

Complex world. Thoughtful church.

April 2021
No. 17-04

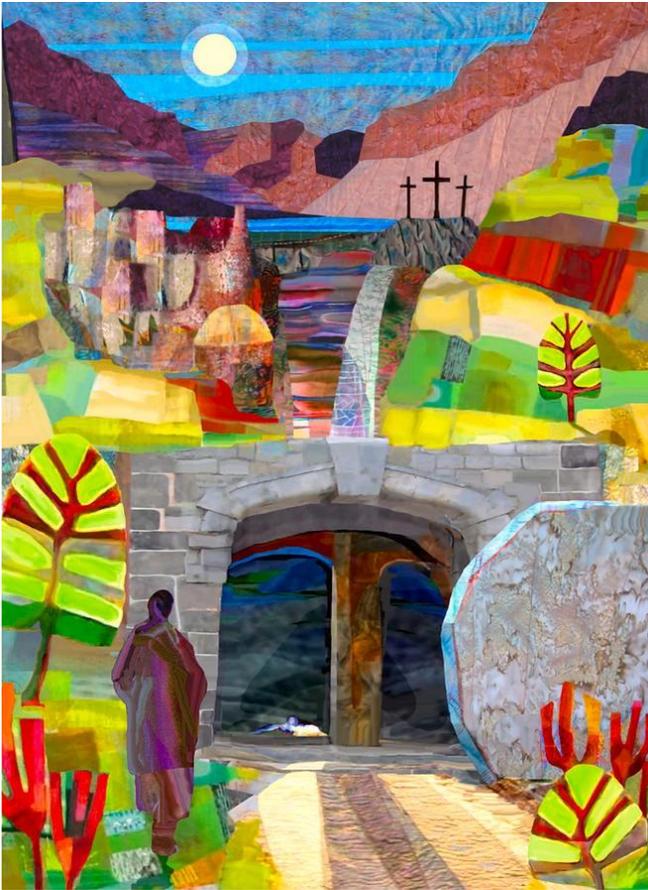


Clockwise from Top Left: Newly created cards for use by the Bereavement Ministry Team; to mark the first day of the Chauvin trial, morning bells were rung and 8 minute and 46 second silence was kept to honor George Floyd and the hope for justice; families enjoyed a gathering at Hidden Falls Park; the youth group in the courtyard; Nashandi sisters at Hidden Park; waters of promise and life in a quiet sanctuary; (center) stylist Jared Swanegan trimmed Tim Krolsek's beard at the Drop In Day in March when a collaborative of local churches, businesses, the library, social service providers, and Red Chair Project stylists offered haircuts, hot meals, resources, jackets, and supplies to our unsheltered neighbors and others (photo credit: Shannon Doyle/MN Daily).

On the Third Day He Will Rise

This stunning collage, *On the Third Day He Will Rise* by British artist Michael Torevell, is currently displayed in Hope's Fellowship Hall. With a compressed patchwork of vibrant colors and textured shapes, the artist maps layers of mystery and meaning into this visual telling of the transforming story of Easter.

From the top, a cerulean blue sky is warmed by the rising sun and cradled in a hilly range including the Mount of Olives. On its western slope was the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prays the night before his betrayal and arrest that, if it be God's will, he be spared suffering his pending sacrifice. And it is this same Mount of Olives where Jesus later ascends into heaven. At the foot of these rocky hills the artist inserts an electric blue body of water, a symbol of the healing power and presence of the Holy Spirit in the living waters of baptism. Just to the right of this water we see three distant, empty crosses stationed on the stony execution hill of Golgotha where Jesus Christ is crucified.



From this sorrowful place we follow a vertical stone path, passing a condensed impression of Jerusalem on the left, wilderness on the right, on down to the most significant feature—a massive tomb cut deep into the earth, the place where Jesus was buried. It is the third day after Christ's death, and the tomb's massive stone closure is rolled aside revealing stark emptiness within—except for a discarded burial cloth, curiously glowing in the dim light.

One might find the artist's depiction of Christ's tomb striking. I'd never imagined it as having a Roman arch complete with keystone. All four gospels describe this never-before-used burial place as belonging to a wealthy Jewish follower of Jesus named Joseph of Arimathea. So, it makes sense that the tomb would be well constructed.

Yet here the prominence of this crowning keystone, smack dab in the middle of the picture, feels intentional. It's the Romans who first use keystones to enable the support of larger archways, and it is a governor of the Roman Empire that hands Jesus' fate over to the will of a frenzied and hostile crowd.

More poignantly, we can view the keystone as a metaphor of relationship. As the strength and integrity of a Roman arch is entirely dependent on the keystone to bear the heavy load and lock into place all the other stones, so it is that our strength and merciful redeeming is wholly dependent on God lifting the

weight of sin and death from us through Christ's glorious resurrection, securing the passageway for us to live in God's saving grace and promise of eternal life.

Deep within this empty tomb we see a dim light, perhaps from an oil lamp. But neither an oil lamp nor the sun have the capacity to produce the surprising flood of light seen here breaking from within this vault and beyond its threshold. A supernatural light source is operating here, strangely emanating from darkness yet strong enough to cast a shadow of the tomb's massive supporting crossbeam onto the outer ground—a reminder of the spiritual imprint that Jesus' empty tomb has made on earth. And again we see the discarded burial cloth, phosphorescent in luminosity.

Shrouded in a purple mourning robe, Mary Magdalene stands to the side of this outpouring of divine light, beholding the whole mystifying scene. And, in 2021, we can stand with her, utterly astonished by God's radical act of redeeming love. Jesus Christ is risen! Hallelujah! Thanks be to God!

A blessed Easter to you from Arts & Environment!

Muffi Abrahamson



Confusing Seasons

I get a little confused about the seasons at this time of year. The winter jacket is done, right? Spring coat? Rain jacket? And, this year, do I wear the super-duper-smokey jacket that is infused with the smell of wood smoke from the backyard fire pit during this season like none other? Snow boots or rain boots? Maybe I'll just break out the sandals! Clearly I'm finding this season confusing.

The combination of springtime and vaccinations offers a buoyancy that is palpable. And, at once, the year's-worth of stressors is relentless, and, with many of you, I am weary, grieving what has been, apprehensive about what is to come. COVID drives much of this, to be sure, but it's actually a complex web: the trial and an outcome and response for which we can only pray, racial inequity and hard and needed work at both the systemic and personal level, political divisions that go deep, and the juggling of life in this season.



As we hear about "opening up" there is at once a giddiness and an uncertainty. Finally! And, yet, is it the right time? For the right reasons? From some I hear a relief that they *could* do such and such, and a strong sense that it's not yet time for *them* to do it. Others are trying to understand how to interact when some are fully vaccinated and others of us have yet to get a first shot. These are confusing times. It's a confusing season

Many of you have wondered to me: When can we come back to church? That's a good question! In a matter of a day I had an email from one colleague sharing a very deliberate careful return to in person worship, and a message from another colleague sharing that their congregation would definitely be virtual until Labor Day and they'd reassess in August. It's a confusing season. Here are a few things that we ponder:

- Going "back" won't feel like usual. Singing won't be the same. Masks and distance will be real. We'll need to attend to hospitality in different ways. A lot has happened and we've grown and changed in this process.
- As a congregation we're asked to make worship a physically and emotionally safe experience for many folks, some who know one another well, others who don't. To do this, we'll need strong guidelines for how we act and interact, and we'll need to honor these guidelines. That's the only way that those who know the community less will be able to trust that it's actually safe: if we do what we say we do.
- Outside is safer, so this may be the season we lean into even more outdoor worship services.
- With the support of the capital campaign (thank you!) and the labor and expertise of the Worship Enhancement Task Force, we're right now preparing to be able to offer both in person and online worship. See Matt Fry's article to learn more.
- Whenever we begin (the earliest will be later May or June) this will be a hybrid of sorts. It's more complex than just doing the service in the sanctuary and recording it to beam out to those who can't be present in body.
- We realize that there's been an intimacy in our worship online. How often do we get to be so close to one another? How often do we get to worship from our homes? For many this has made a tough situation much more sustainable. For those who continue to worship online, we're thinking about how to offer some of this intimacy and engagement with the community.
- How do we make these decisions? Governor Walz has offered wide possibilities, but each community still makes its own plan. Carol Flaten and I will use our current COVID procedures (dated August 2020) as a base. We'll look closely to the updated guidance from MDH and the CDC, not simply for how many can come to worship, but details about singing, distance, movement in the building, sharing food, and plenty more.
- We'll revise our procedures in coordination with the staff and the Vision and Governance Board. We'll think about things like the spread of variants (and lock downs in Europe), the COVID rates and the vaccination the rates in our area, the guidance of the Minneapolis Area Synod and trusted sources like Dr. Michael Osterholm, and how other congregations are making decisions.
- We'll also think about the safety and capacity of our staff and volunteers. When will the staff be vaccinated? What about key volunteers? Returning to in person worship while also doing virtual worship takes technology and a lot of time and energy. How can we move toward this without overwhelming the leaders we depend on?
- I anticipate knowing more in April as we revise the COVID procedures. But, truth be told, we won't know everything. Numbers will continue to go up and down. Our procedures will surely acknowledge this.

Friends, it's a confusing season. I know that many are yearning to break free from this hard year. I also know that in anxious and uncertain times we hanker for clarity. Listen for those themes in the Bible and you'll hear them a plenty. We're in good company! In this season, I'm giving thanks for the wisdom of scientists, medical personnel, and leaders. I'm praying for patience. And I'm trusting that God who raised Jesus from the grave, will make a way of life and hope for us in this confusing seasons. Easter blessings.

Pastor Jen

Worship and Music

Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. (Exodus 15:20)

We are living in a holy time. These first days of April - the Triduum, the Three Days - are the everlasting instant which we hold at the heart of our life as a Christian community. We carry these days with us throughout every day of every year, from the font to the grave, and, in grace, beyond.

This year, the Vigil of Easter resonates in a more profound way...haven't we been "keeping vigil" for a resurrection for all this time? Through the pandemic, the blueish vigil lights of our device screens marking time, our time together sustaining us, we have been watching and waiting for a new dawn that may just be upon us. The pandemic is waning and there is real hope for what's to come.

We hear lots of talk about "returning to normal," and that phrase sits differently with different folks. I don't believe what's to come for us bears any resemblance to what came before. After all, isn't that what these Three Days are about? Jesus died. He experienced death and rose again. I wonder, did waking up after he died, seeing daylight after death's darkness, standing up and feeling the cool earth under his feet and taking those miraculous steps out of the tomb - did that feel like "returning to normal?" I can't imagine so. In the same way that these Three Days affirm for us what we've lived in the past year—that the only way out is through—I believe we must acknowledge the reality that we have been changed significantly by the journey we've been on.

We hear the story of the Israelite's deliverance out of Egypt on the night of Easter Vigil. After suffering in servitude God leads the people out of bondage through the parted waters of the tumultuous sea to the other side. Miriam and her sisters take up tambourines. Their whole bodies express what they feel, and the air around them vibrates with the shimmer of tambourines, with the joy of music. The complexity of this joy is relatable, for I think it might be like what we feel now, after all this death and sickness, loneliness and isolation. This journey has been heavy, and just because it's near over doesn't mean we will ever feel normal again.



God knows this feeling. God is here with us. And, I think, the Spirit is here, challenging us to wear our scars, to join hands, and to walk out of the tomb together. Grab your tambourine on the way.

Zach Busch
Minister of Worship and Music

Mark your calendar: Prayer Around the Cross evening service on Wednesday, 4/28, 7pm

Opening Doors Sanctuary Technology Upgrade Update

One of the priorities identified for the Opening Doors capital campaign is to invest in upgrades to our sanctuary to enhance the distanced worship experience. I am pleased to report that a subgroup organized by facilities has been hard at work with our dedicated staff to make this a reality. Our goal is to continue to provide a meaningful online worship option as we return to the sanctuary in person.

To that end, we will soon be purchasing two PTZ (pan, tilt, zoom) cameras and a dedicated streaming computer. We are also investigating an upgrade to the sanctuary sound board to better interface with the streaming computer. Finally, Nathan is currently implementing an upgrade to our internet service to provide the bandwidth in the sanctuary for streaming (and improve wi-fi throughout the building! -- this should be completed by the time you read this). Together these systems will be able to provide a video and audio feed of whatever is happening in the sanctuary to a Zoom or YouTube participant. We're hoping to be testing our new equipment in April and May and are excited about the opportunities that having this capability will create for our ministry in the years to come.

If you are interested in learning how to use this capability with us, please let me know at matthew.g.fry@gmail.com or give me a call and I will get you connected!

-Matt Fry, V&G Liaison for Worship and Music

University Lutheran Church of Hope Recreational Ministry

Save the Date for These Upcoming Summer and Fall Events

The Recreational Ministry Team is excited to offer a wide variety of outdoor activities for the upcoming months. Mark your calendars and watch for more details as the date approaches. Individuals as well as families are welcome!

- **Saturday - 5/8:** Hike/walk at Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve.
- **Thursday - Saturday, 6/17-19:** Camping at William O'Brien State Park.
A group camp site that accommodates 35 people has been reserved. Tent sites are free and available to the first 35 people that reserve by messaging Bryan at 612-685-0402. RV sites will be available on Thursday only and need to be reserved. There are options to paddle Friday and Saturday with Saturday typically being the main paddling day. A Friday hike is another option.
- **Saturday - 7/17:** Bike at Dakota Rail Trail starting in St. Boniface.
- **Saturday - 8/14:** Kayak at White Bear Lake.
- **Sunday - 8/22:** Hike/walk at Battle Creek Regional Park.
- **Sunday - 9/19:** Hike/walk (TBD).
- **October:** TBD.



Contacts - Bryan Kufus - bkufus462@icloud.com and Deb Bordsen - hrvestmoon@gmail.com

Bereavement Ministry Card Writing Opportunities

The roll out of Hope's Bereavement Ministry is underway. This is a new area of support for our faith community under the umbrella of *Care and Nurture Ministries*. Its aim is to extend a word of comfort to those in our midst grieving the loss of a loved one. **We are in need of individuals who can periodically share a hand-written word of comfort on behalf of our congregation.** Card writers are provided with a collection of

bereavement cards designed for this purpose, as well as guidance on how the program works and reference tools in support of this ministry. If you can devote a few minutes of your time to let the bereaved in our community know they are not alone in their grief, please email Lisa Morse at ULCH.BMT@gmail.com or 651-332-3920 for more information.

Lisa Morse
Bereavement Ministry Coordinator

Racial Justice Film Discussion Group

The April Film will be 13th

The Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution abolished slavery and involuntary servitude, except as punishment for a crime. The Racial Justice Film Discussion for April will be held on Sunday, April 18 at 5pm on Zoom. See the Thursday Epistle for the Zoom link. Watch the film 13th in advance and join in the discussion with others in the Hope community. Here is a link to the film: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krfcq5pF8u8&t=60s>).

Save the date for the Children's Ministry Spring Celebration

Back by popular demand!

Who: All Sunday School families and up

What: Picnic, fun and fellowship, kickball and more

When: Saturday, April 24th, 2021, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Where: Hidden Falls Regional Park, St. Paul

Bring: Bring a Picnic lunch for your family and chairs. COVID-19 protocol will be followed (please bring a mask). A snack will be provided. Stay tuned for more details in the Thursday Epistle.

Children's Ministry Team - Shelly Parry, Paige Whitney, Ann Beane and Rosalie Eldevik

Camp Amnicon This Summer

We're planning for some summer trips to Camp Amnicon. Some know Amnicon well, for others it may feel new and unknown. Here's the link to their website: <https://amnicon.org/> Camp Amnicon is an ELCA outdoor ministry located on the south shore of Lake Superior, east of Duluth/Superior. They do a variety of kinds of programming, much of it progressing as kids get older and are ready for greater challenges. Over the years, Hope kids and youth have done most of the trips, strengthened their faith, deepened relationships, and gained trust and confidence.

For this summer we're aiming for two groups:

- One that will be middle school (currently in 6th grade and up)/ high school. This would include canoeing the Flambeau River (in northern Wisconsin) and camping together as a group along the way. This trip will be June 20-25. They teach you all the skills, so it's okay if this is new to you.
- The other will be an on-site program called Wilderness Discovery for those ages 9-12. The group gets to do a lot of playing and working together, campfires, swimming, camping, canoeing, and all at the camp's base. This program will be June 20-23.

Last summer, between Hope and First Congregational, we had two Amnicon groups. Amnicon did a great job of taking COVID precautions and running an adapted and safe program. There is a cost and the congregation is committed to assisting with the cost and making this possible for everyone. If you are interested in being part of this or learning more, please contact me (jenn@ulch.org). Thanks!

Pastor Jen

Greetings from Nigeria! A Message from Pastor Amson and Dorthea Hamman

March 14, 2021: "It has been long since we last wrote and a very long year for all of us. Today we had an exciting Sunday service and I want to share it with you. When COVID hit, we experienced lock downs throughout March and April and beyond and, as with most people, we couldn't go to church, but we could still gather in homes for fellowship."

"On March 29, 2020 we had our first neighborhood fellowship on our neighbor's outside deck. Amson has been the main pastor, but has been assisted by several lay leaders and pastors in the area. Today, March 14, 2021, we became a full-fledged congregation and bear the name Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Lamingo, Jos District, Myaweghi Division, Abuja Diocese, [Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria]."

"On the average we have had about 15 attending, with more than 25 at times. Today we were 93 adults, many visiting from the church we came from. We have found a plot of land nearby so we can start to build a church soon, but have to source for funds."

"Before inaugurating the church we welcomed ten adults into the Lutheran Church, two of which are our leaders. We ask that you pray for our new congregation so that we might continue to spread God's love and hope to more neighbors and serve as an example of how God can work, even in difficult times."

Dorthea and Amson Hamman

Care and Nurture Ministries

Register now for Compassion Care Ministry Training Sessions in April – May (ZOOM)

Compassion Care Ministry leaders will offer a series of 7 training sessions for Hope members and friends on Monday evenings beginning April 12 thru May 24. Topics include Confidentiality, Grief, Depression, Loss of Relationships, Empathetic Listening, Boundaries and Prayer. Compassion Care ministers are lay members of our ULCH congregation who complete a series of training sessions designed to help them hone their skills for deeper listening and confidential care. After completing the training, Compassion Care ministers may be available to care for those who may be dealing with a life crisis such as a serious illness, the death of a loved one, the pain of a broken relationship, or other life situations where care is needed.

Who can attend? Adults of all ages and genders, individuals or couples, are encouraged to participate in the training sessions (at no cost). Those who complete all of the training sessions might go on to serve as a Compassion Care minister, but there is no obligation to serve in that capacity. Most participants have found the topics to be pertinent and practical in application for self-discovery and daily living with family and friends.

To Register: Contact Pastor Barbara Johnson – barbaraj@ulch.org cell 970-901-7189 or one of the Compassion Care Ministry Leadership Team: Muffi Abrahamson, Ann Agrimson and Karen Jorstad.

Young Adults, LCM, and the Future of the Church

Your Lutheran Campus Ministry-Twin Cities bears witness to the love and mercy of Christ in the midst of 55,000 young adults at the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities. We often talk about young adults as the "future" of the church, and fail to understand the ways they are shaping it now, in the present. This year has been particularly challenging for campus ministry and for young adults in general. Mental illness is skyrocketing, the economy is shaky, and our culture seems to be fraying at the seams. When they look at the world they are inheriting, they see the many challenges that are facing them.

And still, or maybe because of this uncertainty, students are actively engaged with their faith. They are hungry, and they show up to pray, to serve, to learn, and to worship

together. More than anything, they show up to connect, and to center down in the love of God. At LCM, we see first-hand the incredible work of the Holy Spirit, who animates these young adults and our ministry among them. We look forward to being present with you on April 11th for LCM Sunday!

A student will be preaching on that day, proclaiming the Gospel, and sharing stories about their life in college. As we anticipate a year of reconnecting and rebuilding beginning next fall, your support matters now as much as it ever has. We are grateful that University Lutheran Church of Hope will be taking a special offering in support of this vital young adult ministry. Thank you for being church together. For more information, visit <https://umnlutheran.org/support-us/>

Bible & Brews – April 26th at 6:30 p.m.

Exactly what it sounds like...bring your Bible, your favorite brewed beverage, and a penchant for laid-back but totally engaging conversations about faith, scripture, and current events. We will meet on Zoom, and the link can be found in the Thursday Epistle. You can also email nathano@ulch.org to retrieve the link.

Day Camp 2021 (with some changes from last month!)

Join us for South Minneapolis Day Camp, June 21-25! This year, our theme is "Soil and Spirit." As we sing, pray, and listen to stories from Scripture together, our kids will be grounded in the Spirit's work in creation - renewing and sustaining life. As we make art and learn about gardening, our kids will get their hands in the dirt and learn about soil, seeds, plants and pollinators through a number of activities. Camp is for children entering kindergarten through high school, with a separate middle and high school track and opportunities for high school leadership with the younger kids.

Due to the unknowns related to the continuing pandemic and vaccine roll-out, we are planning to offer camp fully online, with at least one outdoor, in-person evening gathering

opportunity for every kid (with an option for the whole family to join) from 6:30-8:00 p.m. on Tue, Wed, or Th. Our online camp will include live Zoom gatherings from 9-10:00 a.m. M-F, which will involve songs, ASL learning, prayer time, and learning about our theme. We will have further content on our website with daily art, storytelling, and gardening videos. Everything will be ASL interpreted. We will also have a closing celebration on Friday, June 25, which will be outdoor and in-person. At any outdoor in-person events, we will have safe protocols in place, including a mask requirement and physical distancing. We are still working on our website, and will be sharing information about registration soon. For now, save the date. We hope you can join us!

Youth Group

We're gathering monthly for Youth Group. Recently these gatherings have been in the courtyard at church and have included a campfire and time together. In April we'll meet on Sunday, April 18 at 12:30pm. Youth Group includes those in 6th grade and up.

April Sunday Forums

April 4 Happy Easter! No Forum

April 11 Deacons and Deaconesses Today

Diane Greve and Dan Bielenberg will discuss their own perspectives on *diakonia* as deaconess and deacon in today's church and world. Some of you remember from the book of Acts that Stephen was a deacon. And many of you would recall Lutheran Deaconess Hospital in south Minneapolis. These lesser-known expressions of ministry are alive today and worthy of a conversation. Come with your questions.

April 18 How We Keep Hope Afloat

An exploration of the three ways we give to support the ministries at ULCH. Three members will present a more detailed explanation of the Annual and Capital Campaigns as well as the Hope Trust. They will detail how they differ from one another, how they are managed as well as how funds raised have been utilized.

April 25 Racial Justice

The Racial Justice team will continue with a monthly program toward the goal of enlarging the conversation around racial equity. Watch the Thursday Epistle for more specifics.

We Celebrate Birthdays in April and May

Let's help these beloved members and friends celebrate their birthdays! Consider sending a card or making a phone call to these folks! Most of the members whose names are on our birthday list are 80 years or older. Some live at home independently, others reside in a care center or assisted living situation, and some are caregivers themselves. They all appreciate hearing from you, their siblings in Christ, and their community of faith. Check our latest ULCH directory for their addresses and phone numbers.

April Birthdays

April 7 Leonard Hrnrcir
April 8 James Solem
April 16 Sally French
April 19 Marge Perko
April 29 Jean Albrecht
April 29 Janette Munson - her 80th Birthday!

May Birthdays

May 7 Ruth Fingerson
May 23 Esther Dant
May 30 Marcheta Scribner

HOPE BOOK CLUB

On April 11th at 7:00 p.m., the Hope Book Club will meet by Zoom and discuss:
Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents, by Isabel Wilkerson.

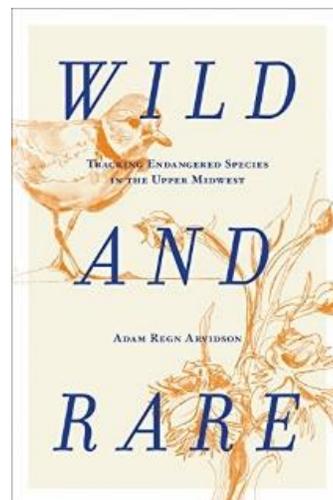
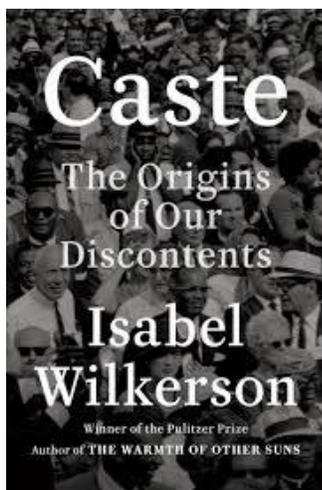
"Pulitzer Prize-winning author [of "The Warmth of Other Suns"] Isabel Wilkerson says racism is an insufficient term for the systemic oppression of Black people in America. Instead, she prefers to refer to America as having a 'caste' system. . . . Caste . . . 'is the term that is more precise [than race]; it is more comprehensive, and it gets at the underlying infrastructure that often we cannot see, but that is there undergirding much of the inequality and injustices and disparities that we live with in this country.'" -

<https://www.npr.org>

May 9: *Wild & Rare, Tracking Endangered Species in the Upper Midwest*, by Adam Arvidson

"The elusive Canada lynx bears kittens in Minnesota's northeastern woods. In the far southeastern part of the state, the succulent Leedy's roseroot clings to cold cliffs. On the northwestern grasslands, the western prairie fringed orchid grows only on ancient glacial beach ridges. In the rivers of the Twin Cities metro area, the snuffbox mussel snaps on a fish's nose to give its larvae a temporary home. These species and fifteen others living in Minnesota are on the federal Endangered Species List. Adam Regn Arvidson, a talented science reporter and genial guide, uncovers the stories of these plants and animals . . ." - amazon.com

Please contact Sonja Peterson if you'd like to join us and she will send you the Zoom link. Please also send Sonja your book suggestions: 612-242-8711 or speterson@dunnwald.com



Life Events

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, including Carmen Macoskey and family at the death of Carmen's sister **Ruby Swanson**; Dan O'Loughlin and Becky Halvorson, Maya and Leah, at the death of Dan's mother **Margaret O'Loughlin**; Ken and Alpha Lundquist and family at the death of Ken's mother, longtime Hope member **Ruth Lundquist**; Marge and Anna Ostroushko at the death of Marge's husband, Anna's dad, and beloved music maker, **Peter Ostroushko**; Kristen and Jay Carlson and family at the death of Kristen's grandpa **Bob Helvig**; Bill and Jan Sanden, Karin and Kjerstin at the death of Bill's father, **Conrad Sanden**; and Madhu Bhat and family at the death in December of Madhu's father **Oscar Eksten**.

Significant Illness—We pray for those living with illness, cancer, recovery, uncertain diagnosis, hospice, chemical dependency and other addictions, and mental health struggles, including Stewart Herman, Oswald "Mutt" Doure and infant granddaughter Danai, Steve Ganzkow-Wold, Jack Parry, Steve Schreuder, Miriam Hougen, Edward Nyhus, Janet Carpenter, Hannah Kiresuk, and Chuck Lewis.

Separation, Divorce, Retirement, Moves, Graduations, New Beginnings, the Pandemic, and this ongoing civil rights movement—God is with us through it all.



A Note from the President

As questions about the “new normal” and life after the pandemic surround us, I like to consider my favorite Yogi Berra quip—“I hate making predictions, especially about the future.” It sure would be nice if we knew exactly when we will return to in-person worship, when we can hug each other in the lounge again, when singers and musical ensembles can fill our sanctuary with the Lord’s song.

In the earliest days of the Coronavirus lockdown a year ago, our four chickens came into our lives in New Brighton. Maggie was the classic Easter chick. Last summer, the crew started supplying us with 2-4 fresh eggs a day. The snows came, extreme cold, and windy days, but the eggs continued, an abundance that is more than Beth and I can manage.

Yogi Berra aside, I am going to make this prediction: When the pandemic subsides, Beth and I will still be getting fresh eggs from our garden. In this way, life will not be different.

Here is another solid prediction: Nick Tangen will not be working at University Lutheran Church of Hope after the pandemic. New staff with unique talents will support our ministry. As this column goes to press, the Vision and Governance Board is attending to its call to visualize our future without Nick. Following a time of reflection, the board plans to have a hiring process in place by summer, and welcome new staff in early fall.

Important as this new staff will be, let us also consider the amazing enthusiasm and abundance the Holy Spirit has given the lay ministry of ULCH this past year. As the danger of the virus subsides, the people of Hope will surely continue their increased care for the suffering among us. Our new solar panels definitely will continue to generate electricity and cut down on harmful fossil fuel use. Meanwhile, our new learned experiences will continue to shed freshness on our Bible studies, our virtual connections, and our prayer life.

This all will stay with us. I am willing to bet 2 dozen eggs on it.

Uli Koester
Congregational President

Treasurer’s Report

February 2021 and Year-to-Date Income and Expense						
	Feb. Actual	Feb. Budget	Feb. Variance	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Variance
General Giving	36,293	38,037	(1,744)	70,935	85,584	(14,649)
Rental Income	9,685	10,166	(481)	19,452	20,332	(880)
Total Income	45,978	48,203	(2,225)	90,387	105,916	(15,529)
Salaries & Benefits	27,670	25,995	1,675	54,720	51,990	2,730
Total Expense	50,122	49,059	1,062	104,845	101,095	3,749
Net Operating Income	(4,143)	(856)	(3,288)	(14,458)	4,821	(19,278)

February Financials

General giving totaled \$36,293 for the month of February, \$1,744 less than budgeted. Year-to-date general giving totaled \$70,935, \$14,649 under the budgeted amount. Rental income totaled \$9,685 in February. Income for the month totaled \$45,978 contributing to a total year-to-date income of \$90,387, \$15,529 underbudget.

Expenses totaled \$50,122 for the month of February. Year-to-date, expenses total \$104,845, \$3,749 overbudget primarily due to increased utility expenses and several small facilities repairs around the church. We had a net operating loss of \$4,143 for the month contributing to a net operating loss of \$14,458 year-to-date. As of February 28th, we have \$519K in current assets – primarily composed of our checking and savings account (including the Solar Project funds).

Capital Campaign – Opening Doors

In the first month of the Opening Doors Capital Campaign, we received \$15,549 in contributions. This campaign is aimed at dedicating funds to pay the mortgage (*expires in April 2027*) and fund special projects around the church including virtual worship enhancements. We are also in the process of distributing benevolences to several organizations as part of the Revealing Hope Capital Campaign.

2020 Year-End

For additional information on 2020 Year-End Results, please refer to the [2020 Annual Report](http://www.ulch.org/leadership_and_resources) at http://www.ulch.org/leadership_and_resources. The Executive Committee alongside the Vision and Governance Board are grateful 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, stay well

Emma Carpenter, Treasurer

April 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
				10:00 AM Sanctuary Open for Prayer, Holy Communion 11:00 AM Zoom - Centering Prayer 6:30 PM Zoom - AA Group 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Service- Zoom and Live Stream	Set up in the Courtyard and Lounge 10:00 AM Sanctuary Open for Prayer-Good Friday 7:00 PM Good Friday Service- Zoom and Live Stream	1:00 PM Small Gathering 7:00 PM Easter Vigil- Zoom and Live Stream
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:30 AM Easter Meal Prep 10:30 AM Easter Worship - Zoom and Livestream 12:30 PM Easter Meal Pick up	9:00 AM Zoom - Quilters	11:00 AM Zoom - Staff Meeting 6:30 PM Zoom - MHNA Land Use Committee 6:30 PM Zoom - Personnel Committee 7:15 PM Zoom - Executive Committee		9:30 AM Zoom - Dorcas Circle 11:00 AM Zoom - Centering Prayer 6:30 PM Zoom - AA Group 7:00 PM Zoom - Men's Group	7:00 PM ZOOM-Crafters' Group	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:30 AM Zoom - Sunday Forum 9:45 AM Zoom - Sunday School Check-In 10:30 AM Worship - Zoom and Livestream 7:00 PM Zoom - Book Club	9:00 AM Zoom - Quilters 5:30 PM Zoom - PEASE Community Foundation 6:00 PM Compassion Care class - Zoom 7:30 PM Zoom: Worship Planning Team	11:00 AM Zoom - Staff Meeting	5:30 PM Zoom - Compassion Care Team 6:00 PM LCM Worship - Parking Lot 6:00 PM Zoom - Facilities Team 7:00 PM Choir - Zoom	*"The Visitor" Articles Due 11:00 AM Zoom - Centering Prayer 6:00 PM Zoom - SE Como Hope Connections Group 6:30 PM Zoom - AA Group		9:00 AM Garden of Eatin' Build (and plant) Day!
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9:30 AM Zoom - Sunday Forum 9:45 AM Zoom - Sunday School Check-In 10:30 AM Worship - Zoom and Livestream 12:30 PM Youth Group in the Courtyard 5:00 PM Zoom: Movie Discussion Group with Racial Equity Focus	9:00 AM Zoom - Quilters 6:00 PM Compassion Care class - Zoom 7:00 PM Riverside Innovation Hub Team Meeting	11:00 AM Zoom - Staff Meeting 4:00 PM Sanctuary Coalition Meeting 6:30 PM Zoom - Vision & Governance Board	6:00 PM Children's Ministry Team Meeting 6:00 PM LCM Worship - Parking Lot 7:00 PM Choir - Zoom	11:00 AM Zoom - Centering Prayer 6:30 PM Zoom - AA Group 7:00 PM Zoom - Men's Group	7:00 PM ZOOM-Crafters' Group	11:00 AM Family Event at Hidden Falls Park
25	26	27	28	29	30	
9:30 AM Zoom - Sunday Forum 9:45 AM Zoom - Sunday School Check-In 10:30 AM Worship - Zoom and Livestream 7:00 PM LCM - Courtyard, Lounge	9:00 AM Zoom - Quilters 6:00 PM Compassion Care class - Zoom 6:00 PM ZOOM-Bible & Brews	11:00 AM Zoom - Staff Meeting 7:00 PM Zoom - Racial Justice Team	6:00 PM LCM Worship - Parking Lot 6:00 PM Zoom - Sanctuary & Immigration Team Meeting 7:00 PM Zoom: Prayer Around the Cross 7:30 PM Choir - Zoom	11:00 AM Zoom - Centering Prayer 6:30 PM Zoom - AA Group		

Re-Imaging the South Entrance becomes The Garden of Eatin'-- And Now We Need Help!

Last fall, following a strong suggestion from Facilities' John Pignatello, we started a conversation to re-imagine the south entrance, that is, the space where our trash, recycling, and organics recycling bins currently are.

It was a Facilities and Gardeners conversation mostly. We talked. We wanted to add a vegetable garden for the neighborhood, especially the homeless. We ran into a problem. We solved it. We talked again. We applied for a Trust Board grant. We got it! We are now getting ready to go to work and GROW! Literally. First we have to move the dumpster and bins; then we build and plant and tend and welcome our neighbors and keep tending, both the garden and any relationships we develop.



The big problem was that we couldn't find a good place to move the bins permanently; the solution is that we are just making it a seasonal move. Except for two permanent raised beds against the south wall where they are not in the way, the other six raised bed garden planters will be moveable, so the big trash and recycling bins can be moved back to their original spaces for the winter. During the growing season, the bins will be directly west by the fence where the big snow pile usually is in the winter.



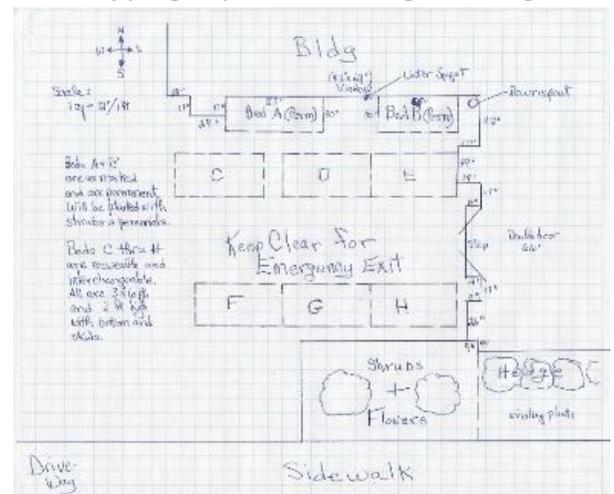
We are working with Tom Peluf, Hope member and owner of Terrapin Construction, to prepare the summer site for the bins and generally prepare the south entrance for its summer garden. Tim Abrahamson and others are finalizing the design for the plant boxes, which will be wood-framed metal boxes on skids. They will be 3 feet wide, 6 feet long and 2 feet deep. They will look much like this bin that Tim built last summer, except they will have a bottom to hold in the soil and raised up on skids so they can be moved. And we will be planting them a lot closer together to fill them with produce. Note

the comfy looking cedar edging on top for gardeners to sit while planting and weeding. Tom Peluf will be moving them twice a year (spring and fall) with his equipment and additional strapping to prevent damage, storing them out of his way for snow plowing in the winter and back to the growing space in the spring.

Muffi Abrahamson is taking the lead on the Garden of Eatin' welcoming signage. We are also planning for shrubs in the permanent beds and two tree hydrangeas along with cut flowers and groundcover flowers in the garden by the sidewalk. Here is the planned layout for the area:

FYI, for the record, I, Kathy Knudson, am in charge of dirt.

Facilities, is planning a build day for Saturday, April 17, starting at 9 a.m. (Our backup date, just in case we have lots of rain or a blizzard, is set for April 24.) **And this is the call for HELP!** Tim and others will lead the garden bed building. We need experienced builders, handyones, and helpers who know how to social distance, wear masks, and still get things done. Please bring your own masks, gloves and tools, like drills, screwdrivers, and hammers. Talk to Tim for details on that; we will also publish final details in the Thursday Epistle. We will be adding dirt and planting cool weather crops in some of the boxes just behind the builders so we will also need gardeners and dirt movers with gloves, masks, buckets or wheelbarrows (we have some at church) who can start a little later than the builders. And we would love it if someone can volunteer to be in charge of snacks and lunch for the workers.



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 all the world.
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