



The Visitor



June/July 2016

Issue #12-6

Complex world. Thoughtful church.

601 13th Avenue SE
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55414-1437
Tel. (612) 331-5988 Fax (612) 623-0693
www.ulch.org

*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.*

Summer Worship and Music

Two special Worship and Music happenings will begin this summer! First, join us on the fourth Wednesdays of June, July, and August for **Prayer Around the Cross**. This restful, meditative style of worship, begun at Holden Village, is one we utilized during the season of Lent this year in the chapel. The worship services are filled with silence, prayer, candle lighting, and gentle singing. This summer we'll experiment with using the patio and courtyard for Prayer Around the Cross. Services will be at 8 p.m. on Wednesdays June 22, July 27, and August 24.



Second, this summer will mark the first ever **Courtyard Concert Series** at Hope! This will be a three-concert series of intimate chamber music in the beauty of our courtyard. Concerts will be the third Sundays of July, August, and September at 7 p.m. The July 17 concert will feature University of Minnesota graduate student and fabulous soprano Regina Stroncek, with Zach Busch at the keyboard. August 21 will feature a program of music for violin and piano by the gifted duo Ashley Ng and Nanyi Qiang, both graduate students at the U. Lastly, a program of delightful piano duets on September 18 will be performed by Zach Busch and his dear friend and fellow church musician Emily Bruflat, Cantor at First Lutheran in Saint Peter, MN. Seating for these concerts is general admission, and all concerts are free-will offering.

Zach Busch
Minister of Worship and Music

Treasurer's Report for April 2016

April 2016 and Year-to-Date Income and Expenses						
Summary	Actuals April 2016	Budget April 2016	April 2016 Variance	YTD Actuals	YTD Budget	YTD Variance
General Giving	31,163	36,075	(4,912)	154,639	161,250	(6,611)
Rental Income	6,687	8,292	(1,604)	24,886	31,667	(6,781)
Total Income	37,850	44,367	(6,516)	179,525	192,917	(13,392)
Total Expenses	42,528	53,947	(11,419)	152,101	180,222	(28,121)
Net Income	(4,678)	(9,580)	4,903	27,424	12,695	14,729



April total income is unfavorable to budget by \$6.5k; YTD our income is unfavorable to budget by \$13k. While the majority of our rental income comes from PEASE, we also budget for parking lot rental, both daily and overnight. The overnight spots have finally all been filled; this will help our rental income going forward.

In the upcoming summer months when you are enjoying vacations and relaxing with family and friends, please remember that the needs of our church are still as important as they are during the Fall and Winter. Your offerings keep our congregation together in fellowship and help our church continue with our mission to demonstrate God's love for the world.

YTD net income is favorable to budget by \$15k. While our total income is unfavorable to budget by \$13k, total expenses are favorable to budget by \$28k. All areas of ministry are being mindful with our resources and for this we are grateful.

Income for the Hope for the Future capital campaign in April was \$6.2k and again we paid \$6.9k toward our mortgage. Our building fund balance as of April 30, 2016 is \$266k. We will see a decrease in this balance within the next couple of months as we replace the roof on the Education and Office wing of our church.

If you have any questions, please contact me at treasurer@ulch.org

Ruth Hedman
Treasurer

Life Events at Hope

We are a community called to hold one another in prayer. In these Life Events, we try our best to include everyone (members and others close to our community, births, death, marriages, and other pivotal events), but we need your help to stay up to date. We include in prayer...

Births: Alton Charles Edin, child of Stacey and Colt Edin.

Baptisms: On May 29, 2016, Gabrielle Lauren Davenport, child of Julie and Greg Davenport.

Deaths: Katerina Ostroushko, mother of Peter and Marge Ostroushko. And, all those who grieve the loss of loved ones. Our losses remain and we remember the gifts and stories of those who have died, and support one another in our living days.

Significant Illness: Those living with illness, cancer, uncertain diagnosis, chemical dependency, and mental health struggles. We pray especially for Kathy Knudson, Chuck Lewis, and Hannah Kiresuk. We also include in prayer a number of our members who have experienced significant falls in recent weeks.

Marriages: Kjerstin Sanden and Shane Yager are marrying on June 4 at University Lutheran Church of Hope. Lance Radziej and Megan Baney are marrying on June 25 in Little Falls.

Transitions: Graduations, relationships, moves, job changes, retirement—God goes with us.

Pastor Jen, Pastor Esther, and the University Lutheran Church of Hope Staff

Being Sent Forth

I write on Pentecost Evening. Our sending hymn this morning was a catchy hymn from Central America; I suspect it was new to many of us and this line captured my attention:

*“The angels are not sent into our world of pain
to do what we were meant to do in Jesus’ name;
that falls to you and me and all who are made free.*

Help us, O Lord, we pray, to do your will today.” -ELW #538



I love Pentecost and the freedom of the Pentecost Spirit unleashed, out of the box, and calling us forth. By the time you read this, we’ll be into our summer schedule, quieter days, and a changed pace, but that freeing Spirit of Pentecost remains. As we look toward this season after Pentecost, I’m reflecting on my hopes for these summer months, and the way I might heed this hymn’s call.

A little more time. Schedules free up and I’m looking forward to visiting with many of you whom I haven’t yet had a chance to get to know. If you’d like to arrange a time for a visit, want to meet at a coffee shop, or are open to taking a walk together, let me know. I’d love to learn more about you and what God is doing in and through you.

Engaging our neighborhood. Our neighborhood and campus team is getting underway and will explore the neighborhood in a variety of ways. One way I’m doing this is prayer walking and prayer running. As I go, I’m praying for our neighborhood, pondering our congregation and ministry, and listening for the Spirit working in all of this. Want to join me?

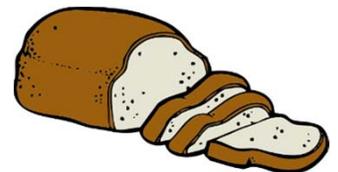
Programs and staffing. The Children, Youth, and Families Transition Team will bring a recommendation to the Vision & Governance Board in June. Your input over the last months and this team’s good work will help guide how we shape our programming and staffing in this particular area. While focusing on some specific elements, we’re also looking at the whole ministry and how best to staff for all that is before us.

Rest and renewal. Our family will join in the June overnight camping and paddling on the St. Croix River. I’m excited about Day Camp and the powerful and fun collaboration with many other congregations; I’m thrilled that we have a number of Hope kids and adults participating! In July our family will take a couple of weeks away to meet up with cousins and grandparents in the Allegheny area of Pennsylvania—precious time together! My prayer for the summer? Space for the Spirit to work in each of us, and our community of faith. Grace with ourselves. And, the grounded-ness that comes with time outside, time with God and God’s people, and time to be renewed. May we “do what we were meant to do in Jesus’ name.” Thanks be to God for our life together.

Pastor Jen

Bread for the World Sunday, June 12

June 12 will be Bread for the World Sunday at University Lutheran Church of Hope. You will have an opportunity to write letters to your representatives in Washington. The 2016 Campaign of Letters, entitled “Survive and Thrive,” is focused on increasing the international funding for the nutritional needs of women, infants, and children.



Our government has led the way in improving the nutritional health of mothers and children, and there has been a tremendous improvement through many different programs, from agricultural development for small farmers (a high percentage are women) to micro-loans (most of them to women). By 2013, 17,000 fewer children under the age of five were dying each day worldwide than in 1990. However, we have a long way to go and must continue until all children are fully nourished and reach their full potential. This is an achievable goal, in which Christians can play a critical role.

Donna Pususta Neste
Hope in the World

FAITH FORMATION NEWS



Faith Formation for All Ages

Summer Day Camp: Peace. Salaam. Shalom

Day Camp is coming up at the end of June and it's not too late to get involved! Kids and families, register now. Adults and youth, we can use your help; talk with Pastor Jen if you can volunteer for part or all of the week!



What: A progressive ecumenical summer day camp experience offering faith formation in a fun, safe, Christ-centered and relational setting. We'll be learning about our call to be peacemakers in a world of many faiths through music, story, art, play, field trips, and more!

When: Monday June 27 through Friday July 1, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Where: Hosted this year at Bethel Lutheran Church, 4120 17th Ave S, Minneapolis MN 55407

Who: 4-year-olds to 8th graders, plus youth and adult volunteers

Cost: \$25 per camper, \$60 maximum for families. Scholarships available. Donations welcome.

Sponsoring congregations: Augustana Lutheran, Bethel Lutheran, Calvary Lutheran, First Christian (Disciples of Christ), First Congregational UCC, Judson Memorial Baptist, Lake of the Isles Lutheran, Lake Nokomis Presbyterian, Living Table UCC, Living Spirit UMC, Lyndale UCC, Our Saviour's Lutheran, St. John's Lutheran, Salem English Lutheran, University Lutheran Church of Hope, and Zion Lutheran.

Registration: Registration forms available at church or at <http://www.ulch.org/connect/children-and-families/> Please register your child(ren) by June 1. Mail or otherwise bring the form along with your payment (check to OSLC) to: Pastor Martha Bardwell, Our Saviour's Luth. Church, 2315 Chicago Ave, Minneapolis MN 55404.

Questions: Talk with Pastor Jen.

Volunteering and Supporting: Adult and youth volunteers are needed!

Thanksgiving for Education at University Lutheran Church of Hope

Over the last year, a dedicated group of volunteers organized, created, and taught Christian Education and music for people of all ages. They have worked hard to keep our high-quality Faith Formation at Hope running well throughout the transition after Diane Shallue's retirement.

We give thanks to God and to the Adult Forum Ministry Team of Diane Greve (Chair), Alden Tetlie, Marilyn Asp, Ruth Hedman, Ruth Fingerson, and John Setterlund, for helping shape our faith by choosing topics and contacting, scheduling, and hosting presenters in 2015-16, and to the many Hope members who participated as presenters for the Forums.

We give thanks to God and to the following people for shaping Children's and Youth Ministry, including Sunday morning Christian Education, music, and intergenerational events:

Godly Play Teachers and Assistants: Madhu Bhat, Sara Tufvesson Doure, Stephanie Struthers, and Melissa Odenbach, and Renee Real-Banas

Godly Play Music Leaders: Tim Gustafson and Paul Odenbach

Grades 1-2 Teachers and Assistants: Kristine Robinson, Nancy Morgan, Suzie Robinson, and Mary Greenwaldt

Grades 3-6 Teachers and Music Leaders: Arthur French, Sonja Peterson, Kelly Brooks, Rosalie Eldevik, Sheila Hougen, and Sarah Cooper-Evans

(continued on p. 5)

(continued from p. 4)

Sunday Morning Confirmation: Kirsten Mebust

Youth Group: Jim Vitale and Leena Rapacz

Coordinator: Shelly Parry

An especially big thank you goes to Shelly Parry, who served as Coordinator and Children's Ministry Team Leader throughout the eight months since Diane Shallue's retirement. From opening doors and providing supplies on Sunday morning to creating meeting agendas and planning special events, Shelly has spent countless organizational and leadership hours, making it possible for everyone else to focus on their roles more effectively. We look forward to the fall, when Sunday morning Faith Formation will begin on September 11.

Children, Youth, and Family Transition Team Update: Finding Hope for the Future in Faith Formation

On May 1, we celebrated children's and youth ministry (CYM) at University Lutheran Church of Hope. The congregation responded prayerfully to Pastor Jen Nagel's sermon, offering our most important values and experiences and our commitments to support youth and children on post-it notes as "flames" for igniting our life together. The Interserve CYM Interim Team asked for written responses in a survey about these important ministries at Hope. These responses have been collected and analyzed, and we are working on approaches and staffing to help us strengthen Faith Formation on Sunday morning and other times of the week.

I am encouraged by what we are learning from the survey and flames. People of Hope deeply value the presence of children and youth in our life and in our worship together. This is a congregation in which children and youth are to be seen, heard, and cherished, at all ages as workers with us in the realm of God. We want children to learn and experience the traditions of worship and music that we value, and we love to see, hear, and witness their gifts, in worship and in life. Our youth feel valued and skilled, and have learned love of God and neighbor well. They have deep and enduring theological questions, and feel that this church is a place where questions and doubts are welcomed. We've done a good job of supporting and encouraging them.

We can also do better at some things. Children and youth could be invited more fully into worship planning and service, but also into the work of other groups tasked with ministries of the congregation. There is a deep and broad longing for real intergenerational relationship in faith formation that both the surveys and the flames revealed. Families with young children as well as older adults in the congregation expressed the desire for intergenerational Faith Formation and the witness and inspiration that intergenerational relationships can ignite. By the time you read this, the Interserve CYM team will be making recommendations on how to move forward with both staff and programming. I am confident that we can use these common hopes to shape our relationships and Faith Formation in directions that are even more Hopeful.

Kirsten Mebust
Vision and Governance Board, Education Liaison

Suzie Robinson, Outstanding Youth Leader

Suzie Robinson, a senior at Minneapolis Washburn High School, is to be recognized for her outstanding demonstration of leadership and volunteerism this year in Worship and Children's Ministry. Suzie has been instrumental in the conduct of Sunday School classes at all levels and in weekly children's music lessons, as well as acolyting and serving communion. Suzie has an incredible rapport with younger children, being able to focus and engage them in the activities at hand. She is an avid participant and leads by example, whether in prayer, discussion, instrumentation, or singing. Her frequent contributions during worship show children, her peers, and adults alike the value and importance of faithful service and participation. While Suzie is still a high school student, she shows great maturity in service and leadership in our church community. She is an inspiring example of "actualizing" her baptism and confirmation as a fully contributing adult member of our congregation.

Arthur French
Sunday School Teacher and Children's Ministry Team

Congregational Life

Congratulations, Graduates! Recognition on June 5

Everyone is cordially invited to attend a reception on June 5 after the 10 a.m. service honoring all those graduating this season. This year's high school graduates include Clara Dunnwald, Emma Hartmann, Maya O'Loughlin, Phoebe Sanders, Kyle Struthers, and Emilie Zibble. Finishing undergraduate and graduate degrees are Elliot Beane, Thomas Hvizdos, Dan Nelson, and Mason Schraufnagel. Nat Hamman is completing his studies in Nigeria. The following Lutheran Campus Ministry students also graduated: Sam Amodeo, Corey Bergman, Mateo Fischer, Krista Hanamann, Drew Lahl, Samantha Lee, Emily Mattison, Rachel Maursinec, Amy Oie, Neil Evan Peterson, Dana Rademacher, Wesley Sandholm, Heidi Schaus, and Lauren Zima. We will give thanks for these wonderful people and the gifts God has given them as we celebrate their achievements and bless their exciting futures.

Summer Paddling and Camping—St. Croix River in June!

Want to get out on the water this summer and canoe or kayak with a group from church? You're in luck! In May we paddled on the Chain of Lakes in Minneapolis and then enjoyed lunch together. Mark your calendar for two more opportunities:

Friday, June 17 (overnight camping) and Saturday, June 18: Paddling on the St. Croix River

Saturday, August 13: Paddling on the Rice Creek Chain in the northern metro.

For the June event, here are the plans; watch for more information in the bulletin and sign up now.

If you'd like, join us for overnight camping at the group camp site (tents only) at St. Croix State Park (east of Hinckley) on Friday, June 17. We'll paddle on the St. Croix River on Saturday, approximately 10 a.m. through midafternoon, and then enjoy a meal out later in the afternoon. The St. Croix is a beautiful river in this area, more wild and very quiet. People of all ages welcome. Canoes and kayaks can be rented, or bring your own equipment. Would you like to participate? Call or text Bryan Kufus at 612-685-0402 or bryan@bkufus.com

Pride Festival

The Twin Cities Pride Festival is June 24-26. We'll join other Reconciling in Christ congregations in hosting a booth at the festival at Loring Park throughout the weekend. This is a great chance to get the word out that University Lutheran Church of Hope is a congregation that is welcoming to GLBTQ people and is active in our community. Watch for more information about this opportunity, and talk with Betty Schroeder or Clair Gustafson if you are interested in participating.

Backpacking with Camp Amnicon

The University Lutheran Church of Hope youth group will once again be taking its annual trip to Camp Amnicon to grow together as a community in Christ. This summer, we will spend 6 days backpacking through the Sawtooth Mountains on the Superior Hiking Trail, hiking, exploring, swimming, playing, and praying. The trip is scheduled for Sunday, July 17 to Friday, July 22. Contact Youth Director Jim Vitale at jvitale001@luthersem.edu if you are interested in attending or if you have questions!

Service Retreat with Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches

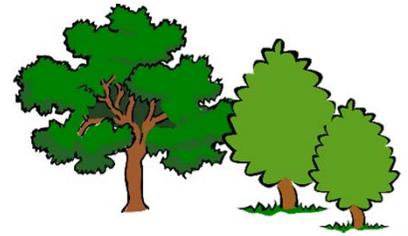
This summer, middle and high school youth are invited to attend a service retreat with the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches (GMCC). This overnight retreat will be held August 10-13 at GMCC in south Minneapolis. The cost is \$200 per person, with some scholarships available. Join us as together we learn more about the needs of Minneapolis and help create a more just and compassionate local community. If you have questions or are interested in attending, contact Jim Vitale at jvitale001@luthersem.edu

Neighborhood and Campus Team

One of our Vision Goals is Connecting with the University and the Community. We'll engage the surrounding neighborhoods as we make our walls 'porous' and make University Lutheran Church of Hope a place where Lutheran campus ministry happens. Our team is committed to this work: Tim Gustafson, Doug Hartmann, Beth Kautz, Joan Campbell, Kirsten Mebust, Rob Gerloff, Lynette Lamb, and Pastor Jen. Talk with us if you have ideas or want to get involved or learn more.

Courtyard Happenings

If you attended the courtyard ideas meeting last winter or heard about it and are wondering what is going on, here is a brief summary of progress and plans. After that meeting, landscaper Tom Peluf took the ideas expressed and used them to develop a preliminary landscape design for the courtyard. The plan was first presented to the Hope Church Trust, who granted \$5,000 to the overall project for 2016. The design has also been seen by Facilities Committee members, some members of the Vision & Governance Board, and other interested parties.



A committee of two (Sharla Asseng and I) are currently reviewing the design to put together a presentation to the V&G Board that recommends priorities, timeline, and costs. We anticipate this project will take two years or more. Stay tuned for more information, including calls for volunteer labor and donations of material and cash.

Meanwhile, Facilities has arranged to have two trees removed from the courtyard and the others pruned. The trees to be removed are the large honey locust near the sidewalk that is rotting out from the inside, and the Norway maple near the lounge door that has been underperforming for years. Both will be lifted out of the courtyard by a large crane (should be interesting to watch) in mid-June and cut up.

Also, a committee has formed to plan the children's play area in the courtyard. The members include Ann Agrimson, Ann Beane, Sarah Cooper-Evans, and Melissa Odenbach. They are looking at developing a natural interactive space (no swings or slides or commercial play equipment).

Kathy Knudson
Facilities Committee and Gardens of Hope

Hope in the World News

This fall University Lutheran Church of Hope will join other Southeast neighborhood churches in partnering with the Sheridan Story network to counteract child hunger. Through the facilitation of the Sheridan Story staff we will be helping to provide food on the weekends for 75 qualifying students at Marcy Open school.



Hope's participation has been made possible by a generous grant from the Hope Church Trust, which will contribute to purchasing the food distributed through the program plus other administrative expenses. As Fall approaches, consider being one of the volunteers who help distribute food to the children's backpacks on Friday afternoons, or perhaps participate in one of the periodic 'packing events' at the Sheridan Story offices. Stay tuned for more information over the summer. To get a 'taste' now of the Sheridan Story's work, watch this heart-warming video clip (5 minutes) at <http://www.thesheridanstory.com/video-jordan>

Pastor Amson Hamman contacted us recently to check in. He sends his greetings, and reports that St. Peter's congregation is doing well and that the threat from Boko Haram has subsided since the military is pursuing them more aggressively. Pastor Amson also mentioned that he has just completed his course work at the University of Jos for his degree in Conflict Management and Peace Studies. His thesis work which remains will be on the topic of Insurgency and Human Security in Northeastern Nigeria.

Bruce Eldevik
Hope in the World

President's Perspective and Vision & Governance Update

One of my passions is fly-fishing and its preparation (you've been lucky in that in the four months I've been congregational president I haven't yet written about fly-fishing). Some have equated fly-fishing to religion. In the words of several well known fly-fishermen:

"If fishing is like religion, then fly-fishing is high church."

Tom Brokaw

"In my family, there was no clear division between religion and fly fishing."

Norman Maclean, *A River Runs Through It*

"Some go to church and think about fishing; others go fishing and think about God."

Tony Blake

I go fishing and think trout live in the 'cathedrals' of nature. All my angling friends agree that it's not all that important if we catch fish.

Vision & Governance Update

At the May 12 V&G meeting we met our new Summer Pastoral Assistant, Dan Nelson. He will be among us during these summer months so please make him feel welcome. Treasurer Ruth Hedman updated us on our current financial status. We heard from other ministry liaisons and spent the bulk of our time discussing the upcoming congregation meeting May 22.

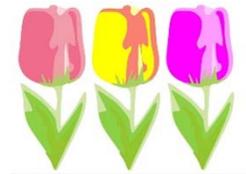
Members of University Lutheran Church of Hope attended a brief congregational meeting after the 10:30 service on May 22 for updates on many areas of our ministry. A hand-out is available if you could not attend.

John Rydeen
Congregation President

From the Visitation Pastor

To Everything There Is A Season.....and a time for every purpose under heaven.

In this beautiful season of spring, change is everywhere, including in the lives of our beloved homebound members.



It is a time for Lorraine Berger to leave her art gallery apartment at Augustana and move closer to family in Eden Prairie. She is so missed, by the people there and by all of us who looked forward to our visits with her.

It is a time for Augustana monthly communion to change, when Millie Holmgren is the only one able to attend. We are so grateful that Millie is back in her apartment again after her fall. Plans are in full speed for her 100th birthday party at Hope in July.

It is a time for stopping and seeing all the new things blooming, when I walk up the steps to Phil and Joy Thompson's incredibly creative home. Soon we will be having communion out on the front porch again.

It is generations of care continuing when Friendly Visitor Pat Frolen visits Bertha Hanson as she recovers from her fall. Pat's mother Winnie was one of the original committee. Winnie's granddaughters fill our coffee hour monthly with to-die-for selections of food for us to enjoy.

It is a time for our Hope Diamonds Senior Group to move into our new schedule for fall, meeting quarterly. Soon, into the summer months, we will have another important organizational meeting. We expect the great participation we had at the last one, "Stepping up to run our own group," as Ruth Lundquist says. Love it.

Blessings to all in this season of changes,

Pastor Esther

Hail and Farewell, Tim Schroeder and Dan Nelson



This is the time of year for transitions. In this season we give thanks for Tim Schroeder who has served as our Liaison to Lutheran Campus Ministry for the last two years. In this role, he's worked closely with LCM, and has also been a bridge to our ministry here at University Lutheran Church of Hope, and to young adult ministry generally. On June 5 we'll send Tim off with prayers of Godspeed (he's also be preaching that Sunday) and give deep thanks for his ministry. Thank you, Tim!

This summer we also welcome Dan Nelson to our congregation in the role of Summer Pastoral Assistant. This summer stint (mid May-through early August) here at Hope is the final component in Dan's preparation for ordained ministry in the ELCA. Throughout the summer he'll participate in our wide variety of ministry experiences: worship, pastoral care, bible study and teaching (here at Hope and in the neighborhood), summer day camp, and administration. Please, take time to get to know Dan and share your story with him. Welcome, Dan!

Tim Schroeder bids "*Tschüss*"

It has been an amazing two years! I remember my first day like it was yesterday. I arrived to staff the Student Welcome Back party in the Fall of 2014. Food, fun, and so much conversation! From there we have spent much time building relationships with students and strengthening our support for Lutheran Campus Ministry. I am proud of the work we have accomplished these last two years, and I am excited to see what you are all up to next, in making 'porous walls' in order to reach the neighborhood!

I want to **THANK YOU** for welcoming me into the church family here at Hope; I have had tremendous opportunities to learn and to lead. As I disembark for Berlin, Germany for my next year of internship, know that you are in my prayers. Blessings to your continued ministry in Dinkytown, the University of Minnesota, and the greater Twin Cities! Until next time, *Tschüss*.

Sincerely,
Tim Schroeder

Dan Nelson Says Hello

Greetings! Summer Pastoral Assistant Dan here. Thank you for opening up your congregation for me to continue to learn and discern the variety of ways that God is at work.

I am originally from Fort Worth, Texas, moving to study at Luther Seminary in 2012. Most recently, I lived in Las Vegas, Nevada, completing a greatly successful internship experience. I love music, rock climbing, and finding fun new recipes for my vegan lifestyle. So, don't be shy! I'd love to hear your stories, and share some of mine. God Bless!

A Summer Bible Study

Results of Pentecost: The Book of Acts. The Holy Spirit filled the Apostles and impelled them to take the message of Jesus to the "uttermost parts of the earth". Some of this earliest missionary work is told in The Acts of the Apostles. Join us to study this fascinating story after Sunday worship this summer. John Setterlund has prepared a study guide and will lead the discussion, six Sundays beginning June 5, 11:15 am, in the library.

What Happened at Synod Assembly?



University Lutheran Church of Hope had a great contingent participating at this year's Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly in early May! We had a cadre of voting members (John Lauber, Beth Kautz, Lauren Flaten, John Setterlund, and Pastor Jen). John Bablitch and John Setterlund helped at the LCM table, Pastor Esther attended as a visitor, Zach Busch was the musician for the opening worship, and Beata Rydeen and Roger and Nita Anderson added their voices to the choir! Wow!

John Lauber shares his experience of the Assembly

Highlights for me included:

Opening worship, with music provided by Zach and a contingent from the ULCH choir. I was moved by Ray Makeever's singing of John 4:5-30 and by Bishop Svennungsen's sermon.

The Bishop. The Assembly was my first encounter with Bishop Ann Svennungsen. I found her to be extraordinarily competent, engaging, and warm. The Synod seems to be in good hands.

Synod Council Chair Craig Johnson, who managed to make his credentials reports, review of Synod activities, and other potentially tedious items of business entertaining and interesting.

Barbara Lundblad. Her two sermons on the Assembly's theme of "Telling the Story" were both thought-provoking and compelling.

The opportunity to get to know the other Hope members who were in attendance.

The Business: A substantial portion of the Assembly was spent conducting synod business. Three of the action items were particularly meaty. These included resolutions urging stewardship for water, and a repudiation of the "doctrine of discovery" (a Euro-centric view of the universe that de-humanized and devalued native people in the so-called "New World") that was used to justify conquest and genocide. Both resolutions were approved.

The other action item was a resolution addressing racial injustice. This resolution began by noting that racism is still an intrinsic part of American society, and called on the church to serve as a catalyst for change—fostering conversations, advocating for equality, and devoting tangible resources to efforts to eradicate racism. Before voting on the resolution, the overwhelmingly white, middle class participants in the assembly took some time for a good discussion of its provisions. The assembly passed it unanimously. I wished it had been stronger.

Food for thought: The Assembly focused on the theme "Telling the Story." There was a great deal of conversation about how we should go about sharing the Gospel, making the church relevant to society at large, and diversifying the demographics of the ELCA. Keynote speaker Mike Mann is a veteran storyteller, the skinniest Santa's helper on earth, and my neighbor. As he addressed the theme in his three presentations, he included a strong element of audience participation. Mike pushed me well outside my comfort zone. It occurs to me that if the church is to survive, we will all be required to move outside our comfort zones to tell our stories, work hard for what is right, and be active participants in society, even if we can't always fulfill those responsibilities with elegance and aplomb.

Staff

Pastors:

Rev. Jen Nagel
Rev. Esther Dant

Minister of Worship and Music:

Zach Busch

Youth Director:

James Vitale, Jr.

Business Manager:

Gayle Bidne

Summer Pastoral Assistant:

Dan Nelson

Custodian:

Geremew Beshah – weekdays
Ben Hartmann – Sunday
opening/closing

Child Care: Clair Gustafson

Working in partnership with Lutheran Campus Ministry

Rev. Kate Reuer Welton

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Past President: Beth Kautz

Treasurer: Ruth Hedman

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Youth & Young Adults:

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Education: Kirsten Mebust

Hope in the World: Bruce Eldevik

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Ruth Hedman

Beth Kautz

**Leadership Development
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John Rydeen

Eric Ringham

Board Secretary: Ann Agrimson

The Visitor

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Articles for *The Visitor* may be submitted via e-mail or directly to 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 permission(s) to republish. Send submissions and correspondence to visitor@ulch.org.

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