

Complex world. Thoughtful church.



Clockwise from top left: The Gather young adult event at Hope in March (hearing about a “source to sea” paddle down the Mississippi with a focus on decolonizing); the labyrinth; the newly built stone bench all ready for some warm weather and great pizza and bread bakes; enjoying fellowship time; a hearty Wild Church gathering on a cold March day; packing supplies in backpacks for Conversations with Friends (these backpacks may be requested by those who are about to be deported by ICE); Bread for the World letter writing; enjoying after-church conversation; and (center) making our Maundy Thursday communion bread (thank you, Sunday School students!).

The Village

Some 25 years ago I volunteered for a stint with the Lutheran church in Zimbabwe, in southern Africa. In both Zimbabwe and in their neighbor to the north, Zambia, I was to visit congregations and church schools, and to encourage youth, young adults and women. I have photos that I pull out occasionally, more often I rely on my mind's eye.



Today I'm recalling a snapshot I took one warm, sunny afternoon. We had been talking and singing with a group of younger teens in a shady area under some trees. As we returned to the center of the village, I snapped a photo of the scene: the well-trod path we followed, the round huts with their thatched roofs, the kids teasing playfully as we walked, some carrying stout hand-carved stools on their heads or at their waists.

When it came time this March to dedicate our Easter Flowers (thank you, Friendly Visitors, for this opportunity), I dedicated our family's to "Our Village". I was thinking about our parents (aka Grammy and Grampy, and Grandma and Grandpa). And I was also thinking of close friends we've known for decades, other friends who grace our lives for a season or two, lively congregations and colleagues, our neighbors, educators and support staff at multiple schools, therapists, coaches, faithful pets, and more. These beloved ones, *you beloved ones*, are *Our Village*. Some years we have very specific people to remember or honor with these flowers. This year, it's Our Village that we lift up, the whole eco-system of support.

I've been musing about Jesus' village. Elizabeth with arms wide in welcome as Mary begins to comprehend this new thing. The animals and humans who welcome Jesus and his family that starry night of his birth. Anna and Simeon with their blessings. The angels and co-conspirators who shelter Jesus' family in Egypt. The elders in the synagogue with whom young Jesus engages, much to his worried parent's dismay. The disciples, the Twelve, of course, but really the whole community of disciples who call Jesus friend, teacher and savior, who share the meal and wash the feet. Those who pushed against the powers in that fraught season when Jesus was put to death. The ones who cry at the cross, care for his mother, lend their tomb, bring the spices, and wrap his lifeless body. The women who catch their breath in surprise finding the tomb empty, and the ones who run like the wind to see for themselves and then to share this breathtaking news. Those who walk the road and in the evening recognize Jesus in breaking of the bread, and those for whom Jesus offers breakfast on the beach. All of them and so many more, Jesus' Village.



Around the Hope community, I am consistently moved as I witness The Village—those who pray, those who bring a meal, those who labor behind the scenes, the hugs, the care and concern during a times of illness, crisis, or loss, the expressions of gratitude and willingness to act from grace, the voices and bodies for justice, the desire to learn and change. At our best, we show up for one another. At our best, we seek to show up for our neighbors. Truth is, being The Village, is inherently risky, for sometimes we fail, by what we've done and what we haven't done. And yet it's a risk I find worthwhile, and a calling of faithful community, indeed, a way we follow Jesus. We are The Village. With Wild Church we're widening even how we understand The Village. We're in relationship with all creation, humankind, the other creatures, the land.

In this season of death and life, new life, I give thanks for The Village. The gift of The Village. The invitation to widen our understanding of The Village. And the promise that Jesus Christ, our Risen Savior, meets us—always—on the Village path with mercy and love, with liberation, with new life and another opportunity to start anew. Thanks be to God.

Pastor Jen Nagel

Worship and Music

The choir season is underway! Join us for rehearsals Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. 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!

Sing with the Choir Spring Dates: Sing with the choir Sundays have returned this spring, giving anyone who can't make a weekly evening commitment a chance to swing by for a Sunday morning choir rehearsal at 9:30 a.m. and learn something straightforward for the service. Dates for these Sundays are: April 21, and May 12.

Music Series Concert: April 21, 2pm: Go and get brunch after worship, then come back for a violin duo recital featuring Sarah Grimes from the Minnesota Orchestra and Kayla Moffett from the Washington National Opera! They will be performing duos and solos of 20th and 21st century music for violin.

Music Series Concert: Join us May 3rd at 7 p.m. as the 10th Wave Chamber Music Collective returns to Hope, this time featuring a program of Korean/Western crossover music, using a combination of Western and Korean instruments, featuring music by Soomin Kim, Nicky Sohn, and more!

Outdoor worship setup volunteers needed. We are hoping to have outdoor worship approximately once a month this summer, but to do this we really need more volunteers to help us setup beforehand. Please email Robert Ragoonanan if you're available to help out. Our volunteer list for this task is very small and we could really use more people to share the load.

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



Young Adults, Lutheran Campus Ministry, and the Future of the Church

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.

As we move into a new, post-pandemic life together, we continue to learn so much from the young adults in our midst. Whether bearing the weight of mental illness, entrenched polarization, or the deepening climate crisis, young adults are learning what it means to be resilient and faithful amidst a world that will likely be uncertain for a very long time.

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 are excited to let you know that a student will be preaching on April 7th, proclaiming the Gospel, and sharing stories about their life as a young adult. We are also excited to thank you, and to invite you into further partnership with this ministry. Your support matters now as much as it ever has, and we are grateful that University Lutheran Church of Hope will be taking a special offering in support of this vital young adult ministry. Please consider making a gift that day, and thank you for being church together.

For more information, visit:

<https://umnlutheran.org/support-us/>

Children's Ministry

Sunday School: We continue to gather on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in room 103. This month we are nearing the end of the program year. We will learn the stories of Mary and Martha, Dorcas, and Deborah. We'll also begin working on a skit for worship on May 19th! We do not have Sunday School 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. Sometimes a parent may read a story for the children, but it is 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.

Congregational Camp at Amnicon: August 16-18

Building Beloved Community Ecumenical Day Camp - August 19-23: 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. Sign up now (link in the Thursday Epistle) for elementary, middle school, and high school leaders.



Pastor Maria Anderson-Lippert

Hope Diamonds

Our most senior members will gather for a soup lunch and fellowship on Wednesday, April 24th from 12:30-2 p.m. Note that this is the fourth Wednesday in April, due to Pastor Maria taking some time away on the third Wednesday in April. All are welcome! We'd love to

Hope Birthdays

Let's celebrate! The birthday list below is of Hope's members who are 80 years and older, in addition to some who may be homebound, living in assisted living or a care center. Their contact information is in the ULCH directory. A phone call, card, or note from folks in our community is always appreciated!

April Birthdays

April 7th — Leonard Hrcir
April 8th — James Solem
April 16th — Sally French
April 18th — Elaine Reed

April 19th — Marge Perko
April 24th — Richard Luedtke
April 29th — Jean Albrecht

May Birthdays

May 7th — Ruth Fingerson
May 23rd — Esther Dant
May 26th — Ana Moreno Solem



Wild Church Gathering

Our congregation will be experimenting once again with a Wild Church gathering on Saturday, April 13th, 3:30-5 p.m. at Hidden Falls Regional Park (north entrance). 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!

April 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!

April 7 - Stories of Hope: Come hear about the faith journeys of two Hope members, Ruth Fingerson and Granger Whitney. These forums are a great way to get to know more about people in our community!

April 14 - Beyond Land Acknowledgements: Dr. Kelly Sherman-Conroy and Nick Tangen will join us in sharing how we can move beyond a land acknowledgment and into action with Indigenous Communities for the liberation of Native Peoples. They will share their perspectives, experiences, and examples from other congregations around the Twin Cities.

April 21 - Hope With Creation: On the eve of Earth Day, a renewed “Green Team” model is in the works! Karen Jorstad and Lynette Lamb will share current climate resources from the ELCA, and also engage us in discussion. Let's cultivate hope and inspiration from one another as we ponder the work of climate justice at University Lutheran Church of Hope.

April 28 - American Indian Community Development Corporation: The AICDC provides culturally unique initiatives, housing and entrepreneurial programs that strengthen American Indian communities. Michael Goze, Chief Executive Officer, will be with us to share their important work in the community. AICDC was a recipient of a benevolence grant from University Lutheran Church of Hope's Capital Campaign last year.

Graduating This Spring or Summer?

Graduating this spring or summer? Or did you graduate in recent months and want to celebrate? We look forward to celebrating all graduates. Whether you are completing high school, a certificate program, undergrad studies, or a graduate program, whether you are 18 or 65, let us know your name, what program you are completing, and, if you like, a little about your hopes

and plans for what comes next. We'd welcome a picture, too, but are happy to take a quick one at church if that's easier. Parents, we know this gets to be a busy season for grads, feel free to pass the basics to us on their behalf. Please send this information to Pastor Jen at jenn@ulch.org by May 20. A graduate recognition Sunday will be held in June-watch for details.

University Lutheran Church of Hope's Racial Justice Team

2022-2032 Long-Term Goals

In 2022, the University Lutheran Church of Hope Racial Justice Team held a retreat to review and revise its long-term goals. In November, 2022 the Team presented our new goals to the Vision and Governance Board for consideration. Here are the Racial Justice Team's current goals for 2022 to 2032:

"We, as a congregation, actively seek to stand together with people of all races, ethnicities, cultures and religions to promote the joy of fellowship and the dignity of equal opportunity."

- *Racial Justice Statement, 2018*

"Antiracism is not a destination but a journey—one that takes deliberate, consistent work."

- Ibram X. Kendi, *Be Antiracist: A Journal for Awareness, Reflection, and Action*

Connect our work to our faith: Our goal as followers of the Way of Jesus is to actively participate in God's transformative work: serving as sources of Justice, Kindness, and Cultural Humbleness. (Micah 6:8)

Congregational commitment to address reparations: Articulate a proposal for the congregation (and secure its adoption), committing us to take action with regard to reparations, including a statement of purpose, annual financial support, and time spent supporting followership of key BIPOC partner organizations.

Develop awareness in our team and congregation: The Racial Justice Team aims to develop ourselves and the congregation's racial awareness and to acknowledge and address white privilege and systemic racism with cultural humility.

Documentation/communication/regular reminders of long-term goals/vision: Communicating and documenting vision, goals, and plans with the congregation, allies, and neighbors is an essential part of working toward racial awareness, sensitivity, and humility.

Stronger relationships and followership with BIPOC organizations in their work: We will build stronger relationships and followership with BIPOC organizations to work toward a vision of God's Kingdom and beloved community by identifying BIPOC businesses, groups and congregations in the metro area who are engaged in justice work, listening, and accompanying them in their mission.

Accountability: Readiness to learn, receive feedback and make changes in approach and direction.

These goals are meant to support racial justice and be inspiring, empowering, active, fluid, and sustainable. The Racial Justice Team is currently considering amending or revising its goals to move beyond a Land Acknowledgement into reparations. We welcome input from the congregation on any of our racial justice goals.

Sonja D. Peterson, Racial Justice Team Member

2024 University Lutheran Church of Hope Congregational Book Read

Sunday, May 12th, at 9:30 a.m. During the Adult Forum at ULCH "*Solito: A Memoir*", by Javier Zamora

"Javier Zamora was born in El Salvador in 1990. His father fled the country when he was one, and his mother when he was about to turn five. Both parents' migrations were caused by the U.S.-funded Salvadoran Civil War. When he was nine Javier migrated through Guatemala, Mexico, and the Sonoran Desert. His debut poetry collection, *Unaccompanied*, explores the impact of the war and immigration on his family." - www.goodread.com

The Hope Racial Justice Team, Sanctuary and Immigration Tea, and Book Club will host a Congregational Book Read discussion of *Solito: A Memoir*, by Javier Zamora during the Adult Forum on May 12th.

The Hennepin County Library and Star Tribune used this book in 2023 "as a catalyst for conversation as we attempt to better understand past and current injustices – including systemic racism, other forms of discrimination, and bias that affects marginalized communities."

The book can be checked out at a Hennepin County Library. We will also have some copies at church available to be checked out.

Discussions about the book are also available online: Replay the conversation with Myron Medcalf and Susana De León, Fernanda Acosta and Teresa Ortiz: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltHtQ9vzF30>

Sonja Peterson

Hope Book Club

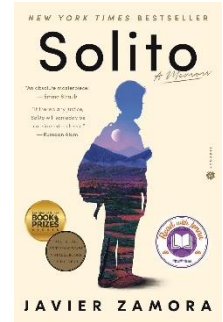
Sunday, April 14, 2024, 7 p.m. via Zoom “*Four Souls*”, by Louise Erdrich

“*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

May 12, 9:30 a.m. Adult Forum: *Solito: A Memoir*, by Javier Zamora.

“Trip. My parents started using that word about a year ago-“one day, you'll take a trip to be with us. Like an adventure.”

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



Growing Traditions: Why Do We Ring the Bell during the Lord's Prayer?

At Hope, we have a tradition of ringing the church bell during the Lord's Prayer. Unless it's freezing cold out, we open the front door so those in the sanctuary can hear it. We've even done it worshipping outside in the summer.

All traditions start somewhere; this one started in the 1980s with a Hope member, William Marvin, who often was an usher. He and his family were from Germany, where ringing the bell as a way of sending the congregation's prayers out into the community was a frequent custom. He suggested we do it too, and something about this simple action resonated with us enough that we've done it ever since. The Marvins live in Colorado now, though they stay connected to Hope friends. But the tradition of ringing the bell has stayed, maintained by the ushers.

There are other traditions that resonate with people but need human energy to maintain them. During the Prayers of the People, the Assisting Minister invites us to speak aloud or silently the names of people in our hearts. This tradition was suggested by Pauline Hendrickson, who had experienced it in the church she attended when they lived in Belgium. She described the sound as a murmur of names throughout the congregation, with people knowing that someone sitting near them had

people in mind. Another tradition: At communion we invite people to come forward for a blessing. This was actually suggested by me, after I experienced it attending church at Westminster Abbey in London – an intimate moment in this huge, ancient church.

These newer traditions resonate with people. They have structures to support them, like the ushers support ringing the bell. Assisting Ministers invite us to say names aloud, and the Presiding Minister invites us to come for a blessing (it's printed in the bulletin too). What can we, in the congregation, do to encourage these welcomes, so that they can become as much a regular part of our worship as ringing the bell during the Lord's Prayer? We say names silently, if that's our piety, but speaking names out loud could encourage others around us who want to but aren't sure they can. For coming forward for a blessing, if we have brought guests to church who aren't going to take communion, or if there are people sitting near us who look like they aren't going to take communion (hopefully we've already greeted them passing the peace), we can invite them to come forward with us to be blessed.

Marty Lewis-Hunstiger

Dignity Backpacks

What an eventful backpack morning we had on Sunday February 25th! We learned about the Minnesotans ICE deports and their needs upon entering a new country. We filled 35 backpacks, wrote cards for the deportees, prayed, and blessed the beautiful blue bags. Thanks to all that helped that day and to those who brought items for the packs.

On the Wednesday of Holy Week ICE will deport another 40 or so people, currently detained in county jails. Most of them have called Minnesota homes for decades. Some of the backpacks we created will accompany these folks and give them some essential supplies, a touch of love, and some much-needed dignity. Let's do it again soon!

Sanctuary and Immigration Team

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.

Marriages—We pray for all those preparing for marriage, and for all relationships of commitment, including Sonya Flaten and Kaleb Schweinefus, who will marry on April 21, 2024.

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 Davenport and family at the death of Garvin's wife and long-time Hope member Bernice on March 16, 2024; and the family of long-time Hope member Anita Smith who died in March at the age of 101. **A memorial service for Anita is planned for Saturday, April 27 at 1:30 p.m. here at Hope.**

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, 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.

Fellowship Meal on April 14

Join us for a fellowship meal on Sunday, April 14 following worship. This is our opportunity to gather as a community to nourish one another in body and spirit. Grad and undergrad students are our guests. Help with set up and clean-up is always needed and welcome. Talk with Becky Halvorson if you can help.

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 for all ages, August 16-18.

Building the Beloved Community ecumenical day camp, August 19-23, 2024

Amnicon Retreat Camping Weekend 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!



Friendly Visitors Needed

Do you have some time at least once a month? We have several lovely people in our congregation who would appreciate a **Friendly Visitor**. We need someone who can call or visit at least once a month and keep them connected to the church. Periodically, you would serve as a special deliverer of the devotion books, bread or flowers from the church. Interested? Contact Rosalie Eldevik or reldevik@gmail.com.

Youth Group Updates

Here is the briefest of updates:

- We had a great Youth Group evening in March that included bracelet creating, pizza making (and eating), Sardine playing, and a number of deep and goofy conversations.
- Watch for an event date for April. Texts and emails to come.
- Questions, ideas, inspirations, talk with Pastor Jen or M'taleni Nashandi



Thank You to All the Bread for the World Letter Writers

Thank you all who participated in the 2024 Bread for the World Offering of letters. We wrote: 32 to Senator Klobuchar, 24 to Senator Smith, 24 to Representative Omar and 7 to Representative McCollum for a total of 87 letters to our lawmakers in Washington in support for the passage of the Farm Bill. Great job!
Hope in the World

Congregational Leadership – Past President

As many are aware, the Odenbach family is facing a serious health situation as their teenager begins cancer treatments. In February, Paul Odenbach concluded his term as Congregational President. Typically the President becomes the Past President. Paul recently shared that he needed to step back as Past President. With the guidance of the Leadership Development Committee and then a vote of the Vision and Governance Board, Ann Agrimson (who served the congregation as Past President in 2023-24) has agreed to serve again as Past President in 2024-25, in Paul's place. As Past President, Ann serves on the Executive Committee, the Vision and Governance Board, and chairs the Personnel Committee. Thanks to Ann for stepping up. And thanks to Paul for his tremendous leadership over the past years. In April we will thank Paul in worship.

Treasurer's Report for February

	Feb Actual	Feb Budget	Feb Variance	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Variance
General Giving	29,023.15	42,496.00	(13,472.85)	104,415.40	82,950.00	21,465.40
Rental Income	21,625.50	11,155.50	10,470.00	34,093.46	21,821.00	12,272.46
Interest	972.01	1,415.00	(442.99)	1,891.62	2,830.00	(938.38)
Total Income	51,620.66	55,066.50	(3,445.84)	140,400.48	107,601.00	32,799.48
Salary & Benefits	50,786.32	49,047.00	1,739.32	84,378.81	83,609.00	769.81
Total Expenses	74,751.38	69,649.00	5,102.38	132,293.02	131,573.00	720.02
Net Oper Income	(23,130.72)	(14,582.50)	(8,548.22)	8,107.46	(23,972.00)	32,079.46

I apologize as this report will be shorter with not as much detail as later reports while I take time to get more entrenched in my role as Treasurer.

Monthly Financials — While our General Giving for February was down, Parking Income made up for the difference with a contract with one of the construction companies for multiple parking spots for multiple months. Our parking lot is another gift that keeps on giving. YTD our Total Income is above budget by \$33K. Thank you for the strong start to 2024. Our expenses are tracking to budget for the year. YTD our net income is above budget by \$32K. Thank you!

Ruth Hedman, Treasurer

President's Report: Walking the Walk

Have you been walking the labyrinth? During our Lenten journey, I've walked the labyrinth a few different times, using the prayer practices around which our Wednesday Lenten services were planned. With *Lectio Divina*, I meditated on the affirmations of God's steadfast love, written on the chapel walls. As a breath prayer, I repeated my mantra, given to me by a friend, [inhale] Who are we to place limits, [exhale] on what God can do? I chanted words from the Sighs Too Deep Liturgy we have been singing during Lenten Sunday worship, "Grace upon grace, mercy upon mercy, peace upon peace, given for you." And sang, "Light of the world of endless blessing, we lift our hearts in thanks and praise." Walking the labyrinth with prayer practices has brought me to the *center* "... deeply rooted in God's love, reminded of who and whose we are, and re-oriented towards the promise that we cannot get lost." (Pastor Maria's sermon, first Sunday in Lent)

The prayer practice of walking the labyrinth has become a way I think about the discernment journey we have been traveling together since receiving the generous gift to the congregation. Connecting prayerful walking of the labyrinth with the discernment journey underscores that we are *not* just talking about money. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we are **walking the walk**. Neither the labyrinth nor the discernment journey is a linear path, but in both, we *are* praying and walking together, so we don't get lost. The journey began with the Donation Discernment group who, following Hope's work in the Riverside Innovation Hub, counseled,

- "As we listen to each other, we should keep the lines of communication open during this journey, valuing openness, transparency....
- As we listen to the Holy Spirit and consider our mission/vision, we should build on our existing strengths, do things that tie into our existing time and talents, and strengthen our community inwardly so that we can have a broader impact on a wider community.
- The journey should proceed in a way that is equitable and inclusive of all."

(Summary of Notes from Discernment Meetings)

In many diverse formats, we spoke with each other about our dreams, picturing what, together, we might accomplish with the gift. Here is a link to the compilation of what we Listeners heard: [Donation-Listening-Compilation-Epistle-Oct-5.pdf \(ulch.org\)](https://www.ulch.org/Donation-Listening-Compilation-Epistle-Oct-5.pdf).

Repeatedly, we Listeners heard "for the students", folks frequently naming Hope's partnership with Lutheran Campus Ministry. The Vision and Governance Board unanimously voted to support LCM with the first gift from the donation. A check for \$42,517 was presented to LCM Pastor Kate Reuer Welton at the Annual Congregational Meeting, met with heart-felt applause. Afterward, folks greeted Pastor Kate, reminiscing about their own LCM days that brought them to Hope, wanting students now to receive that same blessing – passing it on.

Based on the Listeners' reporting, the V and G Board identified members' most frequently expressed, deeply felt, dreams for expanding Hope's current ministries and developing new ones, connecting them with specific projects members proposed. In an October sermon during which Pastor Jen reflected on the challenge of collective discernment, she began, as we do when walking the labyrinth, by calling us to *breathe*,

"Breathe in the love of God
And breathe out your worries
Breathe in the love of God
And breathe out what pulls us apart" (amended)

Seeking consensus in the congregation on the projects that will be funded by the donation, Pastor Jen counseled, "Consensus isn't uniformity, but shaping our hearts together, acting and interacting." The V and G Board established four groups for focused listening (research and field trips!) and interaction: (1) hospitality spaces, (2) wellness, (3) themed programming, and (4) inside/outside building projects. These groups are now meeting and reporting their work to the V and G Board by addressing these questions:

- What has your group been most interested in discussing/doing?
- What ministry areas are you addressing and how are you addressing social justice issues?
- How might it be helpful for your group to coordinate with other groups?

These groups are interdependent, groups 1 and 4 designing and creating the spaces in which the programming planned by groups 2 and 3 might take place. It is not the case that the donation will be equally divided amongst the four groups, nor is it the case that even the very generous gift can fully fund *all* the proposed projects – in the future, some projects may be funded by capital campaigns or dedicated gifts. Spirit-filled ideas will not be forgotten! As Pastor Jen preached, "Trust the process, trust the Holy Spirit." And please pray, hearts together, **walking the walk**.

Linda Herman, Congregational President

April Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
	1 Church and Offices closed Easter Monday Holiday 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters 6:00pm - 8:00pm Parents of PEASE support group	2 Office Hours 9am-2pm 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 1:00pm - 3:00pm Bread Ministry Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Prog. 6:30pm - 7:15pm Personnel Committee 7:15pm - 8:30pm Executive Committee	3 Office Hours 9am-2pm	4 Office Hours 9am-2pm 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 7:00pm - 8:00pm Men of Hope	5 Office Hours 9am-2pm 3:00pm - 9:00pm Bread Ministry Group	6 5:00am - 2:00pm Bread Ministry Group 9:30am - 12:00pm EcoFaith Summit Watch Party	
7 9:30am - 10:15am Families with Young Children 9:30am - 10:20am Sunday Forum Heritage Hall/Zoom 10:30am - 11:30am Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube 11:30am - 12:00pm Fellowship after Worship 11:45am - 1:00pm Bible Study	8 Office Hours 9am-2pm PEASE off 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters 1:00pm - 3:00pm Bread Ministry 7:00pm - 8:30pm ACTION Project ULCH Cohort Meeting	9 ICC-Interfaith Campus Coalition Office Hours 9am-2pm PEASE off 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Prog.	10 Office Hours 9am-2pm PEASE off 6:00pm - 8:00pm Facilities Team 7:00pm - 8:30pm Choir Rehearsal	11 Office Hours 9am-2pm 9:30am - 11:30am Dorcas Circle 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 5:30pm - 7:00pm Hospitality Spaces Group 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 7:30pm - 8:30pm Children's Ministry Team	12 Office Hours 9am-2pm 3:00pm - 9:45pm P.E.A.S.E. Dance 7:00pm - 10:00pm Craft Group	13 3:00pm - 9:00pm Kitchen Cooking Event 3:30pm - 5:00pm Wild Church Gathering	
14 9:30am - 10:30am Choir rehearsal 9:30am - 10:15am Families with Young Children 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 - 1:00pm Fellowship Meal 2:00pm - 9:00pm TCB Meeting 7:00pm - 8:00pm Book Club	15 Office Hours 9am-2pm The Visitor Articles Due 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters 6:30pm - 8:30pm Energy Workshop 7:00pm - 9:00pm ACTION Project 2nd Year Plenary	16 Office Hours 9am-2pm 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 4:00pm - 5:30pm Sanctuary Coalition Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Prog. 6:30pm - 8:00pm Vision & Governance Board	17 Office Hours 9am-2pm 7:00pm - 9:00pm Amnicon Community Campfire Convo 7:00pm - 8:30pm Choir Rehearsal	18 Office Hours 9am-2pm 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 7:00pm - 8:00pm Men of Hope	19 Office Hours 9am-2pm	20 Tentative: Memorial Service-Bernice Davenport, details TBD Tentative: Emily Brown's Ordination at Faith Luth in Coon Rapids	
21 9:30am - 10:30am Sing with the Choir Rehearsal 9:30am - 10:15am Families with Young Children 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 11:45am - 1:00pm Bible Study 2:00pm - 3:00pm Music Series: Sarah Grimes and Kayla Moffett Violin Duo Recital	22 Office Hours 9am-2pm 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters 6:30pm - 8:00pm Bible & Brews (location TBD) 6:30pm - 8:30pm Energy Workshop 7:00pm - 9:00pm ACTION Project 1st Year Plenary	23 Office Hours 9am-2pm 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Prog. 7:00pm - 8:30pm Racial Justice Team 7:00pm - 8:30pm Worship Planning Team	24 Office Hours 9am-2pm 12:30pm - 2:00pm Hope Diamonds 6:00pm - 8:00pm Every Meal Food Packing 7:00pm - 8:30pm Choir Rehearsal	25 Office Hours 9am-2pm 2:00pm - 3:00pm Music that Makes Community Practice Group 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 7:00pm - 8:30pm Sanctuary and Immigration Team on Zoom	26 Office Hours 9am-2pm	27 10:00am - 12:00pm Oblates group - Chapel and Lounge 1:30pm - 2:30pm Memorial Service-Anita Smith	
28 9:30am - 10:30am Choir rehearsal 9:30am - 10:15am Families with Young Children 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 11:45am - 1:00pm Bible Study 12:00pm - 2:30pm Confirmation Mini Retreat 12:00pm - 1:00pm Friendly Visitor Meeting	29 Office Hours 9am-2pm 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters 6:30pm - 8:30pm Energy Workshop	30 Office Hours 9am-2pm 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Prog.	 				

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