



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.*

## Images of Lent and Easter at Hope



### **For the Healing of the Nations**

During some of our services during Lent we prayed intentionally for the healing of the nations, and used this world map to focus our prayers and to place candles. Thanks to Calvary Lutheran on Chicago Avenue for sharing their map.

### **Communion Class**

Here are Ashlei and a few of our kids who participated in a recent Communion Class baking bread and learning more about this holy and liberating meal.



### **Climate Ribbons**

Part of a collaborative project using art and ritual to grieve what we each stand to lose to Climate Chaos, and affirm our solidarity as we unite to fight against it.

# Treasurer's Report

	Actuals March 2017	Budget March 2017	Variance March 2017	YTD Actuals	YTD Budget	YTD Variance
General Giving	\$46,126	\$37,392	\$8,735	\$107,045	\$112,175	(\$ 5,130)
Rental Income	19,286	11,610	8,266	34,422	34,829	( 407)
Total income	\$66,002	\$49,001	\$17,000	\$141,467	\$147,004	(\$ 5,537)
Total Expenses	\$54,926	\$50,501	\$ 4,425	\$148,031	\$151,504	(\$3,473)
Net Cash Activity	\$11,075	(\$ 1,500)	\$12,575	(\$ 6,564)	(\$ 4,500)	(\$ 2,064)



I'm happy to be able to report that we did not have to dip into our cash reserves in March as we did in January and February. Year to date, our expenses are more than revenue, but in March we made up some of our shortfall. Thank you, congregation.

The Vision & Governance Board has been reviewing our cash reserves and discussing how we can best use them. In preparation for these discussions I did my part by researching and reaching out to others in regard to how many months of expenses non-profits should have in reserve. (This is similar to financial advisors telling individuals and families they should have 6 months of expenses in the bank in case of a financial hit to their income.) We are in a good position now with the reserves we have. That doesn't mean we won't continue to discuss our benevolences, but it means we don't have to worry about not paying our mortgage next month. Our financial position keeps coming back to the contributions all our members make, our ability to house PEASE, and our leaders being mindful of spending.

As I review the pledged amounts, giving, and other revenue in the past years and the work our church has before us in 2017 and beyond, I have hope that our congregation will continue to realize that all our gifts – both monetary and time and talents – are needed in our work.

As I like to remind everyone, Simply Giving is a great way to evenly distribute your annual giving throughout the year without having to worry about sending your check or even finding your checkbook. A link to Simply Giving is found on our home page at [ulch.org/](http://ulch.org/). And don't forget, you can now give via text. If you'd like information on either Simply Giving or texting your donation, please let me know.

With the good news in our general fund, sadly the activity in the Building Fund as of March 2017 wasn't as good. We show net cash activity of (\$2.2K). The cash balance in our Building Fund is \$50K. We are blessed to have a wonderful building to call home. My hope is that we can continue to build this fund so we will be able to maintain our beautiful building.

If you have any questions please contact me at [treasurer@ulch.org](mailto:treasurer@ulch.org).

Ruth Hedman  
Treasurer

## Hope Book Club

Join the Hope Book Club on May 21 at 7:00 p.m. in the Hope Library to discuss *Bloodline*, by John Turnipseed.



*Torn from an idyllic life with a loving, extended family in 1960s Alabama, young Johnny Turnipseed found himself in Minneapolis with a father he no longer recognized, and empty cupboards. His father's alcoholism and womanizing started a chain reaction of poverty, violence, addiction, and despair that nearly destroyed three generations. From lost and frightened little boy to gang leader, drug dealer, and pimp, to one of the nation's most respected pioneers of community restoration, John Turnipseed's story of transformation and restoration is told with unflinching honesty, and contagious hope. (From the publisher).*

June 11: *Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear*, Elizabeth Gilbert, author of *Eat, Pray, Love*.

Please contact Sonja Peterson with suggestions or questions at 612-789-0397 or [speterson@dunnwald.com](mailto:speterson@dunnwald.com)

## Hello and Goodbye

It's *that* season. Transitions are coming. I sense this on a variety of levels: Graduation party invitations are beginning to arrive. Talk of internships, summer plans, and what comes next is high. Exams and papers are in the air. Anxiety is real. Long-time members are leaving their family homes and anticipating change. Doing a quick check of notes in my calendar, four of the next seven Sundays will include prayers of Godspeed for one or more people. Truth is, reality is, we easily might pray Godspeed nearly every Sunday for the coming stretch. It's *that* season.



At Easter we heard the resurrection Gospel from Matthew's point of view (Matthew 28:1-10) and I noticed that moving line in which the risen Jesus interacts with one of the Marys and she falls down to clasp his feet. All that emotion, all that pain and grief, and here he is in the flesh. Mary holds him but for that moment. In seasons like this, I think of Mary and her instinct to embrace him, just once more.

New life can be like that: All I want to do is hold on to what I know, whom I love, *and* Jesus calls us to something more. We've talked recently about living with open hands. That's one thing for individuals and it's another for a community like ours. As we enter this season of Godspeed, we who remain may teeter between open-handed trust and genuine excitement for those who head out, and perhaps some honest trepidation: Aren't we good enough? Why does it feel like everyone is leaving?! **Vital communities (especially vital communities on the edge of a university campus) are called to honestly practice the art of welcome and Godspeed...and to do this from a faithful vantage of abundance, not scarcity.** As painful as it can be to say goodbye and God bless to those we've come to love, I also trust:

- that they are going on to do amazing and good things for the world;
- that we've been a faithful and healthy community that has strengthened their sense of what God is doing, and what church and faithful community can really mean; and
- that as they have for generations, new folks will engage and the Holy Spirit will continue to work through us, that in saying goodbye to some, we will also say hello to others.

These next months will bring transitions not only in the congregation, but in the staff. On May 21 we'll welcome our new part-time Pastor for Care and Nurture, Barbara Johnson (and her spouse Swan); on June 4 we'll install Pastor Barbara. Also on May 21 during worship, we'll pray Godspeed for our Interim Faith Formation Minister, Ashlei Buhrow. On June 4 we'll pray Godspeed for our Congregational Faith Formation Coach, Monty Lysne. In late July we'll pray Godspeed for our Youth Minister, Jim Vitale and his spouse Isabel. During the Fellowship Meal on May 21 we'll give thanks for Ashlei, Monty, and Jim. We're in the midst of a search for a Minister of Faith Formation; this position will gather elements of these three positions into one with an emphasis on faith formation for all ages and empowering and coordinating volunteers.

In this season, whether we stay or whether we go, God goes with us. If you are heading out and desire prayers of Godspeed, let me know; we can easily include others in this powerful ritual. And, as new folks venture into this community, let us welcome one another widely, for the risen Christ is at work and doing a new thing. That's Good News.

Pastor Jen

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## Spring Paddling Event May 13... and All Summer!

Paddle on Lakes Calhoun/Isles/Cedar on Saturday, May 13. This is a 2-3 hour outing, weather permitting, starting at 10:00 at Lake Calhoun boat launch, 3000 Calhoun Parkway East. Canoes and kayaks are available for rent through Wheel Fun Rentals. This is the third year we've enjoyed paddling the beautiful Minneapolis Chain of Lakes. The option of lunch follows at one of the nearby restaurants. All ages and abilities are welcome. Please RSVP to John Bablitch at [mplsjfb@gmail.com](mailto:mplsifb@gmail.com) or text at (612) 408-4595.



**Mark your calendar for more paddling through the summer! More details to come.**

**June 17** - paddling on the St Croix River (with overnight camping option)

**July 15** - paddling on the Cannon River

**August 19** - paddling on Mississippi

**October 7** - paddling on Lake Calhoun

# FAITH FORMATION NEWS



## Faith Formation for All Ages

### Faith Formation Update

It may be May, but children's Faith Formation is still busy as ever—and we've jam-packed most of it into two Sundays! On **May 14**, we will gather as one for a special forum for all ages, where we will not only share our time with one another, but will also acknowledge and appreciate our teachers who have helped this year with our children. You won't want to miss it! I hear there may even be some treats to celebrate their hard work.



The following Sunday, **May 21**, the kids will spend the morning with Rosalie Eldevik practicing music to sing for 10:30 a.m. worship. So families, if you would like your children to be able to participate in worship that day, be sure they are at church by 9:15 a.m. for the beginning of Faith Formation. Also on that day during worship there will be thanks for our teachers and a prayer of Godspeed for me.

There is so much to be said about May, and the ending of this school year's Faith Formation programming. We've been very busy working with one another, learning and growing in our faith, and making new discoveries guided by the work of the Holy Spirit. It's been an amazing sight for me to see as University Lutheran Church of Hope's Interim Faith Formation Minister. But with the month of May comes another event, which is, sadly, my leaving. My time at Hope has been short, but I have felt very honored to be welcomed into this congregation with open hearts and given the opportunity to work with such an amazing faith community. I'm sure I will be around here and there, when seminary life simmers down, but for now, I just want to say thank you for this chance to be a part of the rich community that is University Lutheran Church of Hope. God Bless,

Ashlei Buhlow

Interim Faith Formation Minister

### Faith5 for Couples

As we've talked about FAITH5 at University Lutheran Church of Hope this past year, it's important to mention that this conversational faith practice is not just for kids or families with kids. It's great for couples as well. I'd love to be able to tell you that my wife and I are regular FAITH5 users with each other, but it wouldn't be the truth. With a houseful of four daughters, we have quite a schedule of bedtimes and FAITH5 conversations with them, so this does not always lend itself to an abundance of FAITH5 energy with us. However, we try our best to take time to connect semi-regularly. (Do as I say, not as I do, right?) It's important to keep in mind the difference between simple conversations and the depth of the FAITH5. According to Rev. Rich Melheim, developer of FAITH5, what works so well for the kids is also a booster for parents, according to couples who use FAITH5 in their home. "Sharing a low breaks down lonely walls," says Melheim. "The sharing and caring that surround the hurt open up the possibility for confession, absolutions, forgiveness and reconciliation."



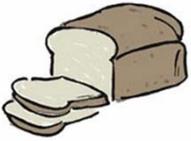
The simple, intentional nature of the FAITH5 "highs and lows" ritual can be the glue that bonds couples together in a crazy world that always seems to want to drive them apart. Of course, scripture (Lutherans opening a Bible at home!), prayer, and blessing all add an important spiritual depth to the conversations. So, if you've tried the FAITH5 with your kids but not with your spouse or partner, I'd invite you to give it a try for a week and measure the results. Caring, deep, close-knit relationships aren't just for kids, but adults, too!

Monty Lysne

Congregational Faith Formation Coach

# Sunday Forums

(9:30-10:20 a.m. in Heritage Hall, below the Sanctuary)



**May 7: Community Oven.** We have enjoyed the bread, and now we can hear the story behind the Community Ovens. Mike Faust and Bryce Johnson (former pastor of White Bear Lake United Methodist Church) will be joining us to share their experience with the use of the community oven to build connections..

Bryce took a 4-day course that Bryan Kufus, John Lauber, John Beane, Bob Dickhaus, and John Bablitch will be taking this summer at North House Folk School in Grand Marais. Bryce then went on a sabbatical to Italy and southern France to get steeped in the tradition of community ovens, which goes back centuries. John Bablitch and others are excited about bringing this mission venture to ULCH.

**May 14: “Place of Grace.”** The theme for our third event of the year for all ages will be “Place of Grace”—conversations on showing grace to others, what grace looks like, and where grace is in our own lives. We will tie in the grace of mothers (it is Mother’s Day!), teachers, parents, and young and old in the church. All are invited to join in for exciting music, lively conversation, fun crafts, and some great time together for all ages.

**May 21: Discovering “Real Presence” in the Neighborhood.** On May 5-6 Minneapolis Area Synod meets in Assembly at Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Ramsey. A few of our members are participating: Karen Jorstad and Betty Schreuder are our voting members; Pastor Jen Nagel, John Setterlund, and Diane Greve also attend in different capacities. Come and hear their impressions and reflections on the theme “*Real Presence: In our neighborhoods, with our neighbors*” as it was told and lived throughout the Assembly.



**May 21 is the last Sunday Forum until Fall.**

**The Sunday Forum Planning Committee** is seeking new members. Ruth Fingerson and Alden Tetlie are leaving the committee; kudos to them for their faithful service. If you are interested in offering leadership in this way, please let Diane Greve know at [dkgreve@gmail.com](mailto:dkgreve@gmail.com) We meet 4-5 times a year; the rest of the coordination is done by phone or email. Continuing members are Brian McCaffrey, John Setterlund, Marilyn Asp, and Diane Greve. Thanks everyone for a good year of programs, speakers, and strong attendance.

## Faith Formation Position

We are seeking a Minister of Faith Formation. This part-time position will support and coordinate faith formation ministries for all ages—children, youth, and adults including seniors. This role will include recruiting, equipping, and encouraging volunteers and volunteer-led teams, and it has a relational and intergenerational approach. Thanks to these members of the search team: Diane Greve (chair), Garvin Davenport, Shelly Parry, Paige Whitney, Oskar Grothe, and Sarah Wille. We intend to receive letters of interest by May 1 and then do interviews during the month of May, with the person ideally beginning in June. The position description can be found on our website at [www.ulch.org/employment-opportunities/](http://www.ulch.org/employment-opportunities/) Please include this process in your prayers.

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## Hope Diamonds Senior Group May 17

Hope Diamonds Senior Group meets on Wednesday, May 17 from noon to 2:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall and Heritage Hall. We’ll begin with lunch and devotions, and then move into a program at 1:00 p.m. The program this month will be led by Marty Brounstein, author of *Two Among the Righteous Few: A Story of Courage in the Holocaust*. This is a true story of a Christian couple in the Netherlands who, during World War II, helped to save the lives of at least 24 Jews. Marty also has a meaningful personal connection to the story and its heroes, which he reveals in his engaging storytelling presentation.

Sign up for lunch with your callers, at the welcome center, or by contacting the church office at 612-331-5988 or [ulch@ulch.org](mailto:ulch@ulch.org)/ People of all ages are welcome. No sign-up is needed if you will only be coming for the program. Pastor Barbara plans to join in the meal and program – this is a great opportunity to meet her.



## Sanctuary Update

*Because the Gospel calls us to love our neighbors as ourselves, University Lutheran Church of Hope declares our partnership with immigrants and others to resist unjust immigration policies and to offer our building as a holy sanctuary.*

The University Area Sanctuary Coalition, comprising a number of Sanctuary and Sanctuary-Supporting congregations near the University of Minnesota campus, met in April to discuss ways to support one another and to work together to oppose unjust immigration policy.

Together the coalition will hold monthly Prayer Vigils on the last Sunday of the month (except in May) at 7:00 p.m. This will be a time to sing, to lament, and to pray. In May this vigil will be hosted on the 21<sup>st</sup> by First Congregational Church, 500 SE 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Please join us!

There are many ways to help with Sanctuary at Hope, even now. If you are interested in helping out please contact Nicholas Tangen at [nickt@ulch.org](mailto:nickt@ulch.org)

Sanctuary is not only about providing a safe space for those facing deportation, but also about opposing unjust laws, educating ourselves on immigration and racial justice concerns, and praying as a community for justice, mercy, and safety.

The most immediate way to help is by donating to Hope's Sanctuary fund. You can designate your funds on the check memo line, through Simply Giving, or by calling Gayle Bidne in the church office.

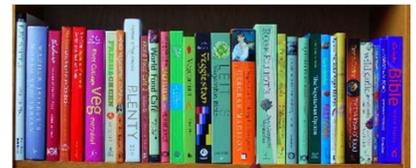
Peace be with you!

Nicholas Tangen  
Community Engagement Coordinator

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## From the Library – Good News

Thanks to the generosity of some members of Hope, there are many new books in our library. The library committee has been at work, sorting, processing, and placing the new books on the shelves—this work is still in progress. The committee urges Hope members and friends to stop by the church library and have a look at the many resources.



A new commentary set from Fortress provides basic information and details of all the books of the Old Testament, the Apocrypha, and the New Testament. The historic Lutheran documents from the time of the Reformation, collected in *The Book of Concord*, are now available in a new English translation. These reference books are especially timely as we consider the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.

A few periodicals are also available; recent issues of *The Christian Century* and *Biblical Archaeology Review* are on hand, in addition to the ELCA's own *Living Lutheran*. Anyone who has recent issues of other religion-oriented magazines is invited to bring them to the library to share.

Suggestions for future additions to the shelves are welcome. Books, magazines, and DVDs are acceptable; unfortunately, cassette tapes are no longer of use to the general public. Many of these, plus duplicate and unusable books, will be offered on the "Free Books" cart. Questions and suggestions are appreciated by the Library Committee: Collin Bradley, Sharon Peterson, Jo Schroeder, and John Setterlund.

# Congregational Life

## Dates to Keep in Mind:

May 3: Weekday Wonders Gardening

May 7: Bread Pickup; Families Moving Forward guests arrive for the week.

May 13: Spring Paddling Event

May 17: Weekday Wonders Gardening, Hope Diamonds Senior Group

May 20: Weekend Warriors Gardening

May 21: Drop-In Choir; Fellowship Meal; Farewell to Ashlei, Monty, and Jim; Sanctuary vigil

May 28: Summer worship schedule changes to one service at 10:00 a.m.

June 4: Pentecost. Bach Cantata. Installation for Pastor Barbara Johnson

## Life Events at Hope

We are a community of faith, called to hold one another in prayer. Here are a few of the life events affecting our community. We need your help to know for what and whom we can pray. Please alert a pastor or contact the church office. We include in prayer...

**Welcoming children:** Many in our congregation who are awaiting children, pregnant, discerning, and holding hope in joyful and painful times. We welcome Etta Noelle, child of Johanna and Josh Brown and grandchild of Pat Frolen and Bob Dickhaus; and Layla, child of Leena and Andy Rapacz and sister Lydia; and Owen Everett, child of Benjamin and Amelia Tetlie and grandchild of Alden and Rebecca Tetlie.

**Deaths:** Karen Johnson and her family at the death of Karen's sister Joan Whiting; and Karen and Bob Lindesmith at the death of Karen's brother James Jorgenson.

**Significant Illness:** Those living with illness, cancer, recovery, uncertain diagnosis, chemical dependency, and mental health struggles, especially Margaret Vainovskis, Peter Anderson, Janet Carpenter, Hannah Kiresuk, Grace Wagner, Madeline Teske, Barry Brooks, Janice (Rising) Minnich, and Chuck Lewis.

**Separation, Divorce, Retirement, Moves:** We hold one another in prayer. God is with us through it all.

## Fellowship Meal

We'll have our final Fellowship Meal of this school year on Sunday May 21 following the 10:30 a.m. worship. During this meal we'll have a chance to thank those staff members finishing up their ministry at Hope in the coming weeks: Ashlei Buhrow, Monty Lysne, and Jim Vitale. Join in the meal and remember that grad and undergrad students eat free. Help with set up and clean-up is always appreciated.

## Centering Prayer Every Friday at 1:00 p.m.

Join Nicholas Tangen in the Thorpe Chapel each Friday afternoon for a time of silence and prayer. Centering Prayer is a silent and receptive method of prayer that emphasizes prayer as a personal relationship with God. See you there!

## Yoga

Did you know that there is a Yoga class at Hope every Wednesday morning at 8:45 a.m. in Heritage Hall? The cost is \$5 per class and beginners are welcome. Try it!

## Summer Day Camp 2017 – Sign up NOW!

We participate in a shared south Minneapolis day camp. The theme this year is Blessed 2 Be. Children entering K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade (and youth and adult volunteers) are invited to participate during the week of June 19-23, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Pick up a registration form at the welcome center or find it on our website at [www.ulch.org/](http://www.ulch.org/)

## Camp Amnicon: Apostle Islands Trip

The youth group's annual trip to Amnicon is scheduled for August 6-12, 2017. Join us this year as we take a 700-lb. canoe out onto Lake Superior and spend the week paddling around the Apostle Islands! The trip is open to all high school students. There are 11 slots available for this trip, and the cost is \$500 per person. Scholarships are available for those who need them. If you have questions or are interested in attending, please contact Jim Vitale at [jvitale001@luthersem.edu](mailto:jvitale001@luthersem.edu)

## President's Report

When I was a boy, a group of aggressive fundamentalists moved into a house up the street. Its members would call to me as I walked home from grade school, demanding that I come into their yard and try yelling "Jesus is Lord" with them at the top of my lungs. When I said I didn't want to, they argued with me. "Why not?" they insisted. "What are you afraid of?" For a while, this was a daily ordeal.

Maybe that experience helps explain my lifelong fear of evangelism. For years, I found it difficult to invite people to church. At times, I didn't even like to admit that I went to church. And yet we're called to witness to our faith, comfortable or not.

It's easier now, and part of the reason – though I'm embarrassed to admit it – is the existence of Facebook. It's a growing part of the public square, and if we want to spread the Gospel, we have to be there.

If you're already comfortable inviting people to visit Hope, great – keep doing that. But I'd like to ask that you also reach out to your friends on social media, particularly on Facebook. Thanks to the efforts of Jim Vitale and others on our staff, University Lutheran Church of Hope has an appealing Facebook presence. We need your help to reach as many people as possible.

On Facebook, popularity begets popularity. When you click on an item, and "like" it, and share it with your friends, you are giving that item an exponential boost. This is how cat videos go viral. And I would stack some of Zach Busch's Tuesday music videos up against cats, any day of the week. The more our posts are viewed, shared, and liked, the more visible Hope will be.

If you're on Facebook, please look up [www.facebook.com/ULCHope](http://www.facebook.com/ULCHope) page and like it. Follow the page, visit often, and click on the items you find there. When you see something you appreciate, like it and share it with all your friends. And if you feel moved to write a post of your own about what your church life means to you, so much the better.

If you want to go out in the yard and shout "Jesus is Lord," that's fine too.

God's peace to you and yours,

Eric Ringham  
Congregational President

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## We Host Families Moving Forward again in May

The next (and our last) week for this year of hosting Families Moving Forward is May 7-14, 2017. Please check your schedules and calendars for dates and times you are available to help, especially if there are times or tasks that have not been signed up for yet.

There will be a new group of families for this upcoming week. The families we hosted in March have been placed in their homes.

Julie Paschke and Christine Nielsen  
Families Moving Forward Coordinators

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## Thank You from Tree of Life

On March 19, Pastor Marissa Sotos from Tree of Life preached and led the Sunday Forum. She spoke of a new ministry that is being formed in the North Loop (the Warehouse District) of downtown Minneapolis. Thanks to your generous support, we raised \$579 for Tree of Life.

Pastor Marissa writes, "Thank you so much for your warm welcome in March. I really enjoyed your creativity and enthusiasm in discussing Tree of Life at the Sunday Forum and was glad to get to worship with you as well. Thank you also for your generous offering, which is a big help as we prepare for our initial Sunday evening gatherings. I hope to see some of you there, and look forward to staying in touch!"

# Discernment Period for Congregational Racial Justice Statement

In 2016 the Minneapolis Synod adopted a resolution calling on its congregations to draft and adopt their own racial justice statements. Late in 2016, the Racial Justice team at University Lutheran Church of Hope agreed to draft such a statement and bring it to the Vision & Governance Board for consideration. Bruce Eldevik and John Beane attended a Synod Lay Leadership workshop on writing a congregational racial justice statement, led by Pastor Kelly Chatman of Redeemer Lutheran Church. Representatives from 22 congregations attended the workshop. Inspired by what was learned at the workshop, the Racial Justice team has created the following draft statement:

As people of faith we acknowledge that all people are beloved of God and are called to be a blessing to one another. To this end, we as a congregation, recognizing that many of us have benefitted from unearned white privilege, desire to be in deep understanding with [or strive to be in community with] people of all backgrounds, as through these relationships we are blessed. In turn, we have faith that we are a blessing to others as we inspire and share our unique gifts, brought to us by God. We reject as contrary to God's will anything, whether through unjust laws, unfair practices, hostile acts, subtle prejudice, white supremacy, or fear, that erodes these relationships and our shared humanity. We actively seek to stand together with people of all ethnicities and cultures to promote the joy of fellowship and the dignity of equal opportunity.

The Vision & Governance Board has agreed to release the draft statement for broader discussion by the congregation. The Board has set no time limit on how quickly it intends the congregation to reach a decision. It is our hope that all members of the congregation will participate in this discussion. Upcoming events will include Sunday Forums, special discussion sessions after worship services, sermons on the topic of racial justice, a Speakers Forum drawing on a broad range of voices, book study, and a series of special events outside Hope in which the congregation will be invited to participate along with members of the Racial Justice team.

Finally, the Racial Justice team wishes to emphasize that this initiative means more than simply finding the right words for a statement welcoming people of all ethnicities and cultures into our community. This statement will ask, "How do we need to change our attitudes and practices to be more welcoming to the people with whom we are seeking to be in closer relationship?" Please send your questions or alternative wording for the statement to Bruce Eldevik ([reldevik@msn.com](mailto:reldevik@msn.com)) or John Beane ([pilgrim.beane@gmail.com](mailto:pilgrim.beane@gmail.com)).

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## Hope in the World:

### *A Review of Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*

*Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, by Matthew Desmond (New York: Crown Publishers, 2016), winner of two major American book awards for nonfiction, is a stark and sobering look at the devastating toll that eviction exacts from our nation's poorest and most vulnerable families. Desmond, a Harvard sociologist, embedded himself in two of Milwaukee's poorest neighborhoods over an 18-month period in 2008-09. Through Desmond's gift for reportage, the struggles and stresses of the families he follows are laid achingly bare, as they attempt to come up with rent approaching 60-80% of their monthly income. Often families cut back on food in order to make their monthly payments. As Desmond succinctly puts it, "The rent eats first." When they fall far enough behind, as many families inevitably do, eviction is the result, and with it a cascading stream of problems descends: school disruption and irregular attendance; lost work time, sometimes leading to firing; an eviction record making new housing harder to qualify for; and on and on. However, the greatest toll is often to one's feelings of self-worth. Eviction brings with it depression, an inclination to give up, even suicide. (Book review continued on p. 10).

(*Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, continued from p. 9)

The overwhelming stress and difficulty Desmond's Milwaukee families experience is heartbreaking. Poverty is a complicated, many-faceted issue without easy solutions. However, Desmond convincingly makes the case that eviction is more than just a condition of poverty – It is a cause.

Nonetheless, there is reason for hope. In cases where safe, clean, and, above all, affordable housing can be secured, many of these problems start to diminish. Families begin to feel better about themselves. Money saved on rent goes to stock the refrigerator and pantry. Chances for stable employment and/or job training improve dramatically. Families take pride in and ownership of their neighborhood and schools.

Reading *Evicted* helped me see more clearly how fundamental adequate housing is to well-being. Where good quality, comfortable housing is not present or possible, most other areas of life are not going to go well either. As a result, I am more keenly aware of how important Hope's participation in the Families Moving Forward network has been over the last several decades. The FMF network of churches offering temporary shelter is a part of the effort, motivated by faith in God's love for all people, to show kindness when life seems bleak, and, as a partner with Beacon Interfaith Housing, to give families hope and ultimately a stable, affordable home.

Bruce Eldevik  
Hope in the World

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## Courtyard Plantings Coming in May

We don't have a date yet, but we do have a plan; that is, we know what we'll be planting, but we don't know when. Keep your eye out for the planting dates in the bulletin and in the *Thursday Epistle*. We will need planting help. Once the plants are in, the courtyard, which looks great already, will look much more alive and colorful.

And check out the new wood rack that Jack Dant built; it is on the north side of the outside fireplace and solid as a rock while blending in beautifully with the lounge window architecture. More to come next month as we continue to work on the courtyard.

## As for the Other Gardens

In May the Weekday Wonders will be meeting on Wednesdays May 3, May 17, and possibly May 31 from 10:00 a.m. to noon, to do garden cleanup and maintenance. The Weekday Wonders group is open to any Hope members or friends who would like to help in the gardens and are available on Wednesday mornings. We will be sure to have guidance and snacks available. Meanwhile, gardeners who have taken on responsibility for a specific garden space are welcome to either join the Weekday Wonders on Wednesdays, or come and garden whenever it works best for them. And of course, anyone who knows a weed from a good plant is welcome to pull weeds at any time; there should always be lawn and leaf bags in the garden shed in the courtyard.

Meanwhile, the Weekend Warriors will meet on Saturday, May 20. That is the day we will be picking up and planting our three new replacement trees for the parking lot. The Weekend Warriors group is open to any Hope members or friends who would like to help in the gardens and are available on Saturdays; and yes, the Weekday Wonders are welcome on the weekends too.

Kathy Knudson for Courtyard Committee and Gardens of Hope



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Rev. Barbara Johnson

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### **Minister of Youth &**

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opening/closing

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