

The Visitor

601 - 13th Avenue SE
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www.ulch.org



December 2009
Issue #11 - 09

*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.*

Advent and Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve services will be held at 4:30 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. on December 24. The early service will have a story sermon that is appropriate for children as well as adults. Holy Communion with candle lighting will also be a part of that service.

The 11:00 p.m. service will be in a traditional Eucharistic style, with candle lighting and choir.

Christmas Day will be a single service at 10:00 a.m. Pastor Shirley will preach on Christmas Eve. Diane Greve will preach on Christmas Day.

There will be a single service on Sunday, December 27 at 10:00 a.m., and we will return to our regular schedule the following Sunday, January 3. Come and worship during this season of Hope and Peace!

Advent Celebration: Advent Readings and Carols, plus a Scandinavian potluck on December 13. Come to worship on that Sunday at 8:30 a.m. or 10:30 a.m. to enjoy the Advent/Christmas story in scripture and music. Choirs, soloists, and congregational singing will be the highlight of that service. Then bring a dish to pass—one that will feed at least 10 people—and join your fellow members, visitors, and students in a fun meal of Scandinavian delights in Fellowship Hall. Meat will be provided.

Please note: We need help for this event. Anne Agrimson has agreed to coordinate it, and there will be opportunities to sign up to help, advertised in the bulletins that precede that Sunday. You may also call or email Pastor Shirley to volunteer.

Rooms in the Inn?

University Lutheran Church of Hope will open its doors to homeless families (FMF) during the week of December 20-26. All Hope members are invited to find some way to help show hospitality to our guests during this special time. The intergenerational event on the first Sunday in Advent (November 29) will begin preparing “the inn” and signing-up volunteers. Please stop by and see how you can be involved. Some particularly challenging tasks will be to provide the Christmas Eve meal, evening and overnight hosts, and a hot Christmas Day breakfast/brunch. As the day center

will also be closed, we are hoping to provide activities for those families who do not have local friends or relatives with whom they can spend the day.

If you will be away from University Lutheran Church of Hope during our hosting week, please feel free to lend your financial support for our endeavors.

May the peace of the season be with you and your family as we celebrate the coming of our Lord. Thank you for all that you do in His service. Please feel free to contact me, at (612)729-5891 or at jschroed@umn.edu, if you have any questions or concerns.

—Jo Schroeder

Hope Book Club

The University Lutheran Church of Hope Book Club will meet on **Sunday, December 13, at 6:00 p.m.**, at the home of Sonja Peterson, 1501 26th Ave. NE, Minneapolis, for a **Minnesota Classic Pot Luck**, and to discuss the book *Sweet Land*, by Will Weaver.

Sweet Land contains fourteen “short stories that look at the yearning of the human spirit and the transformation of America’s heartland.” The short-story “Gravestone Made of Wheat” inspired the 2006 movie *Sweet Land*, a love story set in 1920, where a woman from Europe is sent to America to marry a Norwegian immigrant. The Minnesota farming village where her intended husband lives is horrified to learn that she is a German immigrant with no papers, but who has connections to the American Socialist Party.

Please call Sonja Peterson at (612) 242-8711 if you have questions or book suggestions.

Advent Puzzle Surprise

“Advent Puzzle Surprise” almost sounds like a recipe, but it is a full-color, four-piece magnetic puzzle. Each Sunday in Advent, one of the puzzle pieces will be given to the children and to interested adults during worship.

After four weeks you will have a complete Advent puzzle for your refrigerator door and will be able to identify the Christian symbol created by the pieces. If you miss a Sunday, you will be able to get your puzzle piece from Diane Shallue. The first puzzle piece will be given on Sunday, November 29.

Families Moving Forward: “Home for the Holidays Concert” December 4

Treat your whole family to a delightful, free evening of holiday music with the Lake Wobegon® Brass Band. This free-will offering event benefits Families Moving Forward’s emergency shelter program for homeless children and their families. The Lake Wobegon® Brass Band will be performing a myriad of holiday classics during this two-hour musical delight. The evening begins at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, December 4, at the beautiful Colonial Church of Edina, located at 6200 Colonial Way in Edina (off Hwy 100 at Tracy). Please visit www.familiesmoving-forward.org for details. Interested in singing with the choir? Contact Tracey at (612) 529-2185.

Women’s Intergenerational Retreat - SAVE the DATE - February 27-28 at Dunrovin Retreat Center

Beata Rydeen will lead the Women’s Retreat again this year. The theme is, “In Praise of Women”

Registration begins in January. For information contact Ann Beane, at spiritbeane@yahoo.com or (651)481-8175

From One Tradition to Another

In 1969, forty years ago, Gloria Circle made a decision to serve fruit soup and *lyulekage* on the second Sunday in Advent to University Lutheran Church of Hope members and friends, in conjunction with the Advent service of readings and music. It was an immediate success.

The tables were set with fresh greens, shiny ornaments, and votive lights. The serving tables always had two large, straw yulebok, red Swedish candles, fresh greens, and the sterling silver serving pieces. Very festive!

The aromas of fruit soup and hot apple cider wafted over Fellowship Hall as much happy conversation took place. Yes, it conjures up a pretty picture as traditions from other countries were recalled.

However, the members of Gloria Circle have decreased in the recent years as their ages have increased, so—reluctantly—this tradition is ending.

Good news! We are welcoming a new tradition! Instead of a fellowship meal, you are invited to a Scandinavian potluck lunch on December 13 after the second service. The meat will be prepared and furnished by the planning committee. You are asked to bring a large dish to share. Please make your dish either Scandinavian or representative of another culture’s food that you enjoy during the holidays. We need side dishes, salads, breads, cookies, etc. (Remember, the meat will be prepared at the church).

Gracious thanks go from the congregation to Gloria Circle for their forty years of dedicated service! Just how many gallons of fruit soup do you think were made?

Shirley's Share

The Tuesday Bible study group has been studying the book of Ephesians this fall. It has been an interesting study in which we have talked and been taught about walls—physical barriers we as the church put in place to keep people “in their place.” The book of Ephesians urges us to tear down walls that separate us from one another and instead be united in Christ. For Paul’s time it was the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians that needed to hear this. In our time, there are a host of other warring groups that need to hear this message of hope.

The final chapter of that book of Ephesians tells of putting on the armor of *the Lord*, rather than that of an invading army. In particular, “Put on your shoes so that you are ready to spread the Good News that gives peace” (Eph. 6:15, *God’s Word Bible*). Paul’s words are important as we approach this holiday season, the season of peace. The gospel gives peace. The good news about Jesus gives peace. It is such a simple message, but when we search everywhere and find no peace, it is refreshing to know that such peace is not dependent on the power of a nation or relationships and good humor between peoples, but rather that peace comes from God’s good news in Christ.

It is also interesting to note that it is *we* who have the job of spreading that news: “put on your shoes so that you are ready...” Paul wrote. We are called to be ready to share the gospel message in order to bring peace to the world—real peace, true peace, lasting peace, final peace. It may be a peace that exists in spite of war or illness or divorce or death, because it is a peace that transcends this world, and so it is “beyond understanding.”

I wish for peace this season; in our world, in our homes, in our personal lives, and in our nation. But it can only come from the one who knows true peace. Remember that cute little cliché? “No Jesus, No Peace; know Jesus, know Peace.” Well it’s true. Pax

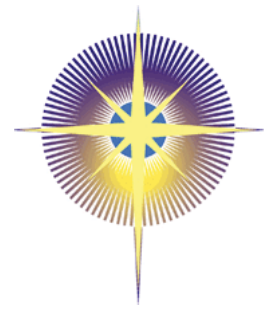
—Pastor Craig Shirley

“reMEMBERing Christmas”

A University Lutheran Church of Hope Family Gathering, Dec. 16 ~ 11:30 a.m.

Attention all seniors! A special afternoon of Christmas celebration is happening at University Lutheran Church of Hope on **Wednesday, December 16**. We will begin at **11:30 a.m.**, with a time of welcoming that will include music and Senior Club’s traditional punch. **(Please note this change of time for Senior Club.)** Then a delicious Christmas dinner will be prepared for you to enjoy. Following that, a wonderful group of all ages of Hope members will be part of our program. Through beautiful singing, instrumental music, poetry, and the sacred word, we will be “reMEMBERing Christmas.” And there may even be more surprises awaiting you. Come and enjoy! Invite friends!

Reservations must be made by December 10, by calling the church office at (612) 331-5988 or Pastor Esther Dant at (651) 636-7834.



People of Hope

Pastor Gary Wilkerson is teaching full-time in Pastoral Care and Counseling at Luther Seminary, where he earned his Ph.D. He is also the Director of Mount Olivet Counseling Service, where he is actively counseling, to keep his courses fresh.

Karen Wilkerson is Instructor in Vocal Music at St. Olaf College in Northfield. She continues her work singing and conducting. She currently sings with the Ensemble Singers of VocalEssence and directs adult choirs at St. Michael’s Lutheran Church in Roseville.

Congratulations to **Don and Elaine Millam** and also to **Bob and Nancy Swanson**, two couples who each celebrated 50 years of marriage this fall. What great role models they are for living an active, loving life!

Have you seen the “new” **baptismal font**? It is beautiful and functional, with wood, granite, and hammered copper. The previous font had leakage problems from the beginning. **Linnea Pignatello** was the first baby baptized (by immersion) in the previous font. Thanks for the work are due to many people whose names are collected and will be published later. The lovely wood work was done by **Tim Abrahamson**.

—Ruth Fingerson



Faith Formation News for All Ages

Sunday School

Godly Play is for children ages 3 through grade one. The program teaches Bible stories with objects and develops a sense of sacred space.

Faith Weavers is a curriculum that teaches Bible stories related to the daily lives of the children through interactive activities. Grades 2-6 all study the same story on the same Sunday.

	Godly Play Story	Faith Weaver Story	Theme
December 6	Advent 1 & 2	Winter Week #1: Zechariah prophesies about Jesus – Luke 1:68-79	The world needs Jesus.
December 13	Advent 3 & 4	John prepares people for Jesus' coming – Luke 3:7-18	Repenting prepares us for Jesus.
December 20	Practice for Christmas program in the Sanctuary	Christmas program	"The Christmas Clinic"
December 27	No education hour	No education hour	Worship at 10:00 a.m. only

Christmas Program Update

Sunday School children will have music opening and Christmas program practice from 9:30 – 10:00 a.m., followed by regular Sunday School classes on December 6 & 13. They will all report to the Sanctuary at 9:30 a.m. on December 20 for a dress rehearsal.

Confirmation

Grade 7 meets with Tim Gustafson in room 101, with a focus on the Sacraments.

Grade 8 meets with Adam Morton in room 107, with a focus on the Trinity.

Confirmation Saturday class will be held on December 12 to focus on the story of Abraham and Sarah and Isaac and Rebekah.

Sunday Morning High School Discussion for students in grades 9-12 will be held in the Youth Room with Jack Dant, Jen Dotson, and Matt Fleming.

Adult Forums

December 6 – “Making Sense of Scripture” - Bruce Eldevik will facilitate a discussion using a DVD of Dr. David Lose exploring this issue. Come to learn more about the Bible without having to know anything about it!

December 13 – “ISAIAH presentation on building healthy inclusive communities for all people and the problem of systemic racism.” What is the nature of our relationships—across regions, racial divides, and economic differences? This discussion will be led by Donna Neste and other members of our congregation involved in the ISAIAH organization. ISAIAH is a non-profit coalition of 90 congregations from various faith traditions working in the Minneapolis, St. Paul, and St. Cloud regions. The members of ISAIAH are moved by faith to act for justice. Find out more about ISAIAH by attending this panel discussion.

December 20 – No Adult Forum, so you can enjoy special treats in the Lounge.

December 27 – No Education Hour, with only one worship service, at 10:00 a.m.



Getting Close to Hiring Our New Cantor

We are planning on welcoming a new Minister of Worship and Music to University Lutheran Church of Hope in January! As I write this update, our search committee is preparing to interview six applicants in late November. Some of these are from the Twin Cities, and others are from neighboring states and even the West Coast! All show an impressive combination of skills that could serve our church well.

In early December, the best of the bunch will come to Hope to audition on the organ and conduct our choir. After that, we expect to make a job offer. So keep your voices and instruments tuned, because a new lead musician is soon to join us!

—Uli Koester, Search Committee Chair

Kelli Johnson	Mark Nelson
Solveig Mebust	Judy Ranheim
Lisa Morse	Craig Shirley

Come to the **Sunday School Christmas Program**, “The Christmas Clinic,” during 10:30 worship on December 20. Bring your friends and family to learn about the birth of the Christ Child from a different perspective. Special treats will be served in the Lounge between 9:20 – 10:20 a.m.

Parents’ Time Out – Saturday, December 5: Parents with children between birth and five years old are invited to a brunch at 10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Afterwards, parents are welcome either to stay and chat while the children are cared for by Elspeth Cavert in the Nursery, or to go out to run those last-minute Christmas errands until 1:00 p.m. The brunch and child care are free, but reservations are needed. Please contact Diane Shallue at dianes@ulch.org.

The Intergenerational Service Event on November 29 is for all ages. Special treats and activities will begin at 9:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. We will focus on preparing for the Families Moving Forward guests who will be with us during the week of Christmas. We will create placemats, decorations, Christmas cards, and door signs for the families. Please bring dental supplies and white socks for all ages to be put into gift bags for the families.

Hope Connections!

Candlelight/Renewal Celebration,
December 7

Those people who have participated in one of the Hope Connections Small Groups are invited to a Candlelight Celebration/Renewal event with yummy desserts on Monday, December 7.

We gather at 6:30, with the program beginning at 7:00 p.m. We will celebrate the connections that have been built and the service experiences of the groups.

It is a time to share, laugh, and evaluate. Please let your group leader or Diane Shallue know if you will be attending. (dianes@ulch.org)

Church Library News: Our Church Library has a wonderful selection of children’s Bible stories and Christmas story books. There is also a collection of board books with heavy pages for our youngest members in a bin on the low shelves. For over the Christmas vacation, you could check out our selection of children’s VHS videos and DVDs, including “The Toy That Saved Christmas” and “Heroes of the Bible.” For older children, we have a collection of fictional chapter books. Best of all, our Library does not charge fines for overdue materials!



New Editor Needed for The Visitor

Our congregation is looking for a new editor for its monthly newsletter, *The Visitor*, now that Bob Moluf has moved to Virginia. Almost all aspects of this volunteer role can be done from home (which is why Bob can continue working on the newsletter for a while, until a new editor is identified and trained in). A good command of English grammar and usage and some experience in using software for editing and layout are desired. If this sounds like something you could do to help support the ministries of University Lutheran Church of Hope, please contact Bob Moluf at visitor@ulch.org

From the Visitation Pastor

Real Peace

Peace,” I said today to Charlene as she and her family went into the gathering room for prayer. “That was Joe’s favorite word,” she said. Today was his memorial service. He was a mentor I talked about in my faith story a few weeks ago. The service was full. There were many there whom Joe had encouraged, and one finds peace in encouragement.

As I write, I am looking at a mounted piece of rock. It is a piece of the Berlin Wall given to me by our family’s German friends. They no longer wanted that reminder in their homes. They needed peace from days that tore at their hearts when they were children—and long after.

The news last week from Paris said, “For the first time since the armistice that ended World War I with Germany’s defeat in 1918, a German leader joined French officials here to mark the moment the guns fell silent on the Western Front after a war that killed millions. German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Nicolas Sarkozy laid a floral wreath on Wednesday at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier under the soaring arches of the Arc de Triomphe in central Paris. The moment came two days after Sarkozy traveled to Berlin for ceremonies marking the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989. Said Merkel: ‘It’s a week full of symbols. It’s a moment very important to me.’ She was criticized by some in Germany for coming. Sarkozy said, ‘Your presence among us on this November 11 is a gesture of exceptional friendship—every French person knows how significant it is.’

And so it seems that *real* peace, whether in the intimacy of our homes, in the life of our congregation, or across the oceans, requires tremendous humility and courage that only God can give us. Our baby in the manger came, in peace, into a violent world. Little has changed. We are to be bringers of peace. May our courage match our convictions, and may our integrity match our hope. May our faith in God bring us closer to each other.

God’s Christmas peace be with you all,

—Pastor Esther Dant

Watershed News

Emmons & Olivier Resources (EOR) is finishing up our watershed and patio plans and should have the final plans for us in early December. We will post the overviews at or near the bulletin board by the main elevator when we have them. There have been changes since the initial concept plans, so take a look.

We have had three of the four sheets available to us for grant proposal planning and to obtain bids for doing phase 1, which concerns the west parking lot. Unfortunately, the single bid we received was beyond our projected budget, so this fall we are not applying for the \$50,000 action grant proposal from the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO). Once we have the final plans, we will regroup, reset our priorities, and try to find other funding sources, including other possible grant opportunities. In the meantime, we should be able to do some of the smaller rain gardens ourselves, hopefully this summer.

—Kathy Knudson

President's Perspective

On a recent flight to a business conference, I found myself thinking about the macro/micro nature of life. Maybe this happens to you, too, when you step out and see things from a new perspective (like 35,000 feet.) When compared to the immensity that is our society or even the ELCA family of congregations, the issues of our own cozy little church can seem mighty insignificant.

How can we possibly think about inefficient windows and beautiful new baptismal fonts when there are so many pressing economic and world issues at hand? It is easy to be overwhelmed, yet called we are. Called to pay attention to the world we have been given, the large and the small of it, the structural and the personal of it. Maybe we can't fix the big world issues, but we can do our part. Maybe we can't do everything this year that our beautiful old building deserves, but we can continue to prioritize, stretch ourselves, and give, again, of our time and our resources.

It is tempting, given our budget circumstances, to dwell too much on the subject of giving at this time of year. It is an important issue to discuss; however, we must also be reminded of the bounty that is the direct result of these gifts. This is, after all, a time to recognize all that we have received and a time to give thanks—for a loving God, a family of believers, and a church staff and facility that serve us in so many unsung ways. Have confidence that your efforts and gifts are being used to serve God and others in ways large and small.

—Jack Dant,
Congregation President

Treasurer's Report

Operations

Income of \$39,257 was under budget by \$3,241. While expenses have typically been under budget this year, during this month expenses of \$46,643 were over budget by \$2,214. This gave us a Net Income of -\$7,387 compared with the budgeted shortfall for October of -\$1,931.

Expenses have actually been controlled very well this year, with only the Operations area being over budget year-to-date.

The concerns expressed last month have, unfortunately, proven justified. For the first time this year, even with year-to-date expenses down more than \$16,000 compared with budget, we now have a shortfall that is larger than was budgeted.

A summary of actual numbers for October and Year to Date are as follows:

	September		Year to Date		Over/(under)
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	
General Giving and Holiday	34,513	37,287	377,865	395,923	(18,058)
Rental and Extraordinary	4,744	5,211	49,577	51,659	(2,082)
Total Revenue	39,257	42,498	427,442	447,582	(20,140)
Total Expenses	46,643	44,429	460,123	475,002	(14,878)
Net Income	(7,387)	(1,931)	(32,681)	(27,420)	(5,262)

—Mike Fingerson,
Treasurer

Staff

Pastors:

Craig Shirley
Esther Dant

Interim Cantor: Bill Beckstrand

Director of Education and Adult Small-Group Ministries:

Diane Shallue

Youth Director:

Matthew Fleming

Young Adult Coordinator:

Jen Dotson

Administrator:

Craig Wiester

Weekend Custodian:

William Frank

Working in partnership with Lutheran Campus

Ministry Staff:

Eva Jensen
Kate Reuer

Vision & Governance Board

Officers:

President: Jack Dant

Vice President: Gregg Landmark

Past President: Garvin Davenport

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:

Renée Real-Banas

Support Areas:

Operations:

Mike Fingerson,
Garvin Davenport

Leadership Development

& Communications:

Jack Dant; Gregg Landmark


The Visitor

The Visitor is published monthly by University Lutheran Church of Hope, located at 601 13th Ave. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414-1437.

Articles for *The Visitor* may be submitted via email or in the church office. They must be signed. Electronic submissions in either Microsoft® Word or plain text format are strongly preferred. Articles may be edited for length. Contributors are responsible for clearly identifying any material that is from published sources and for obtaining appropriate permissions. Send submissions and correspondence to visitor@ulch.org

The deadline for submitting articles is the 15th of every month (for the following month's issue).

Copies of the current issue of *The Visitor* as well as back issues are available at ulch.org/VisitorArchive or by contacting the church office.

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Trust Board Seeks Funding Requests

As set forth in its charter, the Trust Board annually disperses money from the Endowment Fund for requests submitted by congregational members. The amount to be dispersed is defined by Trust bylaws and varies from year to year based on the income generated by Fund investments over the preceding three years. (Given that the value of the Fund may not be permitted to drop below the sum total of all gifts received over the years, there may be years in which no money is available.)

The Trust Board anticipates that there will be money available for requests in 2010. Therefore the Board is soliciting applications for funding, which are due January 15. The application form may be found on the church website at: <http://www.ulch.org/images/TrustFundingRequest.pdf>. Give your application to Craig Wiester or the Trust Board chair, Beth Kautz.

The bylaws of the Trust specify that (1) Endowment Funds may not be used for ongoing and/or regular church expenses, (2) requests that have been funded for three years are considered to be ongoing and thus are not eligible for further funding, and (3) funds must be spent during the year in which they are allocated. Remember, funding applications are due January 15.

—John Beane

Vision and Governance Board Highlights

The Vision and Governance Board of University Lutheran Church of hope held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on November 10, 2009. Vice President Gregg Landmark chaired the meeting in the absence of President Jack Dant.

- ▶ New staff members Matt Fleming (Youth) and Jen Dotson (Young Adults) joined the meeting to introduce themselves and talk about their roles. Welcome, Matt and Jen!
- ▶ Vice President Gregg Landmark communicated an action taken by the Executive Committee on behalf of the V&G Board: Garvin Davenport was appointed Past President to fill the position vacated by Bob Moluf when he relocated to Virginia. Thank you, Garvin, for your willingness to serve.
- ▶ Fred Kreider of the Facilities Group presented a proposal for installation of storm windows over portions of the stained glass windows. This project would reduce heat loss, both saving money and improving the comfort of people in the Sanctuary. All agreed with the concept of improving energy efficiency; however, much debate occurred, primarily because the facilities budget has already been exceeded for the year. In the end, the proposal to fund the project was not approved. Additional discussions will continue to explore alternative options.
- ▶ Treasurer Mike Fingerson discussed our budget situation, noting that we will require a healthy “bump” in December to arrive at year-end without a deficit. Pastor Shirley and President Jack Dant will take steps to inform the congregation of the situation and to make an appeal for support.
- ▶ Ann Beane discussed activities in the area of Youth and Young adults, highlighting the addition of Matt and Jen.
- ▶ Uli Koester reported that efforts continue to go well in the search for a new Minister of Worship and Music. A total of 32 applications have been received, which the committee will narrow to six candidates for interviews.
- ▶ Garvin reported that the two University Lutheran Church of Hope positions on the Council for Lutheran Campus Ministry – Twin Cities are now vacant and in need of filling. The Council will likely be involved in a planned addition to the building of Grace University Lutheran Church to accommodate campus ministry needs.
- ▶ Uli Koester discussed the idea of a mini-retreat for the V&G Board, which was well received.
- ▶ A Small Group Ministry Team has been formed that includes John Bablitch, Sheila Entgelmeier, Renée Real-Banas, Diane Shallue, and Carol Steinberg. Hope Connections meetings are going well, with groups performing various types of service.

—Jack Dant, Congregation President