

Complex world. Thoughtful church.



Clockwise from top left: Teenagers sharing a laugh; serious Mardi Gras Mini Golf with our friends at First Congregational Church (check out the loopdeeloop on the far right); brick work on the bread oven bench on a warm February day; walking the labyrinth early in Lent (the labyrinth can now be found in the chapel—please use it often); confirmation students making a prayer shawl for a friend in need of our prayers; The Roasters making music during the Mardi Gras event; getting festive; Night Songs with a full sanctuary (and balcony), some fabulous music and stunning images (\$1403 was donated for Nutritious U and local food insecurity); and (center) preparing a Fellowship Meal to nourish us before the annual congregational meeting.

Doing What We Are Meant To Do in Jesus' Name

*The Lord now sends us forth with hands to serve and give,
to make of all the earth a better place to live.
The angels are not sent into our world of pain
to do what we were meant to do in Jesus' name;
that falls to you and me and all who are made free.
Help us, O Lord, we pray, to do your will today.*

-ELW #538, Enviado soy de Dios



Through the month of February, our Sanctuary and Immigration Team has invited us to help prepare backpacks. Dignity Backpacks they've called them. These are backpacks stocked with supplies and given (via a group called Conversations with Friends) to beloved ones who are about to be flown from MSP back to the southern border, and deported. Life as they've known it - sometimes for decades, family and friends, work and responsibilities - shifts in an instant.



Many of you have been involved in this project: a Trust grant funded the backpacks, the team worked hard to invite and organize us, many donated specific supplies, those at the Sunday Forum and Sunday School in late February learned a little about our complicated immigration situation and then prepared the backpacks, during worship we wrote notes of encouragement to accompany each pack, and finally the backpacks were blessed and we prayed for those who would receive them, their families, and the system.

This Central American hymn has been in my ear (and therefore on my tongue) these last weeks. In English we sing, "The angels are not sent into our world of

pain to do what we were meant to do in Jesus' name...that falls to you and me, and all who are made free. Help us, O Lord, we pray, to do your will today." By grace we are made free, my friends. With that grace we live, we learn, we respond. With the dignity backpacks, I've valued the small glimpse into the hard choices and situations faced by many, including some who we love and hold close. This helps me get in touch with my assumptions, my privilege, my power, and the ways I can stretch my compassion and be part of advocating for change. So often we want to do it all, or do it all right, and it's humbling to take these small and meaningful steps, open to the learning as we go, for that, too, is part of the change.

Have you checked out Javier Zamora's book Solito? Solito is Zamora's memoir of migrating from El Salvador to the United States alone (solito) as a 9 year old in 1999. I read Solito this past summer and was engrossed. It's an important story told through the eyes of a child. The Racial Justice Team, Sanctuary and Immigration Team and the Book Club invite us into conversation about Solito during May, so you've got a little time to find the book and do some reading!

This has been an intense month with plenty of emotion: playful events like Mardi Gras Mini Golf; the joy of hosting another stunning Night Songs; scary health situations, grief, and a lot of support and prayer; some beautiful shared leadership as our congregational leaders stepped up for one another and the community; Ash Wednesday and the start of our Lenten journey; discernment and living with the unknowns. I am strongly aware of Christ's presence leading us in this season. Thank you for your prayers and I hold you in my prayers. God bless you in these days.

Pastor Jen Nagel, Lead Pastor

Worship and Music

The choir season is underway! Join us for rehearsals Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. (7:30 p.m. during Lent). We sing a wide variety of music from around the world and across the centuries, and rehearse in a way that allows everyone to feel comfortable and ready to sing on choir Sundays. Come as you are! Can't come every week? No problem, come rehearse with us when you can! Bring a friend! Lent is a great time to start with the choir, as we're post-Night Songs and just starting to think about Holy Week and Easter.



Sing with the Choir Spring Dates: Sing with the choir Sundays will return this spring, giving anyone who can't make a weekly evening commitment a chance to come for Sunday morning choir rehearsal at 9:30 a.m. and learn something straightforward for the service. Dates for these Sundays are: March 11, April 21, and a possible May date TBD.

Our Lenten evening services are Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m. February 21 through March 20. These are available on YouTube.

Holy Week and Easter Worship schedule:

March 24: Palm Sunday worship at 10:30 a.m. where we commemorate Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and read the passion story from the SPARK Story Bible.

March 28: Maundy Thursday services at 12 p.m. and 7 p.m. with choir, where special importance is placed Jesus' last supper with his disciples. The 7 p.m. service is available on YouTube.

March 29: Good Friday services at 12 p.m. and 7 p.m. with choir, where we hear the passion story in full. The 7 p.m. service is available on YouTube.

March 30: Easter Vigil service at 7 p.m., an ancient service in which telling the story of the arc of redemption throughout the bible is shared with creative, storytelling-style readings and music.

March 31: Easter Morning Service at 10:30 a.m. with choir and brass. Easter Breakfast 9-10:15 a.m.

Soloists and ensembles for worship are welcome! If you play an instrument or sing and would like to offer a piece of music in worship, please let me know! Our congregation has many musicians of all ages, and all are welcome to share their gifts. All are welcome, anytime.

Robert S. Ragoonanan , Minister of Worship and Music



March 3rd Fellowship Meal

The menu will be: spaghetti with tomato sauce or pesto, salad, bread and cake. The cake will be provided by Linnea and Cesar Becerra in honor of Lucella's baptism. Undergraduate and graduate students are our guests. Come for food and fellowship! Help with set up and clean up are appreciated!

Bible and Brews

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 meet the 4th Monday of each month from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Watch the Thursday Epistle for meeting location.

Children's Ministry

Sunday School: We continue to gather on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in room 103. This month we'll study the stories of Rebekah, The Widow's offering, Queen Vashti, and we'll learn about Holy Week. We do not have Sunday School on Easter Sunday, March 31st or on April 7th, the Sunday at the tail end of Spring Break for Minneapolis Public Schools.

Families with Young Children: Families with children 5 and under, or not yet in Kindergarten, are welcome to play in the nursery before worship. This is a good time to get to know other parents with young children, build community, and encourage your children to build relationships, too. This is not a programmed time, but a casual space for play and relationship building.

Summer opportunities: There are a couple of opportunities for children to connect at church this summer. **Trailblazers Camp Week at Amnicon for 9-13 year olds - August 5-9:** Spend one night in camp, two nights canoe camping on the river, and one last night back at camp. Build relationships, get outside your comfort zone, and enjoy time in God's good creation. Contact Pr. Maria (mariaa@ulcn.org) if you'd like the registration link sent to you once it's available.

Building Beloved Community Ecumenical Day Camp: August 19-23rd. Please save the date for a great week of fun and faith formation! This year, our ecumenical day camp will be both later in the summer and at a new location - Diamond Lake Lutheran Church (5760 Portland Ave). Our program arc will be Monday - Thursday (August 19 - 22), with a family celebration on Thursday night. Friday is a bonus fun day. We are excited to welcome children between the ages of entering Kindergarten through middle school, and we hope to have a wonderful crew of high school leaders to support the elementary kiddos. Registration is open now here: <https://www.smpdsdaycamp.org/>

Easter Breakfast: Join our community on Easter morning from 9-10:15 a.m. for a breakfast to support our young people and their faith formation opportunities at camp or on service learning trips. If you'd like to help with the breakfast, contact Pr. Maria (mariaa@ulch.org)

Youth Group

We're hoping for a Youth Group Friday Evening and aiming for Friday, March 22, 7pm-10:30pm. Think lock in but not overnight. Time together, goofiness, seriousness, food, fun, hanging out, (and in the end your own bed). Friends are welcome and expected.

Easter Breakfast. Plan to help with the Easter Breakfast, March 31 (likely with some prep on March 30). The Easter Breakfast supports summer plans for children and youth, so helping out is important.

Summer plans. Our plans have been up in the air with schedules, sickness, and such. We're narrowing in and have decided not to go to the ELCA Youth Gathering nor do a bigger Amnicon trip in Voyageur National Park (think summer 2025 for Lake Superior or VNP!). Here are two other ideas: **A smaller group canoe trip via Camp Amnicon.** There are a number of [trip options](#) (look at Flambeau, Northwoods Island Adventure, River Heros, Namekagon but a number of our kids may have done this). Friends welcome. AND/OR **Another cool and closer to home option...** some day trips here in the city for paddling and/or serving or a city adventure together. Questions, ideas, inspirations, talk with Pastor Jen (jenn@ulch.org) or M'taleni Nashandi

Congregational Retreat and Camp at Amnicon August 16-18, 2024

University Lutheran Church of Hope and First Congregational Church UCC are again planning for a weekend at Camp Amnicon. The dates are August 16-18, 2024. Amnicon (<https://amnicon.org/>) is on the south shore of Lake Superior (about 20 minutes outside of Duluth). The Amnicon River also runs through the camp. They have great hiking, canoes to borrow, and a fabulous beach for hanging out, swimming, and campfires. Meals will be provided by the camp under their outdoor pavilion. The lodging will be a choice between platform tents (permanent tents with beds - you bring your own sleeping bag), bringing your own camping gear and camping there, or renting one of their small cabins (please arrange this directly with Amnicon). Watch for more information, and save the dates!



Gather Young Adult Event on March 17

Gather is a ministry for young adults in the Twin Cities; a place for those who are hungry for community and connection with other young adults in the metro area. Gather is setting the table for connection and rest through worship, meals, and monthly events, and a place for you to deepen in faith as you discover your identity, uncover your vocation and develop as leaders who do justice in the world. Gather is LGBTQI+ affirming and eagerly invites siblings of any sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression into full leadership and participation. Follow our Facebook and Instagram pages for more information @gathertwincities



The March Gather event (Ice Cream Social Justice) will be at University Lutheran Church of Hope on Sunday evening March 17, 7 p.m. in the Lounge. Watch the Thursday Epistle and the Gather communion for more details.

Compassion Care

We know that our community is experiencing a lot of heaviness during this season: illness, anniversaries of grief, complications of aging, caring for those who are aging, the climate crisis, upcoming elections, wars that continue to rage. There is much to hold in these fragile days. And you do not have to hold it alone. Contact Pr. Maria (mariaa@ulch.org) if you would like to be set up with a compassion caregiver who can listen and pray with you.

Hope Birthdays

This birthday list includes Hope's members and friends who are 80 years and older, in addition to some who may be homebound, residing in assisted living, or a care center. You can find their contact info the ULCH directory. Cards, notes, and phone calls are always appreciated.

March Birthdays

March 1st – Leona Reyelts
March 27th – Janice Hallett

April Birthdays

April 7th - Leonard Hrcncir
April 8th - James Solem
April 16th - Sally French
April 19th - Marge Perko
April 24th - Richard Luedtke
April 29th - Jean Albrecht

Wild Church Gathering

Our congregation will be experimenting once again with a Wild Church gathering on Saturday, March 16th at 3:30 p.m. Location: TBD. People of all ages are welcome. We will gather around story, song, and the practice of

connecting with our kin in the natural world - the plants, critters, stone, and water. Come with an open heart and an open mind, ready to be moved. Contact Pr. Maria (mariaa@ulch.org) with questions

“The Trouble Is: Trouble Is” A Bible Study of the Book of Job

Sundays in April and May beginning April 7th
11:45 a.m. in the church library, led by Rev. John Setterlund

A great poet transformed an ancient legend of human suffering, patience, and reward into a masterpiece of Hebrew literature. Written in the form of dialogue, the *Book of Job* confronts us with issues of sin and justice, of arrogance and submission, and of the relationship between humans and God. This book is a literary, moral, theological challenge. Let's face it together!

What Happened at the Annual Meeting?

The Annual Congregational Meeting was held on Sunday, February 11, 2024. Here are a few highlights of the meeting:

- Prayed and sang together.
- Heard from leaders who are part of the four areas of exploration (hospitality spaces, wellness, themed programming, interior/exterior building projects) with highlights.
- Celebrated our partnership with Lutheran Campus Ministry-Twin Cities by giving them a check for \$42,517 as a seed for their endowment campaign. This money is part of the donation and an exciting first step in using this generous gift.
- Received the financial report from 2023 (we did well) with a note about benevolence giving.
- Passed the 2024 budget totaling \$721,815. This includes a 3.2% bump for staff salaries.
- Thanked outgoing Vision and Governance Board members and others. Board members who concluded terms were: Ann Agrimson (completing a cycle as VP/President/Past President), Betty Schreuder (Treasurer), Matt Fry (Worship and Music), Jacob Lanthier (Youth and Young Adults).
- Elected new leaders for many groups, including those coming onto the Vision and Governance Board: John Pignatello (Vice President), Micki Kruse (Worship and Music), Zach Rau (Youth and Young Adults). Linda Herman has become our Congregational President and Paul Odenbach has moved into the Past President role. The Vision and Governance Board will approve a new Treasurer because we weren't yet ready at the Annual Meeting. [LATE BREAKING NEWS: Thanks to Ruth Hedman for stepping into the role of Congregational Treasurer. It's now official!

The annual report can be found on the church website: www.ulch.org > About > Congregational Leadership and Member Resources > Annual Reports.

Baking Hope Update

Can you already smell the bread baking? Our Baking Hope Team will be firing up the ovens again to provide bread on March 3 and April 7th! The bread ministry baking schedule is making a switch to the first weekend of the month for March, April and going forward. Congregational members have done a phenomenal job of reserving bread ahead of time. Thank you! This greatly helps us in planning bread bake quantities. Watch for the Thursday Epistle to reserve a loaf for upcoming bakes. **Thank you for your ongoing support** as we hone our artisan bread making skills. As usual, these bread bakes provide artisan bread for the following ministries:

- Friendly Visitors, who bring God's love to those who cannot make it to worship
- Compassion Care, a confidential ministry provided by trained lay members who offer care and support to those in the midst of grief and life crisis
- Portland House, a Lutheran Social Service program which provides an alternative to incarceration and prison prevention.

Additionally, bread bake monetary donations provide funding for the summer pizza bakes, so that these may be offered free of charge. **Notice anything new by our wood-fired oven?** A group of volunteers along with the professional skills of Terrapin Landscaping, helped complete the stone bench in front of the oven. Thanks to Bryan Kufus, Paul Demueles, and Tom Peluf for the beautiful stonework on this project!

In May, we switch to congregational pizza bakes! Pizza will be provided for the congregation after church on the last day of Sunday School, May 19th, on June 23rd and on September 15th. At these events, we will provide fresh Neapolitan style pizzas made with our new pizza press. Thank you, Trust Board for making this purchase possible!

Opening Doors 2 Capital Appeal

Thank you to all who were able to turn in their pledges these past weeks. At \$372,287, we are well on our way to our \$400,000 goal! We know there are more of you planning to pledge and are asking you to do so soon. The Capital Appeal Committee will follow up with those who have not yet pledged. Remember, you may pick up pledge cards at the church welcome center or go online to the web site and click on the link Opening Doors 2 (at the top of the page) where you can get more information, link to the appeal video, and download a pledge card.

Erik Strand, Capital Appeal Co-Chair



March Sunday Forums

Forums take place in Heritage Hall on Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 10:20. They can also usually be viewed live on Zoom. Look for the link in the Sunday morning e-mail. You can also catch up on missed opportunities via the links in the Thursday Epistle. Please join us for a time of learning and growing together!

March 3: Decarbonizing the Church - What does that mean? We have gotten a start with solar--how much further should we go? Tim Abrahamson and Stewart Herman of the Clean Energy Team will provide a progress report and present some options that we might pursue.

March 10: Daylight Savings Time begins - No forum

March 17: Stories of Atonement - Theologians use the word "atonement" to speak of what Jesus did to strengthen the relationship between God and human beings. But what is atonement? How do the stories Christians have told about Jesus' life, death, and resurrection speak to atonement in our time? Hope member Kirsten Mebust will lead us in this discussion.

March 24: Prayers and Hymns of Atonement - Where do atonement stories show up in our Holy Week and Easter liturgy and hymnody? How do the hymns and rubrics affect our faith and our witness in the world? Bring in a hymn or liturgical element that you appreciate (or don't) to share. Kirsten Mebust will help us continue this conversation.

March 31: Easter - No forum

Trust Board 2024 Grants

The Hope Trust Board received 18 requests in late 2023, for distribution in 2024, and was able to provide at least partial funding for each of them, for a total of \$34,110.

The grants:

- MNCAN (Connect Aphasia Now) \$1600
- Joyce Uptown Food Shelf \$3850
- My Very Own Bed \$1980
- Give Us Wings (work with people in Uganda) \$1650
- Lutheran Campus Ministry \$2200
- ULCH Wood Fired Oven Ministry Team \$1650
- Peace House (ice-maker project) \$4100
- Women of Hope (labyrinth) \$1650
- Global Health Ministry \$1000
- Sanctuary & Immigration Team (backpacks) \$2200
- Clean Energy Team \$2100
- ULCH Little Free Library (food pantry) \$1200
- Homeless in Minneapolis book (Chris Zann) \$1100
- ELCA Youth Gathering or Amnicon \$2500
- ULCH recording project \$780
- ULCH choir music cabinet \$2750
- Be That Neighbor (community arts) \$900
- Giving Voice (choir for people with memory issues) \$900

In 2024 the Trust Board plans to continue collecting applications in the fall (September), to better align with the church budget-making process. We are pleased to welcome Shelly Parry as the newest member to the Trust Board. For more information on the Hope Trust Board, go to www.ulch.org/trust-board, or contact Co-Chairs James Flaten and Scott Hvizdos. Other Trust Board members are Meri Hauge, Ruth Hedman, Tim Hopkins, Leena Rapacz, and Shelly Parry.

HOPE BOOK CLUB

Sunday, March 10, 2024, 7 p.m. via Zoom "Have a Little Faith", by Mitch Albom.

"In the beginning, there was a question. 'Will you do my eulogy?' As is often the case with faith, I thought I was being asked a favor. Actually, I was being given one." <https://www.mitchalbom.com/books/have-a-little-faith/>

Apr. 14: Four Souls, by Louise Erdrich. "Four Souls begins with Fleur Pillager's journey from North Dakota to Minneapolis, where she plans to avenge the loss of her family's land to a white man." -www.goodreads.com

Contact Sonja Peterson at speterson@dunnwald.com or 612-242-8711 with book suggestions or for a link to the meeting.

Hope Diamonds

Our senior members will gather on Wednesday, March 20th from 12:30-2 p.m. for food and fellowship. Our program is yet to be determined. Contact Pr. Maria (mariaa@ulch.org) with any questions or if you'd like to attend.

What is the Friendly Visitor Ministry?



The Friendly Visitors Program is a vital ministry to our homebound congregational members who seldom make it to church because of health conditions or mobility and transportation challenges. These members are still very much a part of our congregation and special to our church family. Our pastors and many volunteers reach out to them with phone calls, visits, devotion booklets, cards, flowers, bread and any other church information throughout the year. The Friendly Visitor Ministry Easter Flower Project provides Easter flowers to beautify our sanctuary on Easter morning. These flowers are then hand delivered by congregational volunteers in the afternoon.

The Easter Flower Project raises money to support the ministry of Friendly Visitors and other special projects for the congregation. Contact Rosalie Eldevik if you would like more information about volunteering in this ministry.

2024 Friendly Visitor Ministry Easter Flower Project

The Friendly Visitor Ministry invites you to remember or honor loved ones for Easter Sunday. Submit their names by March 24th for memorials/honorariums that will be listed in our Easter bulletin, and contribute money for a plant to adorn the sanctuary. After the 10:30 Easter Service, the plants will be delivered by congregational members to all who are homebound, and the families who have been on the prayer list this past year.

Volunteers are encouraged to join us in the delivery.

You can submit names or volunteer in several ways.

- **Submit electronically.** [Click Here](#) for the Easter Flower Project online form.
- **Use the paper form below.** Send the information along with a check (memo: "Easter Flowers") to ULCH, 601 13th Ave. SE, Minneapolis. MN 55414, attn. Rosalie Eldevik.
- **Pick up a form at church** at the Welcome Center, or around the church. Complete form, include it with your check and hand it in to the person at the Welcome Center or a staff person.
- **Note if you want to be a delivery volunteer** (optional).



Thank you for helping to make our Easter so special. All contributions go to support the "Friendly Visitor Ministry." Questions: Contact Rosalie Eldevik 651-295-8789 or reldevik@gmail.com

Please detach and return with a check made to ULCH with "Easter Flowers" in the memo line.

Person(s) contributing _____

Amount \$ _____ Check _____ Electronic _____ Cash _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

I can assist with deliveries. Yes ___ No ___

Name: _____ phone #: _____

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 Baptisms—We pray for all who await and welcome children through joyful and challenging times. On March 3 we welcome in baptism Lucella Becerra, child of Cesar and Linnea Becerra.

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

Deaths—We pray for God's strong embrace for all who grieve deaths and losses, those that are recent and those that were many years ago and whose memories fill us, including Garvin and Bernice Davenport who grieve the death of Bernice's sister Evelyn; and Tami Felling (Nick, Josh, Kelsey), Greg and Tiffany Haltli, Jeff Haltli and James Jose, and Doug Haltli, as they grieve the passing of mom and grandma, long time Hope member Jeanette Haltli who died on February 21 and whose funeral is at Hope on February 29 at 11 a.m.

Significant Illness—We pray for those living with illness, cancer, recovery, uncertain diagnosis, hospice, chemical dependency and other addictions, and mental health struggles, including Zoe Odenbach, Marge Perko (in hospice care), Patrick Colombe, Bernice Davenport, Tom Magnon, Miriam Hougen, Janet Carpenter (in hospice care), and Chuck Lewis. We also pray for caregivers.

Separation, divorce, retirement, moves, graduations, new beginnings, and the civil rights movements of this time.

Treasurer's Report

January 2024 and Year-to-date Income and Expense

| | Jan Actual | Jan Budget | Jan Variance | YTD Actual | YTD Budget | YTD Variance |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| General Giving | 75,392.25 | 40,454.00 | 34,938.25 | 75,392.25 | 40,454.00 | 34,938.25 |
| Rental Income | 12,467.96 | 10,665.50 | 1,802.46 | 12,467.96 | 10,665.50 | 1,802.46 |
| Interest | 919.61 | 1,415.00 | (495.39) | 919.61 | 1,415.00 | (495.39) |
| Total Income | 88,779.82 | 52,534.50 | 36,245.32 | 88,779.82 | 52,534.50 | 36,245.32 |
| Salary & Benefits | 33,592.49 | 34,562.00 | (969.51) | 33,592.49 | 34,562.00 | (969.51) |
| Total Expenses | 57,541.64 | 61,924.00 | (4,382.36) | 57,541.64 | 61,924.00 | (4,382.36) |
| Net Oper Income | 31,238.18 | (9,389.50) | 40,627.68 | 31,238.18 | (9,389.50) | 40,627.68 |

Monthly Financials: As mentioned at the annual meeting, some income expected in 2023 was received in 2024. That combined with the normal monthly giving starts us out strong for the year. In January we received \$75,392. Rental income also started out strong at \$12,468. With interest from the money market of our reserves at \$920, our total income was \$88,780.

Our net income for the month was \$31,238 thanks to the strong giving. The overall monthly expenses were under what was budgeted but we did have a repair bill for the heating system from December that was \$1920. We also paid our worker's comp. insurance for the full year at a cost of \$3791. Our gas bill was only 55% of the budgeted amount, which I am sure is due to the warmer weather we have been experiencing.

As of January 31st, we have \$860,565 in current assets – primarily composed of our checking, savings, and E*TRADE accounts of which \$492,151 is in the dedicated accounts. This leaves the church with \$368,414 available as reserves.

Capital Campaign – Opening Doors: The Opening Doors 1 Capital Campaign giving in January was \$7,236. We have a total in reserves of \$205,007. Thank you for giving to Opening Doors 1. Thanks to those who have pledged to Opening Doors 2. Look for emails about benevolence giving for Opening Doors 1. Please reach out to Nathan Obrestad (nathano@ulch.org) or me, or our new Treasurer, Ruth Hedman, if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank You! The Executive Committee alongside the Vision and Governance Board are grateful for all the ways you contribute to University Lutheran Church of Hope. We know financial contributions are just one way of doing that. Thank you for all the kind words of support and encouragement during my term as treasurer. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns!

Thank you - Betty Schreuder, Treasurer

President's Report: Glimmer

I've been listening. As a member of the Donation Discernment Listening team, I listened to your hopes and dreams for this congregation. For several years, as a member of the Gratitude and Generosity team, I watched those who generously give their time and talents to serve this congregation and our neighbors. Thanks to Pastor Ingrid Rasmussen's (Holy Trinity Lutheran) Epiphany sermon, I learned that there is a word for these ear and eye witnessings, they are "glimmers" – moments of joy that reflect an awareness of God's grace - "Grace upon grace." (John 1:16).

In a season during which we have been mindful of the financial support necessary to make Hope's ministries possible, there has been a wealth of glimmers. Testimonials of long-time Hope members during Gratitude and Generosity moments in worship, statements of appreciation for Hope we heard during the Open Doors 2 capital campaign launch meetings, and the cherished memories of those who found their way here because of Lutheran Campus Ministry, remind us that Hope has been, and continues to be, a wellspring of faith. "Surrounded by such... witnesses... let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." (Hebrews 12:1)

By the grace of God and the generosity of faithful and talented volunteers, Hope is thriving. In Night Songs, we were star gazers, launched into space with celestial music. Every Sunday morning, worship leaders make music, read, pray, serve at the endless table, and staff the holy experiment with their technical expertise. Some stoke fires and bake bread. Men and women join in the ministry of the meatball, again preparing the fellowship meals that we had longed to return to. One hundred-year-old doors are refinished, the boiler is tended, and the grounds are cultivated by folks who cherish our church home. And some serve on committees, maintaining a watchful eye and dreaming of what yet might be.

Our Pastors, Jen, and Maria, inspire, challenge, and pray with us, sharing our grief and joy. With their leadership, by God's grace, and with great joy, Hope "offers an extravagant welcome and a generous sending out into the world to advocate and serve" (the Open Doors 2 appeal).

Announced at the annual meeting, a glimmer was made possible by the generous donation Hope received, when, after months of listening and discernment, attending to the dreams of members who eagerly accepted the challenge of "going above and beyond," Lutheran Campus Ministry, our ministry partners supporting University students, was chosen to receive \$42,674.80. There was no more frequent message that we, Donation Discernment Listeners, heard than "for the students." Now, the work of the four Exploration groups – hospitality spaces, wellness, themed programming, and inside/outside building projects – continues, making the discernment journey, itself, a part of the gift. The Vision and Governance Board receives updates from the groups (as you heard in the annual meeting in February), promotes communication and collaboration between the groups, and looks out for our commitment to restorative justice. We walk out in faith.

Walking together on our Lenten journey, I have read that, in the labyrinth, we walk and pray, without fear of getting lost. (grace.org/labyrinth) And isn't that what we do together at Hope?

I am listening.

Linda Herman, Congregational President

Save these Summer Dates

- **Camping and Paddling the St. Croix River**, June 13-15
- **Amnicon week for 9-13 year olds**, August 5-9.
- **Amnicon Retreat Camping Weekend for all ages**, August 16-18.
- **Building the Beloved Community ecumenical day camp**, August 19-23, 2024
- **Youth Group this summer**, dates and details TBD.

March Calendar of Events

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|---|
| | | | | | 1 Office Hours 9-2 3:00pm - 9:00pm Bread Ministry Group | 2 5:00am - 2:00pm Bread Ministry Group |
| 3 Baking Hope Operations 9:30am - 10:30am Choir rehearsal 9:30am - 10:15am Families with Young Children Gathering 9:30am - 10:20am Sunday Forum Heritage Hall/Zoom 9:30am - 10:15am Sunday School 10:30am - 11:30am Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube 11:30am - 12:30pm Bread for the World Offering of Letters 11:30am - 1:00pm Fellowship Meal | 4 Office Hours 9-2 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters 1:00pm - 2:00pm Sunday Forum Team 6:00pm - 8:00pm Parents of PEASE support group 7:00pm - 8:30pm ACTION Project ULCH Cohort Meeting | 5 Office Hours 9-2 7:00am - 8:00pm Presidential Nomination Primary 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Prog. 6:30pm - 7:15pm Personnel Committee 7:15pm - 8:30pm Executive Committee 7:30pm - 8:30pm Wellness Team Exploration Group | 6 Office Hours 9-2 7:00pm - 7:30pm Lenten Service, with YouTube option 7:30pm - 9:00pm Choir Rehearsal | 7 Office Hours 9-2 4:30pm - 6:00pm Compassion Care 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:00pm - 8:00pm Parents of PEASE 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group | 8 Office Hours 9-2 7:00pm - 10:00pm Craft Group | 9 8:00am - 9:00pm UBC Discernment 2:00pm - 3:30pm Ted Olsen rehearsal |
| 10 (Day Light Saving Time-spring forward) 9:30am - 10:30am Choir rehearsal 9:30am - 10:15am Families with Young Children Gathering No Sunday Forum this week 9:30am - 10:15am Sunday School 10:30am - 11:30am Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube 11:30am - 12:00pm Fellowship after Worship 12:00pm - 2:30pm Confirmation Mini Retreat 2:00pm - 9:00pm TCB Meeting 7:00pm - 8:00pm Book Club on Zoom | 11 Office Hours 9-2 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters | 12 Office Hours 12pm- 2pm 8:30am - 11:45am Staff CPR/AED Training 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Prog. | 13 Office Hours 9-2 5:30pm Hospitality Spaces Meeting 6:00pm - 8:00pm Facilities Team 7:00pm - 7:30pm Lenten Service, with YouTube option 7:30pm - 9:00pm Choir Rehearsal | 14 Office Hours 9-2 PEASE Talent Show 9:30am - 11:30am Dorcas Circle 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 7:30pm - 8:30pm Children's Ministry Team | 15 Office Hours 9-2 The Visitor Articles Due | 16 3:30am - 5:00am Wild Church Gathering |
| 17 9:30am - 10:15am Families with Young Children Gathering 9:30am - 10:30am Sing with the Choir Sudnay Choir rehearsal 9:30am - 10:20am Sunday Forum Heritage Hall/Zoom 9:30am - 10:15am Sunday School 10:30am - 11:30am Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube 11:30am - 12:00pm Fellowship after Worship 7:00pm - 8:00pm Gather Young Adults: Ice Cream Social Justice at ULCH | 18 Office Hours 9-2 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters 7:00pm - 9:00pm ACTION Project 2nd Year Plenary | 19 Office Hours 9-2 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 2:00pm - 3:30pm ISIAIAH Clergy Meeting 4:00pm - 5:30pm Sanctuary Coalition Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Prog. 6:30pm - 8:00pm Vision & Governance Board | 20 Office Hours 9-2 12:30pm - 2:00pm Hope Diamonds 7:00pm - 9:00pm Amnicon Community Campfire Convo 7:00pm - 7:30pm Lenten Service, w/YTube 7:30pm - 9:00pm Choir Rehearsal | 21 Office Hours 9-2 12:00pm - 4:00pm PEASE Recovery Renewal 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 7:00pm - 8:30pm Sanctuary and Immigration Team on Zoom | 22 Office Hours 9-2 7:00pm - 10:30pm Youth Group | 23 10:00am - 12:00pm Oblates group - Chapel and Lounge |
| 24 9:30am - 10:30am Choir rehearsal 9:30am - 10:15am Families with Young Children Gathering 9:30am - 10:20am Sunday Forum Heritage Hall/Zoom 9:30am - 10:15am Sunday School 10:30am - 11:30am Palm Sunday Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube 11:30am - 12:00pm Fellowship after Worship | 25 Office Hours 9-2 PEASE Spring Break 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters 6:30pm - 8:00pm Bible & Brews (location TBD) 7:00pm - 9:00pm ACTION Project 1st Year Plenary | 26 Office Hours 9-2 PEASE Spring Break 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Prog. 7:00pm - 8:30pm Racial Justice Team | 27 Office Hours 9-2 PEASE Spring Break 3:00pm - 5:00pm UMN School of Music event "Cultural Exchange with UMN Women's Choir and Berlin Singakademie Mädchenchor." 7:00pm - 8:30pm Choir Rehearsal | 28 Office Hours 9-2 PEASE Spring Break 12:00pm - 1:00pm Maundy Thursday Midday Service 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 7:00pm - 8:00pm Maundy Thursday Service, w/Y-Tube | 29 Office Hours 9-2 PEASE Spring Break 12:00pm - 1:00pm Good Friday Midday Service 7:00pm - 8:00pm Good Friday Service, w/Y-Tube | 30 7:00pm - 8:30pm Easter Vigil |
| 31 Easter Sunday 9:00am - 10:15am Easter Breakfast 9:30am - 10:30am Choir rehearsal 10:30am - 11:30am Easter Festival Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube | | | | | | |

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