



The Visitor



January 2019

Issue #15-1

Complex world. Thoughtful church.

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*University Lutheran Church of Hope
is a welcoming, Christian community of faith
centered in God's grace and
called to demonstrate God's love for the world.*

ADVENT AT HOPE



Intergenerational Service of
Lessons and Carols



The heavens declare the glory of God, and the
sky proclaims its maker's handiwork. Psalm 19:1



Poonam Morgan, Seneca Brooks,
M'taleni Nashandi and Gretchen
Peik prepare gifts for Plymouth
Christian Youth Center. Thanks for
donating 156 items and \$75 in cash!



19 carolers visited several members at home.
Pictured are John Setterlund, Paige Whitney & Paul
Cantrell & daughter Viva, with Ed & Winnie Nyhus.

Faith in Community News

Visiting Representatives Trainings Jan. 6 and 13

Many of you have committed to visit your state representatives about the need to pass legislation restoring access to drivers' licenses for our immigrant neighbors. We will hold two trainings focused on the logistics and strategy of these visits on Jan. 6 and 13. Meet in Heritage Hall right after 10:30 a.m. worship. Donna Neste is our facilitator, and we are grateful for her leadership. Let's keep building that power together!

Neighborhood & Campus Team Meeting Jan. 6

The Neighborhood & Campus Team will meet Jan. 6 in the library after worship to discuss the Dinkytown Farmers Market, a market manager job description, EBT education, and local sponsors. If you are interested in helping ensure that the Dinkytown Farmers Market is a vital and sustainable neighborhood service, please join us for this meeting. Contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org for more information.

Sanctuary & Immigration Strategy Jan. 13

Join us after worship on Jan. 13 to discuss our Sanctuary & Immigration strategy at ULCH for Spring 2019. We will discuss Drivers' Licenses, Representative Visits, Sanctuary Suppers, Education, and other advocacy opportunities. If you would like to learn more, please contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org

ISAIAH: Claiming Our Voices 2019!

On Saturday, Jan. 19 at 11 a.m. at the Minneapolis Convention Center, 1301 2nd Ave S, Mpls, MN 55403, please join with other ISAIAH leaders to launch a powerful political path through 2019. As a Sanctuary Congregation, our involvement and input is strongly encouraged. Doran Schrantz, Executive Director of ISAIAH, says, This will be the first gathering of all of the constituencies of our organization: the Muslim Coalition of ISAIAH; Barbershops Creating Change in the Community; the Black Church Collective; The Latinx Coalition; our Sanctuary Network; Kids Count on Us Childcare centers and parents; and Greater Minnesota places of worship in Wilmar, St. Cloud, Rochester, and Northfield, as well as metro churches and mosques. We will hold trainings to prepare ourselves to be moral protagonists in our struggle to make progress on our agenda for Minnesota through the 2019 legislative session and beyond:

- Radical inclusion: getting drivers' licenses for all and restoring the vote to our disenfranchised residents.
- Creating a caring economy: quality, affordable childcare and eldercare and paid family leave and sick time.
- Climate justice and right stewardship of the planet we've been entrusted with.
- Quality, affordable, accessible health care for all.

If you are able to attend, please contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org for registration information.

Drivers' Licenses for Immigrants in Minnesota

We have an opportunity to restore access to drivers' licenses for our immigrant neighbors this coming legislative session. There are many issues on the table in 2019, and some things will be left behind; this issue has been identified by our immigrant leaders as the top priority. Many of us take our licenses for granted, but consider the implications for families and workers. Imagine the fear every time you get behind the wheel to drive your kids to school or to visit family in the hospital. You aren't even able to return something to Target without a license. Denying drivers' licenses to our undocumented neighbors (approx. 100,000 individuals in Minnesota) makes the roads less safe for everyone. If you don't have access to a license, you also don't have access to the testing and education that every Minnesotan who drives is expected to complete. Many of you have already committed to visiting your state representatives about this issue, and I encourage you to keep talking to friends, family, and neighbors about this important topic. If you would like more information, visit the Welcome Center for a helpful information packet, or contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org

Seeking Writers for Vision Goals Reflections

In 2019 we'll host a blog at ulch.org to reflect on our new Vision Goals, "Fueling Our Life Together." We are seeking people to write reflections that will be posted weekly beginning in January. If you're interested in our commitment to cultivating deep roots in our community, fueling authentic worship, or embracing all persons, please consider writing a reflection. Contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org for more information.

Faith in Community News continued on p. 3

Arise, Shine!

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

Isaiah 60:1)

This is the way our first reading begins on Epiphany, January 6. It's the start of a season of revelation. Things that once were hidden are being made known. By the star, the Magi find the Christ Child. In the river, Jesus is named Beloved. By the ancient words, Jesus' call of liberation is made public. By the sea, would-be followers are called ... and in our uncertainty we find courage.



Over the last months, our congregation has teamed up to apply for a number of grants. Many of these have been mentioned in passing, but their focus can be confusing. Today I'm naming these grants and sharing a bit about each. Grants help us make things known that we may not otherwise have the resources for. They stretch our capacity and enhance our ministry... not just within our walls, but in our neighborhood, and far beyond. I'm grateful for a bunch of people (lay leaders, staff, ministry partners in other congregations) who've had the vision to see what we can do together for the glory of God and the liberation of our world.

You'll notice that three of them are Ministry Imagination Grants. The Minneapolis Area Synod has received money from the sale of some church buildings, and divided it for a number of purposes. A portion is for Ministry Imagination Grants, small grants that further the gospel and encourage growth in faith or service.

Expansive Language Liturgy. Ministry Imagination Grant with Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Luther Seminary, St. Michael's Lutheran Church, and others, to create an expansive language (inclusive in language about God, humanity, creation, images, theologies) Lutheran liturgy. \$12,500 received.

Gather: Feast. Pray. Rest. Ministry Imagination Grant with Lutheran Campus Ministry and Grace University Lutheran Church to create metro-wide worship, fellowship, and retreat opportunities for young adults, especially young adults who are beyond our congregations and untethered (we're thinking especially about YAGM/LVC/LCM alums). We call this Gather; the first worship will be in April. \$15,000 received.

Community Organizing Video Project. Ministry Imagination Grant received by Nick Tangen and his peer group of community engagement staff to create videos about community organizing. \$10,000 received.

Riverside Innovation Hub. Augsburg University's Innovation Hub is funded by the Lilly Foundation; it makes a space to explore young adult ministry. Currently the funding provides a part-time coach (ours is Amanda Vetsch) who leads our Innovation Team (Will Heller, Erika Larson, Abby Lucas, Doug Hartmann, Kirsten Mebust, and Nick Tangen) through a process of listening and learning in our community. In the spring we can apply for a grant for a specific project.

Dinkytown Farmers Market. This past summer the mini-market received a grant from the city of Minneapolis to fund some of the market start up, especially buying the equipment needed to accept food assistance (SNAP and EBT cards).

Hope Church Trust Grants. Did you know that our congregation's endowment has given away more than \$200,000 since it began? The Trust is now accepting applications for grants. You are invited to apply.

Beloved Ones of God. Arise, shine, for your light has come. God's grace and glory are active in and through us. I give thanks for these grants and the gospel possibilities they reveal, and I give thanks for you. Epiphany Blessings.

Pastor Jen

Faith in Community News – continued from p. 2

Riverside Innovation Hub (RIH)

The RIH Team has been meeting with neighbors, community members, congregants, and other stakeholders as we practice the artform "accompaniment." Moving into the new year, we will explore the artform "interpretation," in which we ask questions about Hope's own story. What are the significant events in our history? What are the assets that shape our identity? How do we interpret scripture or think about its authority? These are some of the questions we'll explore together. Our next RIH Team Meeting is Jan. 13 after worship. Questions or want to learn more? Contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org

FAITH FORMATION NEWS



Faith Formation for All Ages



Children's Ministry

Sunday morning Children's Ministry will start again on Jan. 6, kicking off with Story Day. Kids will meet in Room 108 for First 15 and then split into two classes: PreK-2nd Grade in Godly Play, and 3rd-5th Grade in a Story Discussion. All children from PreK-5th grade are invited to participate in Children's Ministry offerings!

- Jan. 6: Story Time! The story this month is Jesus' Baptism. (Room 108)
- Jan. 13: Let's Sing a Song! (Sanctuary)
- Jan. 20: Art Expression (Room 103)
- Jan. 27: Community Day! (Lounge)

The Children's Ministry Team will meet on Jan. 23 at 6:30 p.m. in the library to prepare for March and April rotations. Questions? Contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org/



Youth Group

The high school youth will gather on Jan. 6 in the Youth Room for a time of check-in, prayer, reflection, and community. On Jan. 20, we'll meet at Hope and walk to the Purple Onion for coffee talk! We will gather that same evening at 6 p.m. to discuss the Lutheran understanding of vocation, theories of change, and our role in a community of faith. We will discuss some more opportunities for fellowship and community building, so keep an eye on the calendar for updates. Questions? Contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org/

Camp Amnicon

It is time to begin planning our summer trips to Camp Amnicon. If you have elementary or high school youth who are interested in attending camp this summer, please let Nick Tangen know as soon as possible. We will host an informational meeting sometime in January (date TBD) for both younger and older youth. Expect to receive further communication after the New Year.

Centering Prayer Fridays at 1 p.m. in Thorpe Chapel



Every Friday we hold space in the chapel for Centering Prayer, which is a silent method of prayer that prepares our faculties for the gift of contemplation. Centering Prayer is a practice of resting in God, which helps to dismantle all those messages that seek to convince us that we are anything but Beloved. All are welcome, and there is no prior experience with the practice required. Join us for this time of holy rest. Questions? Contact Nick Tangen at nickt@ulch.org/

Spiritual Gifts Discovery Workshops at Hope

Let us talents and tongues employ! On two Saturday mornings in early 2019, 9 a.m. to noon, John Hensrud and Beata Rydeen will present workshops about Spiritual Gifts discovery. You will identify your innate gifts and discover how to use them for growth and service in our church life here at Hope. Sign up for one or both!
Jan. 12: The Clifton Strengths Workshop will focus on your top 5 (of 34) strengths. You will learn to appreciate your own strengths and celebrate the strengths of others. Requirements include registration and \$20 to cover the cost of the online assessment. You'll receive a code to access the assessment.

Visit <https://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com> for an overview.

Feb. 9: The Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Workshop will focus on your personality type preferences and how to recognize and use your unique gifts. Registration deadline is Feb. 3. Complete the assessment and share your results with John or Beata by Feb. 5. A print version will be available, which must be returned for scoring. The free online assessment can be accessed at <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp/>
If you have taken either of these assessments previously, you are welcome to join the discussions for a refresher. By knowing, using, and celebrating the gifts God has given us, we can enrich our congregational life together! Questions? Contact John at jhensrud@homesm.com/ or Beata at beatarydeen@comcast.net/

Sunday Forums

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

Jan. 6: Welcome the Refugees. Margaret Yapp from the Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota Refugee Resettlement program will discuss the basics of resettlement, current challenges, and changes in the U.S. resettlement program. She will explain the services families receive once here, and how folks can get involved. On this Epiphany Sunday we will consider tangible ways to bring *light to the nations* in our world today.

Jan. 13: Hospitality in a Changing Neighborhood. Join Pastor Jen and Minister of Faith in Community Nick Tangen for a discussion about our neighborhood, the shifting dynamics and demographics, and our call as a community of faith to offer hospitality. Who is our neighbor? What will our future neighborhood look like? What implicit and explicit expectations do we have as a community for encountering our neighbor? We'll discuss topics relevant to our vibrant and innovative neighborhood and our role as people of faith.

Jan. 20: Building Power through One-to-Ones. One-to-ones are the building blocks of healthy, powerful organizations, and an engaging way to build community in congregations. Throughout the last year, many of you have met with congregants and community members for intentional one-to-ones to learn about one another, discover each other's self-interest, and build community. Join Nick Tangen and others to learn more about this powerful practice, and the steps that follow when action is needed community-wide.

Jan. 27: Befriending the Muslim Neighbors. Trinity Lutheran Congregation has become a place of welcome to many of the new Somali immigrants in the Riverside community in Minneapolis. Pastor Jane Buckley-Farlee will join us to discuss the ways this congregation is engaging the needs of the people there. What can we learn for our own community engagement?

Herald in the New Year with the Hope Book Club

On Jan. 13, 7:00-8:30 p.m., come to Nancy Miller's home, 2501 27th Ave NE, Minneapolis, to discuss *The Buried Giant*, by Kazuo Ishiguro.



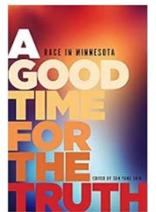
"You've long set your heart against it, Axl, I know. But it's time now to think on it anew. There's a journey we must go on, and no more delay." *The Buried Giant* begins as a couple set off across a troubled land of mist and rain in hope of finding a son they have not seen in years. Sometimes savage, often intensely moving, Kazuo Ishiguro's first novel in nearly a decade is about lost memories, love, revenge, and war.

Feb. 10: *The Women in the Castle*, by Jessica Shattuck. Three German widows of the resistance together at a run-down castle when World War II ends embody aspects of the catastrophe that overcame their country.

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

A Good Time for the Truth Chapter Discussions

On Oct. 14, David Lawrence Grant, author of "People Like Us," one of the chapters in *A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota*, spoke here at Hope to an engaged and enthusiastic group of listeners. Mr. Grant then joined us in Fellowship Hall for a dinner catered by Breaking Bread restaurant in north Minneapolis, and further discussion of the book.



It is important for us, as a culturally white congregation, to spend time listening to voices of people of color, and this event kicked off that conversation in a spirit-filled way. Special thanks to the Hope Church Trust for financial help buying copies of the book for Hope members, underwriting the speaker's fee, and subsidizing the meal. Interest in continuing the conversation is high; another discussion was held on Dec. 2, focused on "Red, White, and Blank," by Heid Erdrich, about the invisibility of Native people in this country.

Keep your eyes open in January and beyond, for announcements of additional chapter discussions throughout the year. If you have any questions or suggestions, contact me at westwoodkaren@yahoo.com

Karen Westwood
Racial Justice Task Force

Treasurer's Report

November 2018 and Year-to-Date Income and Expense						
	Nov. Actual	Nov. Budget	Nov. Variance	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Variance
General Giving	45,686	41,976	3,710	422,650	461,731.49	(39,082)
Rental Income	12,282	11,723	559	131,538	128,952.34	2,586
(Net Services and Misc.)		-	-	(106)	-	(106)
Total Income	57,967	53,699	4,269	554,082	590,684	(36,602)
Total Expense	51,182	53,699	(2,517)	584,153	590,684	(6,531)
Net Operating Income	6,785	(0)	6,786	(30,071)	(0)	(30,071)

November 2017 and Year-to-Date Income and Expense						
	Nov. Actual	Nov. Budget	Nov. Variance	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Variance
General Giving	31,293	37,391	(6,098)	365,259	411,308	(46,050)
Rental Income	20,566	11,610	8,956	130,795	127,706	3,090
(Net Services and Misc.)	(55)	-	40	(35)	-	40
Total Income	51,804	49,001	2,899	496,019	539,014	(42,920)
Total Expense	42,324	50,501	(8,177)	534,701	555,514	(20,813)
Services	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Operating Income	9,480	(1,500)	11,076	(38,682)	(16,500)	(22,107)



November was another great month at University Lutheran Church of Hope! General Giving totaled \$45,686, an increase of almost 46% compared to November 2017. Although year to date, general giving is down 8% compared to the 2018 budget, it is up nearly \$60K (16%) from this time last year. Steady rental income contributed to a total income of \$57,967 for the month.

Expenses totaled \$51,182 for the month of November. Year to date, Hope has incurred \$584,153 in expenses, nearly 10% more than last year. We are closely managing our expenses while making strategic decisions on how our resources should be used for important things in the future. As a congregation we have been presented with opportunities to expand our ministry, including a pastoral intern, providing benefits to our staff, and conducting a church-wide information technology audit. The Vision & Governance Board was fully aware of the risk in accepting additional expenses, and felt confident in our financial position. We are confident that these incremental expenses are bettering our congregation and overall mission.

Net operating income was \$6,785 in November. Year to date, we have a net operating loss of just over \$30K, which is less than 5% of our total 2018 budget of \$644K.

The balance sheet is a snapshot of our financial position at a specific point in time. As of Nov. 30, we have nearly \$234K in current assets mainly comprising our checking and savings accounts. We continue to maintain a healthy balance sheet position.

Contributions to the Building Fund totaled just over \$11K for the month. After satisfying our mortgage obligation, we had a net income of approximately \$4.1K. We currently have \$129,493 in total assets for the Building Fund. We are looking forward to Year 2 of our capital campaign, Revealing Hope.

The Board is finalizing the 2019 budget. Thank you to everyone who completed a 2019 pledge card. Pledge cards were a fundamental component for building the 2019 budget. Please join me on Sunday, Feb. 3 for the 2019 budget presentation, just one week before the annual congregational meeting on Sunday, Feb. 10.

Thank you for all the ways you contribute to University Lutheran Church of Hope. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns! Thank you.

Emma Carpenter
Treasurer

Seminar on the *St. John Passion* of J.S. Bach

A 6-week seminar on the *Saint John Passion* of J. S. Bach will be held on six Monday evenings beginning Jan. 14, through Feb. 18, 2019. Besides detailed exploration of the music itself, Paul Westermeyer and John Setterlund will discuss the history, style, and interpretation of the *Passion*.

This seminar will be held at the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, 3115 Victoria St. N., in Roseville. Registration can be made through Rachel at the church: rwright@lrelca.org or 651-484-1292. A fee of \$20 covers the series. For further details check the music events bulletin board or contact John Setterlund at john.setterlund@gmail.com or 217-828-1038. John S. Setterlund

2019 Hope Women's Retreat: Dancing with the Divine

The 2019 Hope Women's Retreat will be held at Dunrovin Retreat Center north of Stillwater, Jan. 18-20, Friday night through Sunday morning. All Hope women and friends of any age are welcome. Saturday morning is the only structured time, so there are lots of opportunities for crafts, hiking/skiing at William O'Brien State Park, massage, a Stillwater trip, etc. The cost will be approximately \$200 for two nights and 4 meals. People can come for part of the weekend as well. Scholarships are available (speak to Pastor Jen).

Deadline for registration is Jan. 9. Contact Ann Beane at spirit.beane@gmail.com or Beata Rydeen at beatarydeen@comcast.net with questions.

Gratitude and Generosity Moment

When you read this, Christmas memories of 2018 will still be fresh, and the New Year will be in motion. As I reflect on the holidays, I'm mindful of the traditions that have become part of our family, full of gratitude and the generosity that flows from them. For both John and me, our parents have been very generous to our family over the years. We heard the message, "What we are doing for you now, we hope you will do the same for your own family." That also was reflected in their giving to non-profits.

So, for the holidays, we now have the tradition, as I'm guessing many of you do, of giving to organizations and then gifting that to family members. This year we gifted through the ELCA Good Gifts program, giving clean water filters, school supplies to children in Africa, support money for new congregations, and a goat in a developing country, to name just a few. So, in this New Year of growing your gratitude for what God has given you, grow your generosity as well, as I continually challenge myself to do!

Blessings, Ann Beane, Gratitude and Generosity Team

Trust Grant Requests

The Hope Trust Board is now taking applications for funding requests for 2019. The deadline is January 31st, 2019. Please paste this address in your web browser: http://www.ulch.org/leadership_and_resources to get the form. Feel free to contact Merrill Morse at mandlmorse@comcast.net if you have any questions.

Care and Nurture Ministry

Hope Diamonds at noon on Wednesday, Jan. 9. Special Guest is Doug Ohman of Pioneer Photography. Lunch includes hearty beef stew, homemade bread, and dessert. Doug Ohman will share slides and stories of historical Minnesota landscapes. RSVP by Jan. 6 at the Welcome Center.



Hope Diamonds tour the Bell Museum* Tuesday, Feb. 19. Join a guided group tour of the Bell Museum & Planetarium, 2088 Larpenteur Ave W., St Paul, MN 55113. Cost per senior is \$14, which includes the guided tour and a planetarium show. Tickets are to be paid in advance at church by Sunday, Feb. 6 (checks or cash to ULCH). Plan to meet at Hope at 12:30 p.m. to carpool, or meet us at the Bell Museum by 1:15 p.m. Questions and information from Pastor Barbara Johnson, 612-331-5998 or barbaraj@ulch.org

*Note there will not be a senior lunch at church in February.

Congregational Life

Dates to Keep in Mind:

Jan. 6: Epiphany!

Jan. 9: Hope Diamonds

Jan. 12: Spiritual Gifts Discovery Workshop; Painting Day; Bread Baking

Jan. 13: Baptism of Jesus Sunday.

Jan. 18-20: Hope Women's Retreat

Jan. 23: Prayer Around the Cross Evening Service

Jan. 27: Fellowship Meal celebrating Chinese New Year

Feb. 10: Annual Meeting, with a light Fellowship Meal

Feb. 15-18: Winter Retreat at Mount Carmel

Feb. 17-24: Our week to host Families Moving Forward (FMF)

Mar. 6: Ash Wednesday – Lent begins

Life Events at Hope

We're a community called to hold one another in prayer in every season—in our 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 and baptism: We pray for those in our congregation who are awaiting children and holding hope in joyful and painful times.

Marriages: We pray for all those preparing for marriage, and for all relationships of commitment.

Deaths: We pray for all who grieve the loss of loved ones.

Significant Illness: Those living with illness, cancer, recovery, uncertain diagnosis, chemical dependency and other addictions, and mental health struggles, including Peter Ostroushko, Bob Swanson, Janet Carpenter, Hannah Kiresuk, Trish Gorbunow, and Chuck Lewis.

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

Painting Day.

The Facilities Team is planning a painting day Jan. 12, 9am to 2pm. We will paint both the east and west narthex areas. This should be a one-day project. All skill levels are welcome, but some familiarity with brush and roller painting is helpful. Lunch will be provided. Please contact John Pignatello at johnpignatello@usiwireless.com or 612-743-3448 and/or speak with Craig Nelson if you are interested. Thank you!

Chinese New Year Celebration—January Fellowship Meal

Come celebrate the Year of the Pig at our annual Chinese New Year celebration Sunday Jan. 27 for our Fellowship Meal. Wear red – red symbolizes fortune and luck! The menu will be: beef with vegetables, sesame chicken, vegetable lo mein, fried rice, steamed rice, egg rolls, and almond cookies. Help with cleanup is always appreciated. Undergrad and graduate students are our guests.

Congregational Annual Meeting Feb. 10

Mark your calendars for our congregation's annual meeting on Sunday, Feb. 10 after the 10:30 a.m. service. We'll gather in Fellowship Hall, share a light lunch, review the year past, elect congregational leaders, approve a budget, and do other congregational business. Please plan to participate.

Welcome New Members! Directories Available

In early December we received 11 new members into this community of Christ. To get to know them better, take time to put names, faces, and stories together by reading the new member bulletin board by the staff offices. Reach out and get to know one another! Updated congregational directories (including new members and other updates) are available on Sundays at the Welcome Center or electronically by contacting ulch@ulch.org. Welcome: Bernt Berkland, Elizabeth Campbell, Susan Carlson, Will Heller, Micki Kruse, Jayne Lindesmith, Dick Luedtke, Lyle Lutz, Tom Magnon, Kristen Tangen, and July Ye Zheng.

Mount Carmel Winter Retreat

Have you ever gone on the Hope winter retreat? Please join Hope families and singles at our annual University Lutheran Church of Hope/Mount Carmel winter retreat, a great time away in the winter. Here are the details:

Arriving on: Either Friday, Feb. 15 late afternoon or Saturday, Feb. 16 after 1 p.m.

Departing on: Monday, Feb. 18 late morning.

2 or 3 overnights: You may choose between those two options.

Recreation and activities: Skate, cross-country ski, snowshoe, slide, sauna, board games, reading, fireside chats, Sunday chapel service.

To make your reservation, contact Jill at Mount Carmel at 800-793-4311, jill@mountcarmelministries.com or contact Bryan Kufus for more information at 612-685-0402, bkufus462@icloud.com. Registration information is available at the Welcome Center. Reservations should be made ASAP with a non-refundable deposit of \$50. Please make commitments early to aid those doing the planning. Payment by check should be sent to Mount Carmel, PO Box 579 Alexandria, MN 56308. You can also pay by credit card.

Beacon “Housing First” Event

Beacon, the affordable housing organization that heads the Families Moving Forward program, does much more. They have spearheaded the building of a number of affordable multi-unit buildings with supportive services in the metro area.



They are currently planning to build another building in Minneapolis. Hope has committed to help with the activism needed to make this happen. We have already taken the first step by signing post cards to Governor-Elect Tim Walz, inviting him to a Beacon “Housing First” Event, Congregations Convening, on Jan. 29, 7-8:30 p.m. at Bet Shalom Congregation, 13613 Orchard Rd in Minnetonka. Housing First focuses on getting people into stable housing without first requiring them to address other problems they may face; it’s easier to engage with support services if the chaos of living on the street, or in a tent, is alleviated by the security of a home.

If you are interested in attending this event, there is a sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center.

Donna Neste
Hope in the World

Music Ministry at Hope

Thank you to all volunteers—those who help with worship, who serve as worship leaders, and who make music in the community—for making God’s presence Incarnate in our worship life together during the Advent and Christmas season. January is a relatively quiet month for worship and music, but do mark your calendars for Jan. 23 when we will resume our monthly **Prayer Around the Cross** opportunity. We meet at 7 p.m. in the chapel for this service of silence, candlelight, and singing.

During the season of Lent, which begins with Ash Wednesday March 6, we will add a **drumming group** to our musical activities. Similar to the Advent Handbell Choir model, we will meet weekly starting in late February, and offer our music in worship throughout Lent and perhaps for Easter Sunday. This group will rehearse weekly (Tuesday or Wednesday evening for 60 minutes, to be determined). If this is something you’d like to join, please reach out to me by e-mail or in person to be added to the roster.

Two choral events to highlight come early in February. The evening of Feb. 9, the **Together in Hope Project** will present a concert of the music we brought to Rome in October. The free concert will take place at the Basilica of Saint Mary in downtown Minneapolis. Join this special group in advocating for Christian unity through music. Talk to me for more information. That same weekend, on Sunday Feb. 10 at 4 p.m. at St. Michael’s Lutheran Church in Bloomington, the **National Lutheran Choir** presents a live concert “recording” experience. Called “Carols We Love to Sing,” this concert will be recorded and distributed as part of the well-known “Hymns We Love to Sing” series of recordings. The audience is a full participant in this concert and will be featured prominently on the recording. Come take part and join your voice! More information at nlca.com.

Zach Busch
Minister of Worship and Music

President's Report

Christmas Presents

Dec. 15, 2018

As I write this, a little more than a week before Christmas, most of us are spending at least some of our time thinking about Christmas presents. We participate in Secret Santa events at work, we have white elephant exchanges with friends, we share meaningful gifts with each other at worship, and we shop frantically to find the perfect something for those who are close to us. 'Tis the season.

By the time this edition of *The Visitor* reaches you, Christmas may well be a pleasant memory. But gift-giving season will not quite be over. After the first of the year—on Jan. 6—we will mark Epiphany, the day when tradition says the Magi arrived in Bethlehem from the East, bearing earthly treasures—gold, frankincense, and myrrh—to present to the Christ child.

Whenever I think of treasure, I cannot help but think of the words inscribed on a rustic wood lectern that stands on one side of the gymnasium at Holden Village—a space that serves as the setting for daily vespers during the summer months. Carved by the legendary St. Olaf College art professor Arnold Flaten and presented to the Holden community in the mid-1960s, the lectern bears a simple inscription: “We have this treasure.”

These words are excerpted from Paul's second letter to the church at Corinth (2 Corinthians 4:7-9). He is writing to a congregation that is struggling to comprehend and respond to the mystery of the Gospel. They are stung by Paul's rebuke in an earlier letter—a misstep that has soured his relationship with that church and that made the apostle realize his own shortcomings as a mentor. Confronting this reality, he finds comfort and strength from knowing that God has freed us all from the burden of guilt through the gift of Jesus Christ. Here's more of the passage:

“We have this treasure in clay jars, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.”

In this one short statement, Paul acknowledges the human condition and makes it clear that we all exist in a state of grace, that grace comes from God, and that grace is freely given regardless of our human failings. What a wonderful, hopeful thing for us to know as we face the joys and challenges of a new year. What a gift! Blessings,



John Lauber
Congregational President

Holden Village in Summer 2019

Zach Busch and a friend have been invited to serve as musicians at Holden Village this summer, July 21-27. Tim Gustafson has been invited to be the musician during the following week, July 28-Aug. 3. Holden Village is a Lutheran retreat center nestled in the Cascade Mountains of Washington State. We're encouraging a group of Hope folks and friends to head west during this span in July. This would be an organic group so you could register for the time frame that fits your schedule, make your own travel arrangements, etc, but know that you'd have Hope friends in the Village at the same time during either of those weeks. To learn more, talk with John Lauber (jflauber@comcast.net, 612-991-8983). Registration begins Jan. 1 so decisions should be made soon. Holden: www.holdenvillage.org.

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Rev. Barbara Johnson

Minister of Worship & Music:

Zach Busch

Minister of Faith in Community:

Nicholas Tangen

Pastoral Intern: Linqing Chu

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Custodian:

Geremew Beshah – weekdays

Gus Gustafson – Sunday

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Child Care: Gus Gustafson

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The Visitor

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