



The Visitor



January 2016

Issue #12-1

Complex world. Thoughtful church.

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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.*

Hope Children's Ministry News

The Spirit is moving over the waters in Hope's Children's Ministries. Did you know...

- That this fall the Children's Christian Education Team implemented an important program change, offering music as part of the Sunday morning experience for all children in the program during our new, longer education hour that begins at 9:15?
- That the parents of young children can find the songs their children are learning, on the internet, and play and sing them at home?
- That Shelly Parry has served this fall and continues to serve as Sunday School Superintendent, supporting our Sunday School classroom and music teachers every Sunday morning? Many thanks to you, Shelley!
- That 4th grader Seneca Brooks adapted the Christmas Gospel into a script for the Sunday School Christmas program? Many thanks to you, Seneca!
- That Interserve, a service for helping congregations determine their program and staffing needs around the "first third of life," will begin working with our congregation this month?



Many thanks to the members of the teams who are listening, learning, and discerning this winter and spring. Please make a point of coming to these events and being a part of this important conversation.

Kirsten Mebust
Education Ministry Area

Ash Wednesday and Lent

Mark your calendars: Lent begins this year with Ash Wednesday on Feb. 10. On Ash Wednesday and throughout the Wednesdays of Lent we will have services at noon and 7 p.m. A 6 p.m. Lenten Bible Study is also in the works. More details to come.

Treasurer's Report for November 2015

November giving was \$41,663.71 and our rental income was \$5,430.69 for total income of \$47,028.40. Our rental income was \$1,363.31 under budget and our giving was \$4,593.38 over budget. Total income was \$3,230.07 over budget. We are currently \$11,035.48 under budget for the year to date.

Our expenses for November were \$32,682.61. The budget for November expenses was \$40,233.66 which put us under budget by \$7,541.05 (we spent less than we budgeted for the month). Our net income (income minus expense) for November was \$14,345.79 (our income was greater than our expense). Our net income for the year to date is \$22,671.65, we budgeted net income to be \$(12,111.11). Our net income for the year is very positive and we are in a great place to close out the year on a very positive note.

Thank you again, for your gifts financially, and in all the other ways you contribute to the life and health of this congregation, as it serves the community here in SE Minneapolis, and around the world. It is wonderful to see our members contribute not just their financial resources, but all of the volunteer hours that makes this congregation a vibrant and thoughtful presence in the community.

November 2015 and Year-to-Date Income and Expenses						
Summary	Nov. Actual	Nov. Budget	Nov. Over / (Under)	Year to date Actual to 11/30	Year to Date Budget to 11/30	Year to Date O/(U) to 11/30
General Giving	41,663.71	37,070.33	4,593.38	396,517.46	401,383.63	(4,866.17)
Rental Income	5,364.69	6,728.00	(1,363.31)	80,743.69	86,913.00	(6,169.31)
Total Income	47,028.40	43,798.33	3,230.07	477,261.15	488,296.63	(11,035.48)
Total Expense	32,682.61	40,223.66	(7,541.05)	466,700.61	500,407.74	(33,707.13)
Net Income	14,345.79	3,574.67	10,771.12	10,560.54	(12,111.11)	22,671.65



Total income for Hope for the Future campaign in November was \$7,713.33. In November we paid out \$6,918.89 for the mortgage. Net income was \$794.44. Our building fund balance is \$257,625.57. If you have any questions or comments please contact me at treasurer@ulch.org

Tim Abrahamson
Treasurer

Life Events

We hold one another in prayer during times of grief, joy, gratitude, and all the experiences in between. We try our best to include everyone (members and others close to the community, births, deaths, marriages...and other pivotal events), but we need your help to stay up to date. This month we include in prayer...

Births: Julie and Greg Davenport, big brother Landon, and grandparents, as they welcome Gabrielle Lauren Davenport, born on Dec. 14.

Marriages: Elliott Bioletto and spouse Lily, and Joe Pinzl and spouse Samantha.

Deaths:

The family of long-time Hope member Helen Good, who died on Dec. 9 after some days of hospice care. A funeral was held at Hope on Dec. 18.

Leroy and Marge Halvorsen as they grieve the death of Leroy's brother Phillip and sister-in-law Gladys, and the unexpected death of a great-great-niece near the same time.

Stephanie Struthers and her family at the death of her grandmother Agnes.

Carolyn Rudi and her family at the death of her mother Leone (Longtin) Brule.

Transitions: Retirements, new jobs, and changed jobs—we're on the move, and God is with us.

Pastor Jen and the University Lutheran Church of Hope Staff

Post-It Note Epiphanies

This has happened more than just a few times: One of you pops into my office just to check in; you share a little of what's going on in your life; and, then, you wonder, full of hope, "How's it going? Are you liking it here?" I so appreciate those check-ins, for I want to know what's up in your life, and I want you to hear my joy at being with you in ministry. This joy for me doesn't deny the grief of leaving Salem Lutheran and SpringHouse Ministry Center – I loved these communities deeply. But it is my honest response: this is the right time to be with you in ministry; I'm truly enjoying you as individuals and as a community; I'm moved by our times of worship together; and I'm excited for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead here at University Lutheran Church of Hope. We have much to do together!



When the Vision & Governance Board gathered for a retreat in October, in a matter of hours (and with an abundance of bright post-it notes) our Vision Goals were drafted. It was our sense that day (and I'd hold to it still) that we were ready to move forward. Our retreat gave space for our congregational leaders to articulate this readiness and direction in some clear and spirited ways. We framed these goals under the big heading *Igniting Our Life Together*. We confirmed hopes for connecting with the university and community, igniting worship and deepening spirituality, and revitalizing our ministry with youth and children. Throughout the newsletter you can see these three goals beginning to take on flesh.

Right now, we're on the cusp of Epiphany; revelation and stars and light are all the rage. This is a church season of God's power being made known. Perhaps we began Epiphany a little early this year. Those post-it notes that became our vision goals represent God's power and God's direction being made known here in our congregation. I hope you can join us in worship during Epiphany and the coming month:

Jan. 3: With an Epiphany focus, we'll have stations for engaging Epiphany and the turning of the year: healing, hopes for the new year, prayer, and more.

Jan. 10: Baptism of Jesus Sunday, and a time to renew our own baptisms as we hear again, "You are a beloved Child of God."

Jan. 17: Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend

Jan. 24: The first of three opportunities to explore the vision goals in worship. This Sunday we'll focus on connecting with the university and neighborhood. Will post-it notes help us witness this epiphany? Come to worship and find out.

Jan. 31: Guest preacher Rev. Dr. Paul Westermeyer, Luther Seminary Emeritus Professor of Church Music.

As we move into this season of Epiphany, I'll be on the lookout for God's activity and presence in our midst—on post-it notes and far beyond. I thank God for you, for this community of faith with our gifted leaders and staff, and for the neighborhood to which we're called.

With gratitude
Pastor Jen

Campus Activities

Beer and Hymns Jan. 28. ALL ages, join young adults and students from Grace University Lutheran Church, University Lutheran Church of Hope, and Lutheran Campus Ministry to sing some favorite hymns over a brew. Bring yourself and your friends! We'll be at Blarney's Pub and Grill (basement) at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 28. Parking is available at Hope.

Lutheran Campus Ministry Alternative Spring Break Border Immersion in San Diego and Mexico. Join us in exploring issues of immigration, border security, and the theology of accompaniment. More information at this Facebook Invite, including cost and details of the program: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1556504151236975/> Last day to sign up is Jan. 29, 2016.

FAITH FORMATION NEWS



Faith Formation for All Ages on Sunday Mornings

Music Focus: The Children's Ministry Team has added more music to the children's program on Sunday mornings this year. Singing connects to our spiritual selves in new ways. Godly Play students will have music time once a month. Creation Stations students will have music every Sunday beginning at 9:15 a.m. Once a month the Creation Stations music time will be extended to the full period with time to play Orff and other rhythm instruments, led by Rosalie Eldevik.

Nursery: Clair Gustafson supervises the youngest members in the nursery on the second floor of the education wing.

Godly Play

Classes for children ages three through six are held on Sunday mornings in room 103. Godly Play creates sacred space to hear and learn Bible stories using objects and play. Students and teachers wonder together and then children are encouraged to respond to the stories on their own terms using art materials. The structure of the Godly Play lesson models worship, with: Gathering Time, Hearing the Story/Word, Response Time/Offering, and Feast/Communion. Teachers are Madhu Bhat and Sara Tufvesson Doure. Helpers are Stephanie Struthers, Melissa Odenbach, and Ann Beane.



See detailed schedule of lessons on the church web site.

Creation Stations



Creation Stations

The goal of Creation Stations is to learn about the Bible through hands-on activities such as drama, cooking, crafts, music, and games. Fun and learning about the Bible can go together! These classes are for students in grades 1-6.

Teachers for grades 1-2 (Room 101) are Kristine Robinson and Mary Greenwaldt, with helper Suzi Robinson.

Teachers for grades 3-6 (Room 102) are Arthur French and Sonja Peterson.

See detailed schedule of lessons on the church web site.

Confirmation

Sunday classes meet at 9:15 a.m. in Room 203-204 with Kirsten Mebust.



Youth Group

Youth Group meets on Sunday mornings from 9:15 to 10:25 a.m. in the Youth Room. The discussion will focus on topics of interest to the group. All students in grades 9-12 are welcome.



Adult Forums

(9:15-10:25 a.m. in Heritage Hall, below the Sanctuary)

Jan. 3: No Educational Hour Programming

Jan. 10: A Conversation with Zach Busch

For several months we have been enjoying the musical talent of our new Minister of Worship and Music, and today is our opportunity to learn more about who he is and how he views worship and the role of music in the service. Come and learn more about worship at University Lutheran Church of Hope. He may even have us sing together!



Jan. 17 and 24: Epiphany: The Season of Light

Hope member Alden Tetlie will facilitate a discussion about hope. What revelation of hope can our faith, centered in Jesus, bring to our present world? Can we still capture the excitement of Christ's newness? Using excerpts from lectures given by our own former Hope member, David Lose (now president of Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia), and theologian Marcus Borg, Alden will engage us in illuminating our own understanding of the truly good news of Jesus coming.

Jan. 31: 2016 Church Budget

Hope Treasurer Tim Abrahamson and members of the Vision & Governance Board will present the 2016 budget in preparation for the annual congregational meeting on Feb. 7.



Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA) Conference

As a benefit of Hope's support of the FOSNA organization, which advocates peaceful solutions for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Hope member John Setterlund attended the opening day of its national conference held Nov. 20-21 at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in Bloomington.



The conference explored some of the parallels between Palestine and America. Sabeel, headquartered in Jerusalem, is a primarily Christian grassroots movement, working for a just peace in Palestine and Israel. It calls for an end to Israel's military occupation of Palestine, and advocates its implementation through boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS). Though controversial, these methods give ordinary citizens individual and corporate power when political action is stalled, and have proven to be effective.

Conference speakers included Anna Baltzer, a Jewish American from St. Louis, who has observed extensively in Palestine, and has been an activist leader for a decade. She has first-hand knowledge of the "facts on the ground" in Palestine, as well as experience in educating and mobilizing in the U.S. Rev. Graylan Hagler, pastor at Plymouth Congregational UCC church in Washington, D.C., also spoke. He serves as Executive Director of Faith Strategies, a faith movement aimed at ending racism and improving conditions for the poor. Both these speakers make numerous comparisons between the "situation there" and the "situation here." In addition, I heard a panel of students from the University of Minnesota who act on behalf of justice in Palestine.

I attended a similar conference in Chicago a few years ago, and am encouraged to know that University Lutheran Church of Hope is a supporter of FOSNA. I was happy to be invited to attend this conference on behalf of the congregation. Through continuing efforts such as these, as I plan to return to Palestine in December, I am renewed with hope for a just peace in the Holy Land.

John Setterlund
for Hope in the World

Congregational Life

Trust Fund Grants for 2016

For over thirty years, the Hope Trust fund has been supporting all kinds of ministries at and beyond ULCH: everything from youth ministry to women's retreats, from worship support to kitchen supplies, from education to overseas mission endeavors. Now it's time again for the Trust Board to invite grant requests from congregational members and groups for addressing ministry opportunities in the year ahead. Use the grant request form found on Hope's website or pick one up at the church office or Welcome Center. For questions contact Merrill Morse at mandlmorse@comcast.net. Grant applications are due by Jan. 31, 2016.

Women's Retreat: "Called to Ignite Our Life Together"

The Women of Hope annual retreat will be Jan. 29-31 at Dunrovin Retreat Center near Stillwater. Sign up at the Welcome Center. Cost for the full weekend is \$174.50; scholarships are available. Come to all or part of the weekend. **Deadline to sign up is Wednesday, Jan. 20.** No refunds. For other questions, contact Ann Beane at spirit.beane@gmail.com or Beáta Rydeen at beatarydeen@comcast.net.

Chinese New Year Fellowship Meal Jan. 24

At our Fellowship Meal on Jan. 24 after the 10:30 service, we will bring in The Year of the Monkey with our annual Chinese New Year celebration. Food will be provided by U Garden. Students are our guests and eat free. More information will be provided in the Thursday Epistle.

Mount Carmel Winter Retreat

Looking for a winter get-away and a chance to get to know our community better? You are invited to join a group from Hope at a winter retreat at Mount Carmel Ministries on Lake Carlos near Alexandria, Saturday, Feb. 13 to Monday, Feb. 15 (Presidents' Weekend). Ski, skate, snowshoe, explore the frozen lake, take some quiet time, and enjoy board games, fellowship, good conversation, and Sunday worship. All meals provided. This is a great opportunity for all ages, singles, families, and kids. If you'd like to attend or to learn more, talk with Brian Kufus, Jill at Mt. Carmel (340-846-2744) or jill@mountcarmelministries.com or Pastor Jen.

Annual Meeting and Preparing Annual Reports

Our congregation's annual report is a snapshot of our ministry for the year just past and a way of looking forward to ministry still to come. Gayle Bidne, our business manager, works especially hard at this time of year closing out books and then preparing the report. Thanks to volunteers who have already committed to helping make this preparation go smoothly. We can use extra hands. If you're able to help by editing reports or collating booklets please contact Gayle at 612-331-5988 or ulch@ulch.org Thanks in advance.

The annual meeting of the congregation of University Lutheran Church of Hope will be held after the 10:30 a.m. worship service on Sunday, Feb. 7. Please watch for more information and plan to attend.

Wanted: A Weekend Custodian (or two)

Isabel Vitale is concluding her role as weekend custodian. Big thanks for her faithful work. She has exciting plans for grad school; to prepare for this, in addition to her regular work, she is attending to preliminary classes and volunteer opportunities. We are seeking a weekend custodian; this position is up to 10 hours per weekend and could be split between two people. Saturday hours vary and often include opening for groups, and event setup and cleanup. Sunday hours include a split shift, with early morning opening of the building and then cleanup/setup after services. Qualities needed: trustworthy, dependable, attentive to detail, hospitable, self-motivated. Contact Pastor Jen at jenn@ulch.org or (612)331-5988 for more information.

All That Is, Seen and Unseen

This phrase is from one of the creeds we use. "All that is seen" is easy to figure out – just look around! The "unseen" is less tangible. Things we can't see are harder to believe in. We can't see wind, thoughts, gravity, radio waves, or electricity, but we know they exist. As Christians, we can't see God, and still we believe. Do you know there is also unseen energy all around us and inside us? Come explore and learn about this energy in a free workshop, Monday Feb. 22 at 7:00 p.m. at University Lutheran Church of Hope. Healing practitioner and Hope member Ann Agrimson will provide ways to explore this energy. No previous experience required. Please call Ann at 612-214-6446 with questions.

Youth Ministry Update

Youth sexuality retreat

Jim Vitale and Jen Nagel will host the biennial youth group sexuality retreat, Friday, Jan. 15 at 5:00 p.m. to Saturday, Jan. 16 at 2 p.m. at University Lutheran Church of Hope. This overnight event is open to any youth who wish to attend. The purpose is to provide a safe environment for youth to learn and ask questions about sexuality, faith, and the Christian witness. We will balance our time together preparing meals, sharing in discussion, relaxing, praying, and worshipping. Watch for more information soon.

If you have questions, or would like to attend, please contact Jim Vitale at jvitale001@luthersem.edu. *The youth group meets each Sunday at 9:15 a.m. and on the first and third Sundays of the month at 5 p.m.*

Worship Planning Workshop

Sunday, Jan. 10, Noon–2 pm. Lunch will be provided.

We invite *you* to participate in planning worship for the season of Lent. In 2016, Lent begins Feb. 10 and Easter is March 27. We want to engage your creative spirit and together discover ways in which the sacred is expressed and experienced in our worship at Hope. No past experience necessary – all are welcome! Look for the workshop sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center.

From the Hope Worship Planning Team (aka WPT): Jen Nagel, Zach Busch, Paul Odenbach, Lisa Morse, and Beáta Rydeen. Questions? Email Beáta at beatarydeen@comcast.net.



One Body – Many Parts
Ansgar Holmberg, CSJ, Artist

Senior Group Meets Teddy Roosevelt Jan. 20

The Hope Senior Group's first meeting of the New Year will be Jan. 20. Lunch will be at 12 noon with program following at 1 p.m. All seniors and friends of any age are cordially invited. Please make reservations for the meal with your caller or Pastor Esther Dant at (651)636-7834 or (612)331-5988 x818 by Thursday, Jan. 14.



Following lunch in Fellowship Hall, we will move to Heritage Hall for our special program, presented by award-winning Theodore Roosevelt impersonator Adam Lindquist. Since 2008, Lindquist has traveled the country as Roosevelt and has entertained schoolchildren, care center residents, business leaders, and government officials. His representation of the 26th President has been recognized by his peers as uncanny, earning him first place in national living history competitions. His goal, which he often achieves, is “to make my audiences believe they are meeting Theodore Roosevelt in person.”

Everyone is welcome! If you cannot come to the luncheon, please know you are welcome to attend just the program.

Again, we give thanks for the years of faithful service given by Leona Reyelts in leading this part of our Senior Ministry here at Hope. We recognized her on her retirement from this role at our December meeting and gave her a gift of appreciation—a Bachman's gift card—so that spring in her yard will be a remembrance of our gratitude.

Blessed New Year!
Pastor Esther

Families Moving Forward: It Takes a Village



Thank you to Bryan Kufus and Jo Schroeder for keeping the Families Moving Forward at Hope alive and well for 12 years, and to Beth Gauper, who made sure there was food available for breakfast and in the evenings for guests to pack in their lunches for the next day. We are grateful to Prospect Park United Methodist Church and St. Francis Cabrini Church for their continued support.

We thank the volunteers who provided meals during our most recent week in October: Karen Westwood; Susan Williford; Steve, Nancy, Kyle, and Sam Struthers; Randy, Kelly, and Seneca Brooks; Pat Frolen, Bob Dickhaus, and Johannah Brown; Gretchen Peik; Louise Bjorkman; and Prospect Park United Methodist Church and St. Francis Cabrini Church.

We also want to thank the volunteers who spent evenings at Hope engaging with the children and adults in activities after supper: Jim Solem; Bob Paschke; Bryan Kufus; Doug Hartmann, Teresa Swartz, and Emma Hartmann; Shelly Parry; Rebecca Tetlie; and Carol Shirley, who returned to volunteer for an evening. Thanks to Jo Schroeder, Ann Beane, Uli Koester, Marilyn Asp, Nancy Swanson, and Jim Vitale, who coordinated the youth and young adult groups for Halloween evening. We have signed on for two weeks in 2016: May 1-8 and September 11-18.

Christine Nielsen and Julie Paschke
Co-coordinators

Facilities Committee Report: The Roof Over Our Heads

Perhaps the work of the Facilities Committee is the least exciting thing we do as a church. And yet I am sure we all recognize the importance of maintaining our facility – preventing neglect, decay, and unnecessary deterioration. I also assume Hope members are aware of what a truly large facility we have, and what a potential liability that is. Aging buildings have closed many a congregation because of the high cost of maintenance. We see these churches around us. Some are now gone; some don't have a bright future. We feel their pain. Maintaining these grand structures can be very expensive, easily reaching \$100,000 or more.

University Lutheran Church of Hope has one of these grand structures. We should all be grateful for our financial health – for our loyal members who give so generously! They are what keeps us a living, breathing, successful congregation, and keeps the wolf from our door. We have been progressive and proactive in dealing with some very significant expenses and concerns (e.g. our recent boiler system replacement).

And now, roofs. Flat roofs are subject to routine failure, and need replacing every 20 to 30 years. The Executive Committee and the Vision & Governance Board have approved a recommendation from the Facilities Committee to replace all our remaining flat roof rubber membranes except the Thorpe Chapel roof, which was replaced last spring, and the peaked roof over the sanctuary. This will happen in summer 2016. In varying degrees, the flat roofs of Hope have been in terrible shape for years now, patched many times by our maintenance contractor. The expense of replacement is very significant. We are grateful that our governing bodies concurred with our recommendation to do this now. Replacing all these roofs now, at the same time, results in significant savings: \$10,500 on inflation and trip charges, and the \$4000 we have spent in the last 2 years on maintenance and patching. Finally, by signing the contract now at 2015 prices, the contractor will provide free patching of the old roofs until summer and repair a large gap in the bell tower roof, which requires a cherry picker. The enhanced high-quality system (including reinforced rubber) that we selected will have a life expectancy of 30-35 years. The members of the Facilities Committee can breathe a large sigh of relief.

In other recent improvements, the foggy glass of the large east side entry doors by the Welcome Center has been replaced, and the broken concrete on the ramp by those doors has been repaired and replaced. In that same area, all concrete and building seams and cracks were caulked, preventing further deterioration from freezing water, ice and snow. And, the odor in the women's restroom by the kitchen, caused by a leaking seal, has been eliminated.

Craig Nelson
Facilities Co-chair

Hope for Hannah

On Jan. 31, 2016, I will be hosting a figure skating exhibition and educational trade show. My project is titled: *HOPE FOR HANNAH*. I am hoping you will come and support me.

Hannah Kiresuk, a member of University Lutheran Church of Hope, is the inspiration for my project. Hannah suffers from Myasthenia Gravis (MG), and is currently fighting for her life. Hannah introduced my sister and me to figure skating when we were very young; it has been a passion of mine since I was three years old. I plan to combine this passion with a trade show that will include information about MG and what the community can do to help Hannah and others who are fighting this disease.

Please plan to attend on Jan. 31, 12:30-2:00 p.m. at the Roseville Skating Center, 2661 Civic Center Drive in Roseville. I will also be hosting a **blood drive** in Hannah's honor on Saturday, Feb. 27, 12:00-4:00pm at the Roseville Skating Center. Please consider saving a life by making a blood donation. If you are interested in donating, please contact me at acarpenter1721@gmail.com For more information about Hannah, visit www.cotaforhannahk.com.

Anna Carpenter
Hope member

Luther College Nordic Choir in Concert Here at Hope

On Monday evening Feb. 1 at 7 p.m., the renowned Nordic Choir of Luther College, conducted by Dr. Allen Hightower, will perform a concert in our sanctuary. The concert is presented as part of the choir's West Coast tour, with stops in Washington, Oregon, California, and Arizona. Tickets for the concert are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students, and can be purchased in advance online at tickets.luther.edu or by phone at (800)4-LUTHER. Tickets are also available at the door.

Founded in 1946, Nordic Choir enjoys international acclaim as a premier collegiate choral ensemble. Nordic Choir has toured extensively throughout the U.S., performing in churches of all denominations, schools, and concert halls, including Lincoln Center in New York City; the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.; Orchestra Hall in Chicago; Orchestra Hall and the Historic State Theatre in Minneapolis; the Ordway Theater in St. Paul; Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Crystal Cathedral in Los Angeles; and the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City. For information about how you can help with the concert or provide hospitality to the choir here at church, contact Zach Busch at zachb@ulch.org.

Hope Book Club

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Come join the Hope Book Club in the new year to discuss *What Jesus Meant*, by Garry Wills, on January 10, 7 p.m. in the Hope Library.

“Garry Wills brings his signature brand of erudite, unorthodox thinking to his latest book of revelations. . . . A tour de force and a profound show of faith.” *O, the Oprah Magazine*.

“In what are billed ‘culture wars,’ people on the political right and the political left cite Jesus as endorsing their views. But in this *New York Times*-bestselling masterpiece, Garry Wills argues that Jesus subscribed to no political program. He was far more radical than that. . . . *What Jesus Meant* is a brilliant addition to our national conversation on religion.” www.goodreads.com

“So what was – what is – the ultimate meaning of Jesus? The question will be with us always, even to the end of the age. But we do know this: One cannot read his story without seeing that there is no life without love.”

www.nytimes.com

February 2016: *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*, by Naomi Klein. (We normally meet the 2nd Sunday of the month, but that is Valentine's Day in February, 2016, so we will decide at our January meeting when we will meet in February.)

Please contact Sonja Peterson with suggestions or questions at 612-789-0397 or speterson@dunnwald.com



President's Perspective

Over the last 20 years, I've imagined myself one day serving as president of this congregation. This imagining would usually occur on New Member Sunday, when the president welcomed new members during the worship service and gave each family a plant. I'm happy to say that my vision of what being president of the congregation meant was fulfilled on Nov. 22, when I got to officially welcome an intergenerational group of new members into our congregation! Much of the work of the president, however, is not so public or festive. January is actually one of the tough months, as the Executive Committee and V&G Board prepare the new budget for the congregation to vote on at the February annual meeting. While it is challenging to predict income from parking or expenses related to staffing, you can help us with the budget by filling out a pledge card for your 2016 giving (yes, you CAN still fill out a card now). This reduces the guesswork about that very important revenue stream.

You are generous givers, as you demonstrated in the capital campaign last year. Thank you! With your financial support, we were able to pay down part of the mortgage principal and replace the roof over Thorpe Chapel last year. At the December 2015 V&G Board meeting, the board approved a contract for \$227,000 to replace the very old, leaky roofs over the education, office, and lounge wings of the building in 2016. Appropriately, this money will come from the Building Fund; we are fortunate that we do not need to dip into our general operating account for this project. This leaves us with a healthy balance in that account that provides us not only with a cushion, but flexibility, as our staffing needs may change throughout the course of the new year.

In addition to maintaining our physical space as a welcoming place for our neighbors, we are moving forward with our vision goal of "igniting worship, deepening spiritually." Please note the opportunity to participate in worship planning on Sunday, Jan. 10. We will also begin working with consultants from InterServe in January to discern how this congregation can better minister to children, youth, and families. As 2015 draws to a close, we can be thankful for the dedicated service of so many here at University Lutheran Church of Hope—the pastors, staff, lay leadership, and faithful members volunteering in so many ways. We pray for health and healing in 2016, especially for the Executive Committee. May they not fall from a ladder (Tim) or bike (Beth), need any surgery (Tim and Beth), be confined to home with back pain (Doug), endure multiple cortisone shots (John), or find themselves knocked to the ground by a moving vehicle while walking across campus (Kirsten). Happy New Year!

Beth Kautz
Congregational President

Confronting Racism: A Holy Yearning

ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton writes, "Racism remains an enduring crisis in the United States. As Lutheran Christians, we must continue our involvement in and commitment to the important work of naming racism as a sin – a violation of God's intention for humanity." You are invited to a live webcast, "Confronting Racism: A Holy Yearning," on Jan. 14 at 8 p.m. CST. This conversation will offer a variety of perspectives on the U.S. criminal justice system. Bishop Eaton co-hosts this webcast with ELCA member William B. Horne II. They welcome to the conversation Judge Yolanda Tanner, an associate judge in the Baltimore City Circuit Court; Leonard Duncan, a student at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and an ELCA Fund for Leaders scholarship recipient, who will share his experience of incarceration, poverty, and homelessness; and Charlene Guiliani, a former police sergeant, a student at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, and an ELCA Fund for Leaders scholarship recipient. Also, through our church's social statements, "The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries," and "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture," the ELCA collectively has expressed its calling to confront racism and advocate for justice and fairness for all people. These statements are on elca.org. Questions to be considered during the webcast can be sent to livinglutheran@elca.org.

Staff

Pastors:

Rev. Jen Nagel
Rev. Esther Dant

Minister of Worship and Music:

Zach Busch

Director of Education and

Small-Group Ministries:

Vacant

Youth Director:

James Vitale, Jr.

Business Manager:

Gayle Bidne

Custodian:

Geremew Beshah – weekdays
Isabel Vitale – weekends

Working in partnership with Lutheran Campus Ministry

Tim Schroeder
Rev. Kate Reuer Welton

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