



The Visitor



May 2018

Issue #14-5

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.*

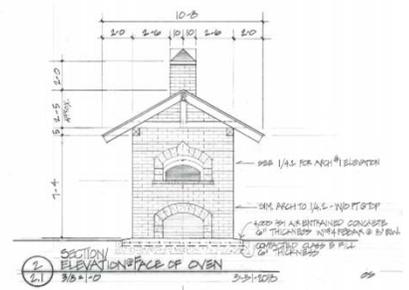
Spring Projects at Hope

Outdoor Oven Construction to Begin!

Construction of our long-awaited outdoor oven begins on Saturday, April 28. Beginning in mid April, a sign-up sheet has been available with information about the types of volunteer work needed. Please visit the welcome desk with questions or to sign up. This is a DIY project, with many volunteer opportunities. We anticipate construction to go through late June. If you have questions, contact Bryan Kufus at 612-685-0402 or bkufus462@icloud.com or Bob Dickhaus at 651-398-9343 or bobpat47@me.com

Bryan Kufus

Outdoor Oven Team



The Courtyard Children's Play Area is Becoming a Reality!

Construction on the Children's Play Area in the courtyard will begin Monday, May 14, lasting six to eight working days. Key features of the play area include:

- a long platform along the north wall of the sanctuary, with an accessible ramp leading up to it;
- slate surfaces for chalk art;
- a trellis for a variety of activities; and
- benches that can be used as tables and/or seating.

Other activities will be supported by storing materials in bins that can be brought out on an "as needed" basis under the supervision of adults. The ground surface will be sod. Anyone willing to keep it watered until it is established is welcome to help. A blueprint of the project can be viewed at the welcome desk. Many thanks for the congregational support of this wonderful addition!

Ann Beane

Children's Play Area Team



Changes in Gardens of Hope

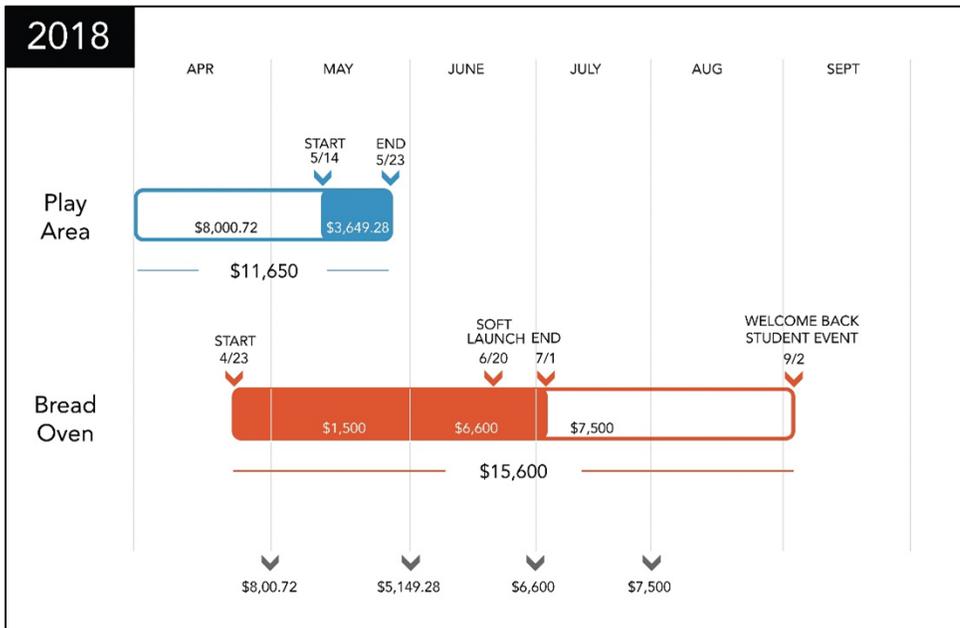
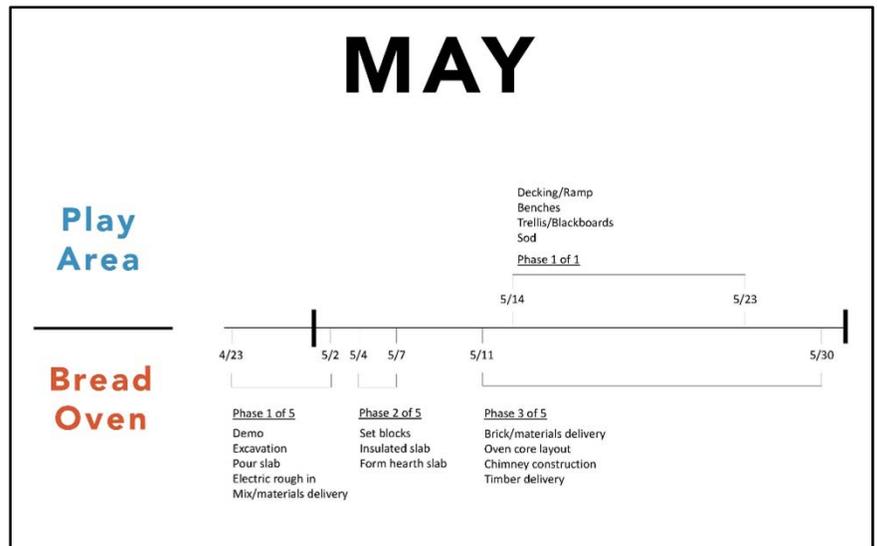
Eagle II will be substantially reduced in size due to the construction of the bread oven. The bike rack is moving from Eagle II to the east edge of Thomas Garden, by the chapel. We will start two cutting flower gardens, one in Omega and the other along the fence line between our west parking lot and St. Lawrence's parking lot. To learn more about the names of our Gardens of Hope, consult the map at the welcome desk and the bulletin board near the east elevator. Please consider adopting a garden for the growing season.

Kathy Knudson
Gardens of Hope

REVEALING HOPE

Giving Update: Thanks to your generous donations. As this issue of the *Visitor* was being printed, we have pledges of \$388,826 for our three-year capital campaign, representing 100 households. (Some with super sharp eyes may have noticed that in mid-April the pledged amount decreased; this was due to a now-corrected communication error.) Thank you for your support of this campaign. If you haven't yet had a chance to pledge, it's not too late. Pledges and questions can be directed to the church office. Thank you!

Project Update: Our campaign includes monthly upkeep of our mortgage, benevolence giving, some work on our organ, refreshing and lighting our stained glass windows, building a bread oven, and constructing a children's play area. We can't do everything at once since cash flow is always a consideration. In late April will begin building the bread oven, and construction is expected to last through late June. On May 14 we'll begin building the children's play area.



You can read more about some of these projects on the front page of this issue of the *Visitor*. Here are the timelines for each project. Additional information and details are available near the church offices as you enter the building by the north parking lot. Thanks to Kristin Tangen who is keeping us organized and serving as our project manager!

Showing Up, Reaching Out, Being the Community

“...love one another with mutual affection...” –Romans 12:10a

Here’s a snippet from a conversation after church on a recent Sunday:

“Pastor Jen, I haven’t seen *so and so* for a bit – Are they doing okay?”

“Hm, you know, I’ve been thinking about them these last couple of weeks, too. As far as I know all is well, but I’ll check in with them. Why don’t you reach out, too? That really shows you care.”



We have these conversations weekly, sometimes daily. Sometimes, like in this case, it’s someone asking after folks in their 90s, concerned, hoping all is okay, recognizing that sometimes it’s not. Other times it’s someone asking about a student or a younger adult, someone they haven’t gotten to know too well, perhaps don’t even know their name, but have realized that they’ve been away and they just want to check.

As someone who is prone to check in with folks by nature and role, I realize there’s a tension: I want them to know they are known and missed. And, I don’t want them to feel guilty for missing church or sleeping in (that can be good self-care) or having a string of weekends with events. And, at the very same time, I grieve when folks slip through the cracks. Too easily we get out of the practice of regular worship or connected community. Once we’re out of the practice, it can be hard to get back into it.

I especially appreciate the interaction above, for it reminds me of the way we are tethered, bound up in community, in what Paul calls mutual affection. I appreciate that they noticed. I appreciate that they asked. I appreciate that they mentioned it to me (that helps shape my pastoral care). I appreciate that they were open to my suggestion to reach out also, and I hope and pray they did.

Recently I was asked to describe Hope, and in a list of many points, I included “prone to conversation.” If you are able to attend worship, you may notice that the benediction and dismissal are pronounced, the cross recesses, the prelude begins, and folks turn to those around them (strangers, friends, familiar or not so familiar faces) and begin to chat. It’s a joy (truly) to stand at the back doors expecting to shake hands as folks file passed and instead to turn and see dozens of spirited conversations underway!

I hope and pray that the conversations I witness from the back doors and the simple question, “How is *so and so* doing?” are the underpinnings of a community steeping itself in mutual affection and growing deeply in faithful care. As we move into spring, please join me in noticing who is missing from our community. Send a note. Make a call. Reach out and let one another know that Christ’s community holds and values them. Pray for those you know and those you don’t know, entrusting one another to God’s care and asking God to grow our mutual affection and love.

Pastor Jen

Gardens of Hope



Time for May flowers, I hope. Our garden club, aka Gardens of Hope, met March 24 to plan for the coming growing season. We are expanding our regular gardening times: in addition to the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 10a.m. to noon (starting May 23), we will meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 6:30 to 8:30p.m (starting May 16). At least one garden leader will be at each session. Unless there’s a critical need, there won’t be any rain-out makeup sessions. Saturday work sessions may be called if needed; we’ll try to give at least a 2-week heads up.

In addition to the changes mentioned on page one of this issue of the *Visitor*, we will replace the arborvitae by the dumpsters with plantings more security-friendly; replace some plants in the courtyard and do final cleanup and path building in the garden shed area; mulch rain gardens and other areas; and in general work on making garden maintenance more consistent and easier.

Again, to learn the names of our gardens, see the map available at the welcome desk and on the garden bulletin board near the east elevator. Gardens are available for adoption if you are interested, and independent tasks are available if none of the group gardening times work for you but you still want to help. So as an enjoyer or as a gardener, hope to see you in the gardens this year.

Kathy Knudson
Gardens of Hope

FAITH FORMATION NEWS



Faith Formation for All Ages

Children's Ministry

All children ages 3 through 5th grade are invited to join us on Sunday mornings at 9:15a.m. for art, storytelling, and sometimes yoga! We gather in Room 108 for First 15 and then split up into classrooms. May 20 is our last class, and we'll be thanking our teachers and coordinators in worship. Are you interested in helping Hope imagine the future of Children's Ministry? Contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org



Youth Group



High School Youth are invited to join us in the Youth Room at 9:15 a.m. on Sunday mornings for conversation, prayer, and study. We'll think about how and where God is active in our lives, and support one another in prayer and solidarity. May 20 is our last day to gather before we take a break for the summer. Are you interested in helping Hope imagine what the future of Youth Ministry looks like in our context? Contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org

Camp Amnicon: Apostle Islands June 17-22

How would you like to join a group of youth and adults exploring the Apostle Islands in a voyageur canoe? A group from Hope will do just that on June 17-22. This trip is open to *everyone over the age of 14*. Our high school youth will make up most of the group, but if you are a college student, young adult, parent, or just an avid outdoor enthusiast, you are invited to join us! The cost of the trip is \$500. If you would like to join us or learn more, contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org Thanks!



2018 ELCA Youth Gathering

In late June, a dozen Youth and Adult Leaders will travel to Houston to spend a week serving, worshipping, and learning together at the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering. May is the final month to donate toward this trip. Thank you for all your incredible generosity over the last 6 months! We have raised over \$4K, ensuring that no one is left out of this exciting opportunity. Parents and Youth, we will meet in May (date TBD) to discuss final travel details, packing list, and financial details. Questions? Contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org

Centering Prayer Fridays at 1 p.m.

We live in a world where people are used to having their attention "grabbed" by something; technology, work, entertainment, political commentary, etc. In this world our attention is beholden to stimuli outside of ourselves. In Centering Prayer we train our minds to deepen awareness without attachment to these objects and experiences. This is how we "prepare our faculties for the gifts of contemplation," or an awareness of God's presence and action in the world. Join us on Fridays at 1 p.m. for a time of silence and rest in God. Questions? Contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org



Love Your Neighbor: Ecumenical Summer Day Camp for Kids

June 18-22, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., at Bethel Lutheran Church (4120 S. 17th Ave.), children entering kindergarten through 8th grade are invited to an ecumenical summer day camp shared by congregations in south and southeast Minneapolis. This year's theme is Love Your Neighbor. Mornings include Bible stories, music, art/mosaics, games, and puppets; afternoons hold larger activities and field trips. Registration forms are available at the welcome desk and on our website. Youth helpers entering 9th grade through high school, and adult volunteers, are needed throughout the week. Questions? Talk with Pastor Jen or Nick.

Holy Ground: Building a Just and Healthy Neighborhood

August 13-17, 5:30-7:30 p.m., children entering kindergarten through 5th grade are invited to build an entire city in the basement of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, then work together to make wise, faithful decisions to help the city thrive! Local experts, community leaders, and residents of the city will work with a community organizer to learn strategy, negotiation, power analysis, and, of course, songs! An evening meal is provided each night, and parents are welcome to visit the "city" and learn its story on the final day.



Sunday Forums

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

May 6 – End of Life: Continuing the Conversation. We all face end-of-life decisions at some point, for ourselves and our loved ones. Last year we discussed communicating wishes about end-of-life decisions, such as advance directives, designating a health care agent, and life-sustaining treatments. We have reassembled the panel of Marty Lewis-Hunstiger, Paul Odenbach, Bill Sanden, and Alden Tetlie to get perspectives from nursing, chaplaincy, and physicians. Come for a review of the last chapter of our lives on earth as we explore the implications of personhood, faith, ethics, relationships, community, and science. How will you write your script, or will someone do it for you, or is there going to be a lot of improvisation?

May 13 – Mission and the Minneapolis Area Synod, ELCA. On May 4-5, the Minneapolis Area Synod meets in Assembly to celebrate the mission we share with other congregations and with the ELCA. In today's forum, Pastor Jen leads a conversation along with Hope members who were voting members at the Assembly. This Assembly is also when the delegation elects the future bishop. Ann Svennungsen is up for re-election; other pastors have expressed willingness to serve in that role. ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will preach at the opening worship and preside over the election process. Expand your understanding of the ministry of the synod by attending this conversation.

May 20 – Becoming Dementia Friendly in our Faith Community

Faith communities can play a vital role in offering supportive and welcoming environments for people touched by dementia. Some people with dementia may stop attending regular worship services to avoid social situations they fear or no longer understand. Others find peace and comfort in a place of worship. Caring for a loved one who has dementia can span many years, leaving family caregivers weary, isolated, frustrated, and depressed. Some may feel embarrassed or reluctant to ask for help from their place of worship. Join us as Carol Kuhlmann, Director of Person-Centered Practices with Rakhma Homes, a residential memory care program, shares information and ideas.

Beginning May 27, Sunday Forums are on vacation until Fall.

Worship and Music Notes

Prayer and Courtyard Concerts



May 16 at 7 p.m. is our monthly opportunity for evening prayer using Prayer Around the Cross, a style of contemplative worship that includes silence, readings, prayers, and candle lighting in the chapel. Stay tuned for monthly opportunities throughout the summer as well.

Courtyard Concerts will return this year in a modified form. Rather than having three concerts over the summer months, we will have two concerts, one in May and one in September. Stay tuned in the coming weeks for the date and time of the first concert. The concert will feature millennial musicians from our congregation, vocal and instrumental alike, and will take place outdoors in our lovely courtyard. It should be a fabulous evening!

Zach Busch

Minister of Worship and Music

Reflection from our Choral Scholar Elise Busse

Since September, I have had the wonderful opportunity to be the Choral Scholar here at University Lutheran Church of Hope. As Choral Scholar, I have been part of the fabulous Hope choir and have had opportunities to perform solos during services. I have assisted Zach with rehearsals and warm-ups and have also sung with the Drop-in Choir. When I auditioned for this position, I had no idea of the community I was becoming a part of. The Hope Community is one of the most welcoming places to which I have been exposed, and I experience this every time I step through the doors. The Choral Scholar role is a wonderful opportunity for growth as a student – one that can create a connection between the Hope community and the college campus. I have been so grateful for this opportunity to be able to create music with such a vibrant, inclusive, and thoughtful community. This opportunity has been an incredible one of music and faith, and for that, I am extremely grateful.

Elise Busse

Friendly Visitor Reflections

Thank you to all who participated in the Friendly Visitor Easter Flower Ministry. I think of the many people who contributed money to honor someone special in their lives, and those who delivered plants. You enabled us to send flowers as warm greetings to people who are homebound, ill, or grieving, including those who have been mentioned on Hope's prayer list this past year. Big thanks to Kathy Knudson and Pat Lindquist, our ever-faithful flower committee, who ordered plants and meticulously organized their distribution. A very special thank you to Karen Jorstad who so capably managed the memorials while I was on our trip to the Holy Land, and to my husband Bruce, who keeps a record of all those whose names appear on our church prayer list throughout the year. All of you help to keep this vital caring ministry alive and thriving.

Friendly Visitor Ministry relies on volunteers who enjoy visiting with others. A Friendly Visitor may make a long-term or short-term commitment to make regular visits to a member who is homebound or living in a care facility. Other ways to connect include phone calls, sending cards, or stopping for coffee. Friendly Visitors help strengthen the connection homebound members have with their congregation, especially when they are no longer able to attend worship on a regular basis. Sometimes, what begins as a church-sponsored Friendly Visitor connection grows into a trusted, caring friendship. The expectation is to contact the person(s) at least once a month, bringing a warm smile, a listening ear and an understanding heart. If you know someone who might appreciate having a Friendly Visitor or if you'd like to consider being a Friendly Visitor for someone, contact Pastor Barbara Johnson at 612-331-5988 or Rosalie Eldevik at 651-644-8789.

Rosalie Eldevik
Friendly Visitor Coordinator

Treasurer's Report

	Actuals Mar. 2018	Budget Mar. 2018	Mar. 2018 Variance	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Variance
General Giving	\$36,056	\$41,976	(\$5,920)	\$105,849	\$125,927	(\$20,078)
Rental Income	\$19,931	\$11,723	\$8,208	\$35,620	\$35,169	\$451
(Services)	(\$150)		(\$150)	(\$150)		(\$150)
Total income	\$55,837	\$53,699	\$2,138	\$141,319	\$161,096	(\$19,777)
Total Expenses	\$56,512	\$53,698	(\$2,814)	\$158,720	\$161,095	(\$2,376)
Net Income	(\$676)	0	(\$676)	(\$17,401)	0	(\$17,401)



March giving was \$36,056 and rental income was \$19,931, for a total income of \$55,837. Rental income was over budget by \$8K as PEASE Academy's April rent was paid in advance. Expenses for March were \$56,512, \$2,814 over the budgeted amount of \$53,698. Total income was \$2,138 over budget, but increased expenses caused a net loss of \$676 for the month.

The Hope in the World expense was higher than expected as our annual donation of \$2,900 to Lutheran Campus Ministry was paid. Additionally, Relational Ministries was over budget as care packages are sent to college students annually in March. Although our overall net income was negative for the month, I am hopeful future contributions will offset our small shortfall and ultimately contribute positively to the YTD variance.

Contributions to our current Capital Campaign, Revealing Hope, totaled \$25,688 during March. This amount will be reflected in the April 2018 financials. During March, pledges for the Capital Campaign increased to \$388K; the Fund had positive net activity of \$6,470 due to February Revealing Hope Campaign contributions of \$13,389. Net cash balance in the Building Fund (Capital Campaign) is \$79,136. Thank you members for your dedication to pay the mortgage!

Thank you again for your financial gifts and for all the other ways you contribute to the life and health of this congregation as we serve our community and the world. We look forward to using these funds to improve our community through the building of a bread oven and children's play area, and improving the stained-glass windows. As we look forward to the summer months, I would like to remind members to take advantage of on-line giving. Please visit ulch.org and click Give. I look forward to serving as your treasurer over the next two years. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at treasurer@ulch.org.

Emma Carpenter, Treasurer 6

Congregational Life

Dates to Keep in Mind:

May 3: Hennepin County Commissioner Candidate Forum (sponsored by ISALAH)

May 4-5: Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly

May 6: Baptism for Constance Skoy; Noisy Offering

May 13: Healing Opportunity; Bret Hesla offers Singing Prayers for the Earth; Baptism

May 18: Prayer Around the Cross

May 20: End of the Faith Formation year; Fellowship Meal; Play Area Dedication; Sanctuary Vigil

May 27: Dr. Ibrahim Bitrus preaches; Godspeed and reception

June 6: PEASE Academy graduation

Life Events at Hope

We're a community of hope, called to hold one another in prayer in times of deepest need and grief, and in our experiences of new life. Here are a few of the life events affecting our community. We need your help to know for what we can pray. Please alert a pastor or contact the church office. We include in prayer...

Welcoming children: On May 6 we celebrate the baptism of Constance Skoy. We pray for those in our congregation who are awaiting children and holding hope in joyful and painful times.

Deaths: We pray for all who grieve the loss of loved ones, including Sarah and Nathaniel Cooper-Evans, Samson, Juna, and Liv, at the death of their grandmother/great-grandmother; and Richard Breen at the death of his brother Dennis.

Significant Illness: Those living with illness, cancer, recovery, chemical dependency and other addictions, and mental health struggles, especially Micah Anderson, Janet Carpenter, Hannah Kiresuk, Trish Gorbunow, Madeline Teske, Alexander Otey-Wold, Cyndi Ganzkow-Wold, and Chuck Lewis.

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

Graduating This Spring or Summer?

We look forward to celebrating those graduating in the coming weeks. Whether you are completing high school, certification, undergrad studies, or a graduate program, whether you are 18 or 65, let us know your name, what program you are completing, and your hopes and plans for what comes next. We'd welcome a picture, too, but are happy to take a quick one at church if that's easier. Parents, we know this is a busy season for grads (and you!) feel free to notify us on their behalf. Send information to Pastor Jen by May 20.

Fellowship Meal May 20

Join us for the final Fellowship Meal of the program year on Sunday, May 20 after the 10:30 a.m. service. We'll savor time together, strengthen community, and nourish our bodies. Grad and undergrad students are our guests and eat free. Help with set up and clean-up is always appreciated. Thanks to those who keep our Fellowship Meals cooking: Becky Halvorson and Dan O'Loughlin, Elizabeth Lincoln and John Lauber, and plenty of others who pitch in, set tables, and do dishes. Thanks!

Lutheran Campus Ministry End-of-the-Year Celebration

As a partner congregation, we are invited to the Lutheran Campus Ministry End-of-the-Year Celebration on Sunday, May 6, at Grace University Lutheran Church. The evening includes thanking retiring board members and departing staff, and sending seniors on to their next adventure. A 5:30 p.m. potluck (please bring a dish to share) is followed by 6:15 p.m. program and worship. See Facebook invite for further info.

P.E.A.S.E. Graduation

P.E.A.S.E. Academy (Peers Enjoying a Sober Education) is the recovery high school that has graced our building for the last 29 years. Students at P.E.A.S.E. have all overcome addictions and now seek a sober place to continue their recovery and education. On June 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary, P.E.A.S.E. seniors will graduate with plenty of pomp and circumstance and some powerful expressions of what they've overcome to achieve this success. You are invited to attend the graduation celebration, support the good work of P.E.A.S.E., and glimpse what happens daily around University Lutheran Church of Hope.

Hope in the World News

Hennepin County Commissioner Candidate Forum May 3

The Hennepin County Board of Commissioners oversee the county's \$2 billion annual budget. This means that our commissioners have the power to advance pro-immigrant policies and lead the way in Minnesota to ensure that jail resources are not used for immigration enforcement. Join us May 3, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Hope for a candidate forum in which we will focus on the debate on protecting immigrant families in Hennepin County.

Sanctuary Vigil May 20, 7 p.m.

Each month the University Area Sanctuary Coalition hosts a Prayer Vigil in which we gather to pray for our immigrant neighbors, for an end to unjust immigration policies, and for the overcoming of evil and hatred. Join us to stand in solidarity with those communities and individuals who have been targeted and harmed by a cruel immigration system. Location TBD. Questions? Contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org

Immigration Updates in Minnesota and the US

- Dr. Mzenga Wanyama, an Augsburg professor who has been in the US for 26 years, has been given until July 4 to leave the country or face deportation. Augsburg, ISAIAH, and some US senators have been demanding that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) allow him and his family to stay in the US. His next ICE check-in is May 10, and there may be an action immediately after, to demand justice.
- Arrests by the St. Paul ICE office increased by 72% from 2016 to 2017, triple the national increase of 24%.
- ICE is seeking up to 600 additional prison beds for immigrants in Minnesota.
- There continues to be no long-term solution for those protected by Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), which the White House revoked last year. At least 800,000 Dreamers are currently protected by DACA. Continue to pressure your representatives to pass legislation protecting Dreamers and to ensure that any legislation passed will not pit children against their parents.

#HopeHappens: Building Relational Power through Community Organizing

How do we think about power? How do we understand our role as Christians in transforming systems and structures that oppress our communities? These are questions that faith-based community organizing seeks to respond to. As a congregation committed to protecting immigrants, dismantling white supremacy, and upholding the dignity of all people, we have an opportunity to expand our vision and language, and to see organizing as a spiritual practice for doing justice. Each month in the *Visitor*, and each week in the #HopeHappens email, we'll highlight a concept, experience, or reflection on ways in which faith communities can more fully engage in justice work, and challenge us to lean into the principles of community organizing in order to build relational power in the image of Jesus the Christ. If you wish to talk more about community organizing and community engagement at Hope please contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org Peace!

Dinkytown Mini-Farmers Market: Anticipated Launch Date June 13

University Lutheran Church of Hope's Neighborhood and Campus Team is working on a proposed Mini-Market in the parking lot which will run from June to October on Wednesdays from 4-8 p.m. Farmers markets are spaces for building community, supporting local agriculture, and tackling food insecurity in our community. Food insecurity is a major concern among college students, with one study finding that nearly one-third of students have experienced food insecurity in the last year. Our hope is that this market can provide fresh and affordable produce to a community in need and continue to expand our vision for porous walls at Hope. If you would like to be a part of this exciting ministry, please contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org

Hope Book Club

On Sunday, May 13th at 7 p.m. in the Hope Library, the Hope Book Club will discuss *Birds Without Wings*, by Louis de Bernieres, an epic chronicle of the making of modern Turkey. "‘Destiny caresses the few, but molests the many,’ a proverb-prone narrator reflects as [the author] begins the story of Eskibahçe, a small town in Anatolia, and of its inhabitants’ fate in the turmoil of the early twentieth century." *The New Yorker* July 8: *We Crossed the Bridge and it Trembled*, by Wendy Pearlman. "A stunning mosaic of narratives told in vignettes of varying lengths. It's hard to fathom the humanitarian disaster of the Syrian war. These testimonies wrenching, but also deeply hopeful—help us wrap our minds around it." *Fusion*.

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



President's Report

I have been a Minnesota Lutheran for a long time. But I started out as an Iowa Methodist. So whenever Zach puts one of the great old Wesley brothers hymns on the Sunday morning agenda, the music conjures up a rich assortment of memories from my early religious upbringing. Many of those memories are of people – dozens of them – who taught Sunday School, directed the junior choir, trained acolytes, chaperoned field trips, cooked chili suppers, and led us through confirmation. It's a very long list.

My friend Mary Lowe, who teaches religion at Augsburg, had a similar experience growing up Lutheran in Alaska. She told me how, as she worked her way toward an advanced degree in theology, she one day realized that the real foundation for her religious education had been laid a long time ago in her home church, and that the people who built it were not academics, but ordinary people who had taken a serious interest in her spiritual well-being. It was an epiphany, and she was both humbled by and grateful for the experience.

We are fortunate to have many people like these here at Hope. I have always felt that the members of this congregation make it abundantly clear to our kids that they are an intrinsic and important part of our community. They belong here, and I think they know it. Over the years, there have been many dedicated individuals who have demonstrated a deep commitment to our children, devoting endless hours to teaching them, mentoring them, and listening to them. Their goal is to provide our youth with a spiritual foundation that they can stand on for the rest of their lives. These teachers take on this mission in the belief that their work is important, but often with no immediate results, and sometimes with very little indication that any of it is sinking in at all. That, in my opinion, is an extraordinary act of faith. Blessings to our children, and to those who teach them.

John Lauber
Congregational President

Thanks and Godspeed to Dr. Ibrahim Bitrus and Family

Dr. Ibrahim Bitrus and his family will return to their home country of Nigeria in June 2018. Ibrahim has completed a PhD in Systematic Theology at Luther Seminary with a focus on the Holy Trinity, and will serve as a professor at Bronnum Theological Seminary, the seminary for the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria. Ibrahim's wife Julecy will soon complete a bachelor of science in biology and chemistry at Metropolitan State University. While their family has been in this country, our congregation has gotten to know Ibrahim well when he was our Nigerian Theologian in Residence through the Minneapolis Area Synod. Here are two opportunities to send these good friends off with our thanks, love, and prayers:

May 6, 2-4 p.m., graduation celebration for Julecy and farewell for their family at their home church, St. Paul-Reformation. Please RSVP to Alice Swan at arswan@comcast.com if you can join this celebration.

May 27, Ibrahim will be our preacher at the 10 a.m. service (it's Holy Trinity Sunday). We'll include prayers of Godspeed and a reception after the service. If you're in town, please join this special time.

Mark Your Summer Calendars

Here are a few summer dates to keep in mind and add to your calendar:

Outdoor Worship Services: June 10, July 8, August 12

Apostle Islands Trip through Amnicon (youth and adults): June 17-22

Summer Day Camp: June 18-22

Paddling on the St. Croix and/or Camping at St. Croix State Park: June 22-24 (paddling on Saturday, camp overnight Friday and/or Saturday)

Paddling on White Bear Lake: July 14

Camp Amnicon for kids entering 4th-6th grade: August 12-16 (talk with Paul Odenbach or Nick Tangen)

Community Organizing Vacation Bible School: August 13-17 (evening) at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

Paddling on Bde maka ska: September 15



Care and Nurture Ministry

Let's Get Acquainted with Leona Reyelts



Leona Mortensen's grandparents on both sides emigrated from Denmark to Le Mars, Iowa. One of her grandfathers was Hans Christian Andersen – not the well-known author, nor was he related, but the name recognition is a fun part of her family lore. Leona fondly recalls classmates and teachers in a one-room country school that included students in Kindergarten through 8th grade. Sunday school classes at the small Danish country church were taught in the pews of the sanctuary.

The congregation eventually closed, and Leona was confirmed at the American Lutheran Church in Le Mars. She graduated from Le Mars High School and attended Wartburg College in Waverly. Leona met Larry Reyelts when he was a student at Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque. Leona looked up to her pastor's wife, who encouraged Leona to get acquainted with Larry, the new intern who was serving at their church in Le Mars. In June, 1951, Larry graduated from the Seminary and was ordained, and he and Leona were married.

Their first call was a mission congregation in Marysville, California. Leona took it in stride when they discovered that their first home consisted of one room behind the sanctuary in the church building, with a rollaway bed, sofa, table, and chairs, and also served as the choir robe room. She hosted their first guests two days after they moved in, when the Synod's District President and his family came for Larry's installation. Two years later they moved into the new parsonage, a two-bedroom home in the suburbs. Their first child, Steve, was born in 1953. Larry's next call took the family to Edmonton, Alberta, where Debra and Daniel were born. Leona played piano and an old pump organ on Sunday mornings until they secured a professional musician.

In 1960 they moved to Coquitlam, British Columbia. In 1966 Larry became Director of Congregational Life in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada, so they moved to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Leona used her education training to assist Larry in conducting workshops and writing Sunday school curricula. In 1972 Larry became Director of Marketing at Augsburg Publishing in Minneapolis. Leona and Larry joined University Lutheran Church of Hope, and Leona served as Director of Children's Education until 1985.

Since then, Leona has contributed her time and her gifts for reaching out to others in a variety of ways, including organizing programs for the Senior Group, serving as a Funeral Coordinator and a Friendly Visitor, and participating in the Gloria Circle. Leona's faith and trust in God have carried her and her family through life's challenges. Larry passed away in 2000, and her granddaughter Thalea died at a young age. Leona's approach to every move and each challenge is not to complain, but her "can do" attitude moves her to size up a situation and do whatever needs to be done. She attributes her good health to a lifetime of walking, since she never perceived a need for a driver's license. Leona enjoys reading and listening to sacred music. She has a small collection of tea cups and spoons on her wall to remind her of many special people and the places where they lived or visited. These days, she especially delights in keeping up with the activities and energy of her beloved four grandchildren and eight great-grandsons.

Hope Diamonds Senior Group Luncheon Wednesday May 16



Hope Diamonds are members and friends of Hope who enjoy eating, laughing, talking and, occasionally, dancing and singing (sometimes even while they're chewing!). When the Hope Diamonds met in March, we decided to return to a monthly schedule, meeting the second Wednesday of each month, for lunch and a program or activity. The next two gatherings will be May 16 and June 20. Please RSVP at the welcome desk or call the church at 612-331-5988 if you plan to attend for lunch. There is a suggested donation of \$6 per person to offset the cost of the lunch. No age restrictions. Bring a friend if you like!

Pastor Barbara Johnson

Thanks from Millie Holmgren's Family

Care and Nurture Ministry

Dear University Lutheran Church of Hope Members and Staff, Thank you so very much for the gorgeous azalea plant we received on Easter Sunday. What a generous and kind way to remember Mom by lifting our spirits in such a special way. University Lutheran Church of Hope has always been so good to Mom and our family and it will always be dear to our hearts. We have so many fond memories of the loving and kind members who make up Hope Church. The staff is so loving, compassionate, understanding, and giving. It is easy to see why Mom loved you all so much. With our love and gratitude, Sharon & Paul Rosenau & Family.

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The Visitor

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