have supported the 25 youth and four adults who will be attending the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans. (25 kids from Hope - WOW!) We will leave from Hope's parking lot on Monday, July 20, along with 200

other youth, on four buses. Twenty-six hours later we will arrive in New Orleans, to join 36,000 other youth from all over the country. We will hear speakers, tour devastated areas, work on projects centered on wealth and poverty, attend workshops, and have fun. We will return to Minneapolis on Monday, July 27. All of this comes with a price. About \$18,000, to be exact! But thanks to the hard work of parents and kids and to the generosity of the congregation (plus a grant or

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two from Thrivent), we have raised more than \$12,000 of that amount already! We hope to have all the costs covered by the time we leave, but a huge *thank you* goes out to all of you who have supported the youth so far in this project!

The second thank you is to all who support our "Invitation to Hope" capital campaign. You may



recall that this is phase two of a *multiphase campaign* to pay for the recent refurbishing our education wing, as well as to support new capital projects as those opportunities present themselves. In spite of the economic situation, most of you have been maintaining your pledges, and some who did not pledge have been giving generously. We realize that a few have not been able to keep up during this time of low return on investments, and we are hopeful that they will eventually get caught up. But in spite of that challenge, we are right on target with our overall giving to the campaign. That means that we can make our monthly mortgage payment and also move ahead on the projects we intend to complete—particularly updating the sound system in the sanctuary. Thank you all! A **special service of thanks and celebration**

(Shirley's Share continued on page 2)

Watershed Planning Progress

The watershed planning process is underway. For those of you who are reading this before Sunday, April 26, please consider attending the 9:30 Adult Forum, where our project manager, Brad Aldrich from Emmons & Olivier Resources, will introduce our initial watershed control plans.

This is your chance to have direct input into the planning process. It will be a time for questions, opinions, advice, visioning, and guidance. After this meeting, Brad should be able to move on to development of the final plans.

—Kathy Knudson

Assistance Needed for the Homework Help Program

Trinity Lutheran Congregation is in dire need of tutors starting at the end of April all the way until the beginning of June, because their regular tutors are moving back home from college. The program *Safe Place: Homework Help* offers tutors for people of all ages between the hours of 3:00 - 5:30 p.m. Monday-Friday.

Whether you know how to add or subtract, write a research paper, or explain crystallography, your presence would be greatly appreciated. You could participate for one day, once a week, or whatever works for your schedule. Tell your friends, neighbors, and coworkers. Please contact Katie Dudzik, at tutoring@trinity-lc.org or (612) 333-2561, for more information. Trinity Lutheran Congregation is located at 2001 Riverside Avenue in Minneapolis.

(Shirley's Share *continued from page 1*)

will be held on Sunday, June 7. Please mark your calendar to be there!

My third word of thanks goes out to all of you who support the regular budget. Though we are behind a bit on giving, we have been staying current with all bills, with our staff salaries (for that the staff thanks you), and with our commitments to the Synod and Churchwide organizations of the ELCA. As summer approaches, it becomes even more essential that folks stay current with their giving. The Simply Giving program is a great way for people to do that, and it certainly helps our treasurer do his job (see Mike Fingerson's report on p. 7 of this issue of *The Visitor*).

Many ELCA congregations and synods are currently in deep financial trouble. The economy is causing mayhem in many homes in our community, and for some in our congregation. Please know that your consistent giving is much appreciated as we work to further the mission of Christ in the world. Thanks to all of you! Pax

—Pastor Craig Shirley

Volunteers Needed by Facilities Team

There are quite a few changes going on at the church, and the Facilities Team can use some help from everyone.

On Saturday, May 2, we are having a Garden Work Day, where *we need many volunteers*. See Marty Lewis-Hunstiger's article on p. 6 of this issue of *The Visitor*.

We have changed our regular meeting date to the second Wednesday of the month. We meet at 7:00 p.m., and you are always welcome to attend and participate!

As many of you have observed, there is an odor in Heritage Hall that comes and goes at various times. We don't know what is causing it, but we are going to try the cheapest approach first in dealing with it, and that will be to do some landscaping outside the windows in the Courtyard. Come and help us dig in the Courtyard on May 2 if you can. The floor of Heritage Hall is raised, and to tear it up and redo it is out of the question—at least for now.

In recent years we have had two or three occasions when shingles have blown off the sanctuary roof, and we've had to have the roof patched at a cost of about \$1500 each time. We are now requesting bids to have the entire roof re-shingled. We have an insurance reimbursement available to us for about 2/3 of the cost of a new roof.

In addition to the stormwater project that Kathy Knudson is leading, we are meeting with an engineering team about opportunities for energy savings we can do around the church—mostly small changes we could make to save money and help the environment. Watch for more information on that.

Volunteer Opportunities (contact Fred Kreider):

- Help caulk Sanctuary stairs—outside.
- Help screw in an additional railing support to the balcony stairs, to address a safety concern.

—Fred Kreider

Letter from Arthur French

Arthur French has sent us the following message from Fort Dix, New Jersey.

Dear Family at Hope:

I am currently enjoying the “hospitality” of Ft. Dix, New Jersey. Here I attend briefings, better known as “Death by PowerPoint,” which is a form of the Catholic concept of purgatory. We get shots, fix cavities, are fitted for glasses, and do a lot of mundane things that normal people probably already have taken care of on a regular basis. We get our personal lives in order, and are issued more equipment than anyone could use in a variety of climates, in space, or even underwater. Then we set about the business of training for survivability and effectiveness with our teams in Iraq. I have about a month to go. The Bible stories about the “patience of Job” now have some meaning for me. It is a long process.

I will be headed to Karbala, Iraq at the end of May for a year’s assignment. We will live in a place I can only compare to a very secured “gated community” in the middle of the desert in Arizona (in August), but a lot hotter. It will be an international place, with Ugandan security guards, NGOs from around the world, and members of the U.S. State Department and all four U.S. military services flying in and out. “Gated community” is a euphemism for a shabby trailer park on a seemingly God-forsaken patch of the Martian surface, with some concertina wire around it, inhabited by the cast from the Star War’s Intergalactic Bar. Imagine the program M*A*S*H, but with newer helicopters, flat rocky terrain, dust storms from the movie *Mummy*, and your oven set to a baking temperature of 325° in the summertime.

All of this picture sounds very cynical, but what we are doing will actually be very cool. My team and I will be working for the Department of State Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Karbala Province. It is just a couple hours south of Baghdad over land. As a Lieutenant Colonel, I will be the second in command of the PRT under the foreign service officer, and will bring military resources to bear on new and ongoing reconstruction projects in the province.

Women’s’ rights are a new concept in the staunchly conservative Shiite region, but great strides are being made. The rule of law is coming into its own, with the strengthening of the courts and domestic police forces. Democratic governance has also made great strides with free elections. Nonetheless, there still are the challenges of sectarian violence between Shiite and Sunni Muslim factions, as well as general anarchist attacks against Shiite pilgrims making pilgrimages to Karbala and Najaf.

Our small group of five young guys and an old one (*moi*) is of good humor and eager to take on the challenges of the work to come. For sure it will be what we make of it.

I look forward to seeing you all again. Peace.

Your friend in Christ,

—Arthur French (arthur.h.french@us.army.mil)

People of Hope

Anna Shallue, daughter of Diane and Bob Shallue, will be married at University Lutheran Church of Hope to Andrew Olson, son of Kirk and Jane Olson of Long Prairie, Minnesota, and grandson of Vicky Miller, on Friday, June 19.

Beth McAllister is grateful for the compassion and support she is receiving after the death of her husband, Nick. She and her children are returning to their regular activities.

Gretta Hunstiger performed in a production of *Fiddler* on the Roof at Western New Mexico State University in Silver City, New Mexico, playing the role of the eponymous fiddler. Gretta plays fiddle in a local bluegrass group, the Silver City String Beans, and also teaches Suzuki violin.

Gladys Holsten turned 100 years old on April 18. She is in the Greely Care Center in Stillwater. Please consider sending her a card. Her address is:

Greely Healthcare Center
313 S. Greely St.
Stillwater, MN 55082-7007

—Ruth Fingerson

Thank You!

Asincere thank you to all who contributed items and/or money for the Midwife Kits. Gloria Circle members assembled and delivered 51 kits to Global Health Ministries, from where they will be sent to the most needed places in Africa. Extra items and money (to be used for sending costs) were also given. Gloria Circle, Global Health Ministries, and the recipients appreciate your generosity. You have truly helped to “help the hands that heal!”



Faith Formation News

Adult Forums (held in Heritage Hall at 9:30 a.m. on Sundays)

May 3 – Find out about the Bread for the World organization through a presentation by Donna Neste.

May 10 – “Christianity in Latin America,” a presentation by Guillermo Hansen, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Luther Seminary.

May 17 – Hear an update on family homelessness & the Families Moving Forward organization by Leslie Frost, the executive director of Families Moving Forward and a member of this congregation and our Vision & Governance Board.

High School

High School Discussion meets in the Youth Room on Sundays from 9:30 – 10:25 a.m.

Confirmation classes for grades 7 & 8 meet on Sunday mornings from 9:30 – 10:25 a.m. on May 3 & 10. Both classes will meet with Pastor Shirley on Sunday, May 17, in Room 108 at 9:30 a.m. The Saturday class has been moved to May 2.

Sunday School News

| Date | Other information | Godly Play Lesson | Faith Weaver Lesson for grades 2-6 | Theme of the day |
|--------|--|--------------------------------|--|---|
| May 3 | King Snakes classroom works on a project for the Children’s Garden. | The Good Shepherd and the Wolf | Spring wk9: Jesus sends power from God. Acts 2:1-21 | God gives us the Holy Spirit to help us. |
| May 10 | Music Opening in the Chapel at 9:35 a.m. Moses Eagles do presentation. | Jerusalem | Spring wk11: Philip tells the Ethiopian about Jesus. Acts 8:26-40 | Follow where God leads. |
| May 17 | King Snakes put “snake” project into the children’s garden. | All Response Day | Spring wk 13: Barnabas encourages Christians in Antioch. Acts 11: 19-26 | Christians should encourage one another in faith. |

Youth News

Time flies when you're having fun! I can't believe it's already May and I'm wrapping up my time here at University Lutheran Church of Hope. It has been an amazing two years of learning and growing, both for me and for the youth program!

The Dream Team is in the process of recruiting new members and establishing ministry teams to continue the mission and vision of the program during the summer and fall. The kids are getting excited for trips to Amnicon and the big trip to the National Gathering in New Orleans! A big thank you to all who supported us in our many fundraisers over the past few months. With your help we consistently raised enough funds to meet the Thrivent matching funds goals of \$1600 and \$120—and then some! Your generosity shows your commitment to the youth of this congregation. We have been greatly blessed by your support!

My time here has been so wonderful, and I will cherish the memories of trips, lock-ins, youth group, confirmation, Moonlight Madness, and all the other wonderful events and activities we've done. Thank you for welcoming me into this church family. University Lutheran Church of Hope will always hold a special place in my heart.

God's peace and love! <><

—Megan Koepnick, Youth Director



Youth Fundraiser

Need some work done around the house or yard? Are you wondering how you'll get it all done? You're in luck! The National Gathering Participants are available to help you with all that spring cleaning! For a fee of \$100 you will get 3 kids for 3 hours, plus one adult supervisor. There are 10 appointments available. More may be added as necessary.

Requests for help will be taken until May 15th for weekend dates in May and June. Please have a few dates in mind so that we can work out a good time for you and the youth.

Youth will be available to help with:

- Ground floor outdoor painting
- Gardening (planting, weeding, etc)
- Raking
- Mowing
- General yard work
- Window washing (indoor or ground floor outdoor)
- Garage cleaning and organizing
- Many other tasks you might need help with.

Contact Megan Koepnick at (612) 331-5988, ext. 15 or megank@ulch.org for more information or to schedule your workers!



Hope Connections

Everyone is invited to a **Potluck** at Bob and Diane Shallue's home on Sunday, May 3, at 5:30 p.m. The address is 9040 Jackson St. NE, in Blaine, Minnesota. Adults and children are welcome. Please contact Diane at dianes@ulch.org if you are interested in attending. The limit is 40 people. The purpose of this gathering is to build friendships and have fun.

Sunday Morning Bible Study

A No-Prep Bible Study on the letter of Paul to the Philippians will be led by Joan Campbell on May 3, 10 & 17 in the Conference Room from 9:30 – 10:20 a.m. Come to one session or all three. Bring yourself and a Bible. Extra Bibles will be available.

The 2009 **Hope Connections Task Force** is planning for another small-group focus in the fall, as small-group ministry continues to be a priority in the mission objectives of our congregation. The Task Force consists of Sarah Burson, Jen Dotson, Tom Frost, Jan Johnson, Nancy Miller, and Diane Shallue. More information will be coming in late summer.

China Service Ventures

China Service Ventures (CSV) is a Lutheran organization based in St. Paul, Minnesota that, since 2004, has participated in ELCA-sponsored Global Mission Events and smaller Global Mission Events held in the Northwest Washington, Oregon, and Southwest Washington Synods. The goals of CSV are to *serve* the Poor, *serve* the Church, and *serve* the Community in China. *Service* is at the heart of CSV's commitment and witness in China.

Would you consider becoming a friend of CSV, or perhaps one of their volunteer English teachers, youth service participants, or health-care workers—who work at the invitation of Chinese officials and partner with local and provincial Christian leaders? For more information about their projects and 2010 service opportunities, visit www.chinaserviceventures.org or contact Steven Ray at sray@chinaserviceventures.org or Kelly O'Brien at kobrien@chinaserviceventures.org.



Hope Garden Club Welcomes Spring!

The University Lutheran Church of Hope Garden Club is a group of individuals with a passion for gardening and a wish to offer a gift of beauty and serenity and welcome to the people who attend services and events at Hope, as well as to neighbors and passers-by. We are embarking on a major project to capture the rainwater that falls on our roof and parking lots and divert it into rain gardens, rain barrels, and a cistern, to keep it from flushing off into the storm sewers and, in the process, save our congregation as much as \$5,000 a year in runoff fees.

Those of you who attended our two-week series of Adult Forums in March learned about the importance of runoff abatement and the usefulness of rain gardens. On Sunday, April 26, we are sponsoring another Adult Forum to present the



results of a comprehensive assessment by a professional landscape architecture firm. Emmons and Olivier Resources (EOR) is “a collaborative group of environmental and design professionals passionate about protecting our waters, restoring healthy ecosystems, and enhancing our community’s unique sense of place” (quotation from their web site). A representative from EOR will tell us how we can be good stewards of the water that falls on our building and grounds and create a more inviting visual environment in the process.

What Can You Do To Help?

- Consider joining the Hope Garden Club—the time commitment is as broad or as specific as you wish;
- Attend the Adult Forum if possible;
- Join us for coffee between services on Sunday, May 17;
- Consider participating in our scheduled work days;
- When summer comes, participate in the after-church watering brigade;
- Participate in fund raisers: we’re planning plant and bulb sales, raffles, silent auctions, and direct donations/naming opportunities, among other projects;
- Watch for Garden Club updates and information on our bulletin board near the lower narthex, as well as on the Hope web site; and
- Keep us in your prayers.

—Marty Lewis-Hunstiger

President's Perspective

Change

We've heard a lot about change recently, haven't we? It was a central theme of the election process, and now that the world is dealing with a variety of economic challenges, change is everywhere. And why shouldn't it be? Our world is constantly changing, and if we think we can somehow hide from it, we do ourselves a disservice.

I thought a lot about change as the Vision and Governance Board prepared for the recent Spring Retreat. Will I change as a result of my year in this post as president? I certainly hope so. More than that, I expect to. With that in mind, I challenged the Vision & Governance Board to consider the same expectation of change as we took on the challenge of turning three simply stated mission objectives for 2009 into real, tangible actions. Expect to be changed—as an individual, a congregation, and a society.

The Board's recent retreat was thoughtful, focused, productive, and jam-packed. The process used had participants alternating between wildly divergent thinking and the difficult process of narrowing to a few chosen ideas. In the end, specific action items emerged that will help move University Lutheran Church of Hope; they will get us out of our chairs to take part in the change that is happening. You will hear more about them in the near future: (1) a menu of options made available to support those affected by the economic recession; (2) new efforts to increase congregational and extra-congregational involvement in small groups; and (3) specific steps toward a long-term commitment to Youth and Young Adult Ministry. Each area will be successful to the extent that the congregation is engaged. Be engaged—be changed.

—Jack Dant, Congregation President

Treasurer's Report

For March, income was \$5,928 below budget and expenses were \$4,812 below budget, resulting in a net income of -\$1,116.40. Comparisons with budget are always subject to further analysis since a number of factors must be considered. For example, part of the income shortfall versus budget can apparently be attributed to special holiday giving having been budgeted to occur in March rather than April. Similarly, expenses were low, yet this was at least partly based on when checks were actually written for insurance payments.

Even so, our giving level during March is definitely a concern. But, year to date, thanks to a major gift in February, our net income is at -\$1,259 versus a budget of -\$13,338.

Another budgeting challenge we have faced is that, on the initial January and February financial statements, the actual amounts for salaries did not match the budgeted amounts. After some investigation it was determined that the total amount of 2009 salaries listed on the spreadsheet I received from the Personnel Committee was about \$12,000 higher than the actual total. To resolve this discrepancy, the Board has decided to provide \$1,500 to Facilities for the Watershed Project and \$1,234 in additional funding for Hope for the World. The remaining surplus in budgeted expenses is being used to reduce the total of budgeted *giving* from 3.9% over last year to 2.3% over last year.

The actual numbers for March and for Year to Date are as follows:

| | March | | Year to Date | | Over/(Under) |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Actual | Budget | Actual | Budget | |
| General Giving and Holiday | 40,424 | 47,083 | 131,853 | 122,805 | 9,048 |
| Rental and Extraordinary | 5,640 | 4,910 | 14,886 | 15,205 | -319 |
| Total Revenue | 46,064 | 51,992 | 146,739 | 138,010 | 8,729 |
| | | | | | |
| Total Expenses | 42,721 | 47,533 | 147,998 | 151,348 | -3,350 |
| | | | | | |
| Net Income | 3,343 | 4,459 | -1,259 | -13,337 | 12,079 |

—Mike Fingerson, Treasurer

Hope Senior Club

Hope Senior Club is sponsoring a very unique and educational program for its gathering on Wednesday, May 20 at 1:00 p.m., entitled, "The Brave Journey of an Orphan Train Rider." Ann Zemke will tell the heartwarming story of her grandmother, Marjorie Peterson, an orphan train rider, through the blocks of a very special quilt she made in her memory. From 1854-1929 an estimated 150,000 to 250,000 children rode trains from New York and other areas of the East Coast to rural parts of the United States, mostly in the Midwest, to find a new home. Some were orphans; others were abandoned; while others were put on trains by their parents, hoping they would have a better life. The trains were called "orphan trains." Marjorie Peterson, at age 8, was sent to northern Minnesota on an orphan train in 1906. All seniors and friends are cordially invited to this warm, personal, and winning presentation of her challenges and indomitable spirit, which allowed her to make significant contributions to the world. Also, Ms. Zemke has written a book, entitled *They Called Me Marjorie*, telling the story of her grandmother's life, which will be available for purchase.



Ann Zemke



The program will be preceded by a luncheon at 12:00 noon in Fellowship Hall. Reservations for the meal should be made by Thursday, May 14, with your caller, or by phoning Pastor Esther Dant at (651) 636-7834. If you are unable to attend the luncheon, please join us for the program. Everyone is welcome!

Vision and Governance Board Highlights

The Vision & Governance Board of University Lutheran Church of hope held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on April 14, 2009.

- JoAnn Bablitch had been nominated to fill the vacancy for a Vision & Governance Board Member-at-Large/Hope in the World Liaison. The Board voted to elect her to this position on behalf of the congregation. She attended the subsequent Board retreat and will begin her formal duties in July.
- Treasurer Mike Fingerson presented the financial reports. He explained that an erroneous salary calculation in the budget presented at the 2008 Annual Meeting had overstated the total amount of 2009 staff salaries. The board accepted Mike's recommendation to address the discrepancy (see the Treasurer's Report on p. 7 of this issue of *The Visitor*.)
- Plans were discussed for the Spring Vision & Governance Board Retreat. A Friday night social evening at the Halvorson/O'Loughlin home was to be followed by a Saturday retreat at the Dunrovin Christian Brothers Retreat Center.
- Marilyn Preus and Merrill Morse joined the meeting to discuss their concerns and observations regarding the process used to prepare the congregation for the substantive changes to the Constitution at the Annual Meeting in February. Each was given time to present their views, and members of the Board were invited to respond. Details of the discussion are available in the April 14, 2009 Vision & Governance Board Meeting Minutes.
- Bernice Davenport has requested that her duties as Fellowship Meal Coordinator be passed on to another. We thank Bernice for her dedication to this effort and for her many hours of coordination and work. Dan O'Loughlin volunteered to take on this role. In response to a motion from Bob Moluf, the Board voted that the regular monthly Fellowship meals may be sponsored by groups within Hope to provide funding for budget line items other than the general budget.
- Due to personal obligations, Leslie Frost has requested a leave of absence from the Vision & Governance Board until July 1, 2009. Dan O'Loughlin will serve as Member-at-Large to the Executive Committee until Leslie's return.
- Uli Koester presented an update on the Worship and Music Ministry Area, highlighting the activities that are happening and opportunities that exist for future development. He requested suggestions from the Board for how this group could continue to offer innovative ideas for meaningful worship in the future.

—Jack Dant, Congregation President

Staff

Pastors:

Craig Shirley; Esther Dant

Cantor:

Timothy Strand

Director of Education and Adult Small-Group Ministries

Diane Shallue

Youth Director:

Megan Koepnick

Young Adult Ministries

Coordinator:

Dannica Montplaisir

Administrator:

Craig Wiester

Weekend Custodian:

William Frank

Working in partnership with Lutheran Campus

Ministry Staff:

Fritz Wehrenberg; Kate Reuer

Vision & Governance Board

Officers:

President: Jack Dant

Vice President: Gregg Landmark

Past President: Bob Moluf

Treasurer: Mike Fingerson

Ministry Areas:

Worship & Music: Uli Koester

Youth & Young Adults: Ann Beane

Education: Dan O'Loughlin

Hope in the World: JoAnn Bablitch

Relational Ministries: Leslie Frost

Support Areas:

Operations:

Mike Fingerson;

Bob Moluf

Leadership Development

& Communications:

Jack Dant; Gregg Landmark

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