

TOGETHER

**Bible Baby Time
Brings Little
Ones Together**



CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF FAITH THAT WORKS

**BLESSED TO BE ON THIS
JOURNEY TOGETHER**

**THE CAMDEN SHOP -
ONE YEAR LATER**

**GOOD SHEPHERD'S
PARENT CHURCH HISTORY**

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MAY 2022



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CHURCH
OF THE
**GOOD
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Worship with Communion onsite at
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ART DIRECTION:

Karen Walhof, based on
May Advertising and Design, Inc.

TOGETHER (USPS 493-740)

Published Quarterly
Lutheran Church of the
Good Shepherd
4801 France Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55410
Periodical Publications
Postage Paid St. Paul MN

Postmaster: Send address changes to:
Together
4801 France Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55410

Vol. 12 #2 - May 2022

ON THE COVER: Ralph and Grace at Baby Bible Time. Photo by Chris Hammond.

TOGETHER

THIS IS WHO
WE ARE
HERE, AND
WHAT WE
ARE ABOUT:

LUTHERAN
CHURCH OF THE
GOOD
SHEPHERD:
FAITH THAT
WORKS

Thin Places

In the book titled *A Spiritual Field Guide* by Bernard Brady and Mark Neuzil, the following words are written:

Have you ever had the sense that you were in a special or sacred place? Have you ever felt that a particular place caused a sense of awe or wonder in your heart? Did that spot make you feel closer to God or connected to something much larger than yourself and your life? Perhaps that experience was not as dramatic as Moses' encounter with God on Mount Horeb. In the Exodus narrative God commands Moses to take off his sandals, for he is on "Holy Ground" (Exodus 3:4)

The concept of a "thin place" or a "thin time" suggests that in certain places or at times the veil separating this world from the spiritual realm may be permeable or at least translucent, in the words of Gerard Manley Hopkins, "the world is charged with the grandeur of God."

I have come back to this book and this chunk of text countless times. I have used it to help prepare students for experiences in the Boundary Waters. It has been helpful as we experience the unpredictable on mission trips. I've kept it in my back pocket for conversations with kids and adults when we talk about the moments where we have seen and heard and felt God.

We have all experienced these places and times in our lives where the God we talk about and sing about and pray to and worship together feels closer, more accessible, within arm's reach. I think it's good to think about those times and spaces and be aware of them and look for them in our own lives. . . . Where are the places that God feels a little bit closer to you?

The great thing about that idea, that concept of a thin place is that it will be different for each one of us and yet still contain the same emotions and feelings and connections to this God that we worship as a community, and this post-Easter resurrection story that we are a part of bringing to the world.

Your thin place, your favorite hymn, the service project that makes you feel more connected, the scripture story that pulls you in – no two of us have to have the same answer. In fact, all of those individual answers become the invitation for others to join you in those spaces, in those moments, engaged in whatever draws you closer to God.

As you read through this issue of *Together*, may you be reminded of the "thin places" in your life, in our shared life as a congregation, and the ways we can live lives of compassion and discipleship that help others feel the wonder and awe of a very close God.

Mark Halvorson
Director of Youth and Family Ministry

**FAITH THAT WORKS IS FAITH THAT CAN TRANSFORM
THE WORLD – "MINE," "YOURS," "OURS," "THE."**

P.E.P. TALK

DURABLE FAITH FOR A GRITTY WORLD



BY PASTOR ELISE POKEL

I ask not only on behalf of these but also on behalf of those who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me (John 17: 20-24),

I used to be afraid of the Gospel of John. Jesus was too other-worldly. Too divine. Too mystical. Too intimidating. As a very flappable person, John's unflappable Jesus seemed too distant for me to wrap my head around. This has all changed since we took a deep dive into the way John tells his stories of Jesus these past few months.

After Pastor Karl's diagnosis became known, I was moved by Jesus' tears for his friend in a way I had never been before. Jesus, about to raise Lazarus to new life, weeps with Mary and Martha. Jesus loves his friends (us!) with a depth and a breadth that is hard to put into words. How blessed are we?

With the continued exhaustion and tension stemming from the pandemic and seemingly endless cultural warfare, I was moved by Jesus' Farewell Address where he prays for his disciples. His disciples that are filled with fear at his leaving. Anxiety at what

will be. Anger at the unknown. Grief at their loss of control. Jesus prays that his disciples would hold the wisdom of their oneness and interdependence in their hearts. He prays that they would be one as Jesus and our God are one. That God's very own glory would shine upon and through them – these fear-filled, faithless, frightened, full-of-foibles young women and men.

The oneness that Jesus prays we would experience is not only for our good (though it is very good for us). It is also that the world may know that Jesus is sent by the one, holy God of all who loves them with a reckless, passionate, never-ending love.

I have been carried these past few months by John's Jesus. His confidence has calmed my faltering faith. His clarity of vision and mission have given me hope for brighter days to come. His purposeful walk to the cross has given me strength to face down fear and difficulty. His abiding love has helped me on days that I felt spiritually and emotionally scattered and shattered. His glory and love have covered me over in such a way that helped me remember that the mistakes and missteps I make and take are not the final word on my worth.

Division and dissension have threatened to tear the church apart from the beginning. But Jesus still prays for us sinners and saints that we might be one as he and the Father are one. In the days to come, may we hold tightly to the truth that Jesus prayed for us and prays for us still. No matter how we might disagree, unintentionally or intentionally harm one another, our Good Shepherd's prayers flow from his throne to us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

You are prayed for.

You are covered in the very glory of Jesus and the Father.

You belong.

You are so very loved.

Let us strive with the Spirit for the oneness that Jesus longs for us to have.

Amen.



Blessed To Be on This Journey Together

BY ANDREA BRANDT, COUNCIL PRESIDENT

“SHEPHERD” – WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Together, we are Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd. As a noun, “shepherd” is a strong and reassuring word. The sculpture at the front of our sanctuary is Jesus as our shepherd watching over us. Additionally, the word “shepherd” is a verb that means to guide or care for a group of others. Each year, we have a new Council tasked with guiding and caring for the congregation. I am honored to serve this year to help “shepherd” us through 2022. In early January as I rolled up my sleeves and prepared to start, I thought the Council’s biggest effort would be considering a Capital Campaign. However, that was quickly eclipsed with Pastor Jacobson’s diagnosis and medical leave.

During his absence, I have come to appreciate all the work, guidance, and leadership he provides as our Senior Pastor. The Council has worked with Pastor Pokel and the staff to assuage his absence. We’re bringing in Pastor Deb Bergstrand for the summer as a Bridge Pastor. And, the Council is starting to look at additional options to tide us over until Pastor Karl’s return.

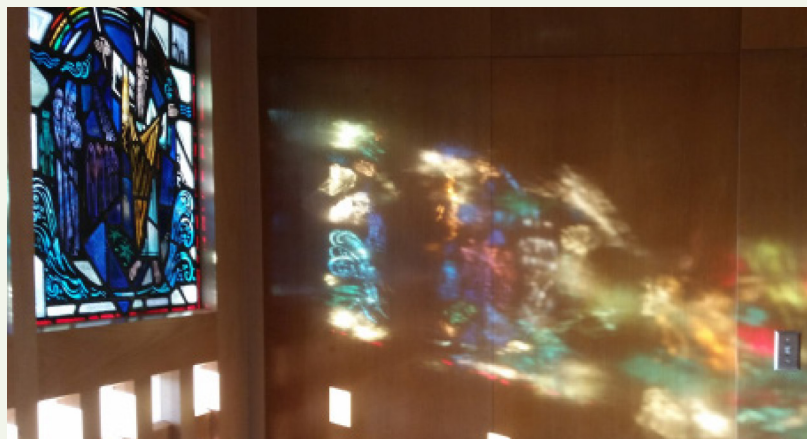
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Now that we’ve stabilized the situation, the Council has resumed work to evaluate a Capital Campaign. A task force was named to conduct a “Listening Phase.” During the month of May, the task force is working with Kairos, a consulting firm, to solicit input from all members of the congregation. The results and recommendation will be presented by the task force to the Council on June 12. At that time, a decision will be made whether or not we move forward with a Capital Campaign.

MASK MANDATE UPDATE

The mask mandate has been modified from “required” to “recommended.” Some members will most certainly continue to mask. Other members will welcome the change. I personally am excited to see all the smiles and facial expressions of fellow members.

There are many other initiatives in the works, so it continues to be a busy time as we evolve and adapt. My goal for the year is to



communicate so that each of you is aware of what is happening. This has been a very rewarding experience. I have come to better understand how a church works and realize that so many people before me have served in this role, though they had different challenges to navigate. Thank you to all past Council members for serving to keep our congregation going these past 100 years.

THANK YOU

I am in awe of Pastor Pokel, who has stepped into some big shoes as she temporarily takes on many of Pastor Jacobson’s duties. Yet, she continues to shine forth her ever-positive, can-do attitude. I have a much deeper appreciation for the staff. Mark, Tor, Karen, Ralph, Roger, and Grant have been especially helpful and responsive. They are so capable, flexible, and dedicated.

There are several members of the congregation who have contributed ideas, experience, expertise, and support, including Beth Helgen, Ron Hovland, Bill Kerker, Renee Raether, and Barb Thomson. The phone calls, meetings, and email exchanges have been more helpful than they will ever know. I am forever grateful.

Finally, I’ve come to rely on the members of the Council (Dave Shay, Amanda Sykora, Dave Sennes, Joe Hagen, Susan Kratz, and Kevin Roellinger) and Capital Campaign Task Force (David Quello, Craig Brandt, Sue Read, Rich Sykora, Rich Omland, Laura Moret, and Erienne Nelson). We’ve been in too many meetings to count, and I feel blessed that we are on this journey together.

Worship This Summer in Person and Online

BY PASTOR ELISE POKEL AND RALPH JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF WORSHIP AND MUSIC

For Sundays in the summer, we will continue to worship at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary, which provides the option of livestreaming. We have an amazing and dedicated team on that front, working to bring our lively worship to life in the homes of friends and family around the world! A special thank you to Colton Davenport, Jason Davenport, and Mark Halvorson – who make that livestream happen.

We will serve coffee and treats in the alcove just off of the courtyard each Sunday morning. Be sure to leave the doors open to the courtyard so that we can enjoy the sunshine and beautiful flowers that the Kerkers so lovingly have planted.

Our Wednesday night worship, Evensong, will continue through the month of May at 7 p.m. We will be worshipping in the courtyard when weather permits. Evensong will then

pause for the summer and pick back up again in the fall. When we resume, it will be a simpler, more contemplative worship service that will not include communion. We will focus on the Scripture and singing, similar to a Holden Evening prayer service.

Our summer Lake Harriet Bandshell service is on July 3. Our Bridge Pastor, Pastor Debra Bergstrand, will be preaching and presiding at that service. There will be a Pop-up Choir opportunity for the service on July 10, with one rehearsal that morning before the service at 9 a.m. All are welcome!

There may be pop-up summer worship services, studies, and retreats offered in the courtyard, so keep your eyes and ears open for more information.



Foundation Approves Two Grant Requests

BY NANCY RYSTROM, FOUNDATION PRESIDENT

The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd Foundation Board unanimously approved two grants at its April meeting.

LSS FREEDOM SCHOOL

For six weeks over the summer, the Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota (LSS) Freedom School helps youth build literacy, academic, and life skills. Last year over 94% of the LSS Freedom School scholars maintained or improved reading levels by the end of the program and their average gain in reading was 11 months, almost a year of advancement in less than six weeks. The Board approved \$10,000 to provide technology and nutrition support for this impactful program.

HOPE AVENUE TWIN CITIES, HEAVENLY BURRITOS FOOD TRUCK

Hope Avenue Twin Cities is expanding its ministry by outfitting a van to distribute hot meals and clothing to those experiencing homelessness in North and Northeast Minneapolis. The Board approved \$10,000 to assist in providing these essential and needed services.

SUBMITTING GRANT REQUESTS

The Board welcomes grant requests. Requests can be submitted through the Good Shepherd website on the form available on the Good Shepherd Foundation page: <http://www.goodshepherdmpls.org/foundation>. The page includes additional information for making grant requests.

Questions can also be directed to: Nancy Rystrom, President, at nrystrom@comcast.net. Other Foundation Board members are: Mary Quello, Vice President; Adam Benson, Treasurer; Sharon Hammond, Secretary; Mike Bosshardt, Craig Brandt, Jo Fontaine, Ken Horstman, and Laura Moret as well as ex-officio members Andrea Brandt and Dave Shay, in their roles as Congregation President and President-Elect.

Thank you to all who have given celebration, memorial, and legacy gifts to the Foundation. These gifts enable the Foundation to continue its ongoing support for the congregation and its outreach.



Malcolm Herman Haider is baptized.

[IN OUR COMMUNITY OF FAITH] LIFE PASSAGES

BAPTISMS

MALCOLM HERMAN HAIDER

APRIL 13

DEATHS

KATHERINE SMITH

MARCH 15

HAROLD HANSON

MARCH 16

EVA BRYAN

APRIL 6

DONNA VON FISCHER

APRIL 28

STEPHEN SAMUELSON

APRIL 28

MARK BRAKKE

MAY 10

We were buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

ROMANS 6:4

The Camden Shop and the People We Serve – One Year Later

BY KAREN WALHOF, DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH MINISTRY

May 7 – the first warm Saturday of 2022. The Camden Shop was full of people shopping, especially, for clothing. After a long and cold winter, families were looking for clothes for adults and teens and kids that matched the newly warm weather. Lots of people were finding spring and summer clothes.

A younger mother walked up to me at checkout – where I was bagging clothing and housewares which shoppers had selected to take home. She appeared to be an immigrant from Africa. She explained that she had three daughters, which is why she had *filled* her shopping bag with clothing. “This is for my oldest girl,” she said, holding out a shirt. “And this is for my second girl.” I stopped her and explained that she didn’t need to account for each piece. “Let’s just put them in the bag to take with you.” As I looked down at the clothes scattered on the table, I saw a small puddle of water forming. I looked up at the woman, and tears streamed from her eyes. “I didn’t know what my girls were going to wear to school when it got warm,” she said. “But now I have clothes for them.” I put my arm around her, and she leaned her head on my shoulder, relieved and content. I thought, “This is why we set up The Camden Shop!” This. Is. Why.

It was just a year ago that Pat Sykes and Terry Haugen-Sjostrom joined me to look at the space where the old food shelf had been at Camden Promise. With the new food shelf building complete and COVID restrictions loosening, we had been given permission to make the former food shelf a clothing and housewares shop. Along with several other volunteers from Good Shepherd, we spent weeks cleaning the room – an old gym on the second floor of Gethsemane Lutheran Church – painting the walls and stairs, purchasing clothing racks (thanks to the Good Shepherd Foundation), and then stocking the shelves and racks with donations from Good Shepherd folks. It is a “shop,” not a discard space. Deb Ellsworth, a frequent volunteer, remarks, “People feel like they are shopping in a store, the way The Camden Shop is set up. We’re not giving out trash to people. We have a lot of really nice clothes here. And shoppers are grateful. Many people we serve are, indeed, the working poor.”

Through the winter, families found the warm coats and clothing they needed. A couple months ago on a cold Saturday morning, a man asked me how many pairs of pants he could take. I asked him, “How many do you need?” Well, he explained, he had just moved



out of a shelter and into an apartment, and he only had one set of clothes. He had selected five pants. We found a couple more that fit him, a shirt to go with each, some socks, some underwear, a sweater, a winter jacket, gloves. He was beaming as he left.

The same day, a young woman triumphantly told us she was living in the Sober House now and was so excited to have a warm winter jacket because she needed to walk several blocks to the bus stop. “Before the Sober House, I was on the streets for four years. Four years. At the end, our tent started on fire, and I lost everything.” We helped her find some clothes plus a warm blanket and a pillow. She left proud of her new situation and hopeful for the future.



Deb Ellsworth

“We helped a woman this winter who had lost the heat in her apartment,” Pat Sykes, the leader in The Camden Shop ministry, remembers. “We gave her blankets and warm clothes. She used some of the blankets to hang in her windows, to fight the cold.” Winter is a grueling adversary when you don’t have access to warm clothes and housewares.



Pat Sykes



During the last weeks, many hours had been spent putting away the darker, heavy winter clothes and taking out the brighter, lighter spring and summer clothes. Hard work, but it was worth it! On the first Saturday in May, a large number of families came and found the clothing they needed.

Pat helped a woman whose three nieces, lost to their family for several years, had been located and had come to live with her. She explained that these three teenagers appeared on her doorstep with almost nothing. She was desperate for help and came to The Camden Shop. She left with a beginning wardrobe for each of them: a nice, fashionable dress for each, jeans and pants, T-shirts and blouses, socks, pajamas, even swimsuits. It's a start toward a new life!

The Camden Shop

To donate clothing or household goods, please leave them at Good Shepherd in the alcove to the right as you walk in from the parking lot.

We are especially in need of men's clothing, children's clothing, and all housewares – especially sheets and blankets, pots, pans, flatware. We'll take small appliances (like toasters and coffee makers) too. Actually, all housewares are needed.



On that same day, another man came in, stowed his bicycle in the entry, and announced that he wanted to get just *one* set of clothes. "I only have the clothes on my back," he said. "And I've been wearing them for a month." We found him a few sets of clothes, and he found a small tent that someone had donated. When he biked off, his clothing and tent wired to the back of his bike, he said, "I'm going to the river to bathe, put on clean clothes, and set up my tent!" (The Mississippi River isn't too far away.) We are always amazed at how people live.

A few weeks earlier, a woman came in, just on the chance she could find a dress for her daughter's wedding. A Good Shepherd member recently had cleaned out her closets, and there it was – a dressy, beautiful suit that had only been worn a couple times! So we dressed the mother of the bride. The variety of challenges is amazing!

Ask the people who volunteer at The Camden Shop why they keep coming back to assist guests and, clearly, it is work that benefits both volunteers and guests. Deb says, "We *do* make relationships with the people who come in, and that's important for us and for them." Pat adds, "We're pretty isolated at Good Shepherd. It's good for us to make the connection with such a wide variety of people and recognize how they live and the challenges in their lives – so different from ours."

She adds, "I have a passion for this ministry. It takes an incredible amount of time to be poor, and we can offer them help right here, right now. I love it when people look for something, and we have it! It's so exciting when you can help someone." Deb sums it up: "That's how God works – through us."

Baby Bible Time Brings Little Ones Together

BY PASTOR ELISE POKEL



Immersing our littlest disciples in the language of faith from the beginning is crucial. It might be easy to assume that you can't really program for babies and toddlers, but their openness, playfulness, and flexible brains are fertile ground for faith-filled songs and stories.

Each Sunday at 9:15 a.m., our parents with littles aged 0 to 2 meet in Room 134 to sing, read, and play. Slowly emerging from this pandemic, we are all realizing the importance of community.

Parents of babies and toddlers especially need our support and encouragement.

We love having Remy Leemann, Damian Martin, Ralph Matyi, Grace Nelson, Fred Pokel, and Caleb Severson, growing together and experiencing Christian community!



Vacation Bible School and Dramatic Play Camps Plan for a Fun-Filled Summer

BY TOR JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES AND PERFORMING ARTS

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Because the teachers' strike extended the school year by an additional two weeks, Vacation Bible School (VBS) had to be rescheduled. It will now be taking place June 27 to July 1. The hours are the same as years' past – 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

The age range is preschool to fifth graders. Because of extenuating circumstances – like the teachers' strike and the ups and downs of the pandemic – we will be a small, yet vital group. Several of our middle school and high school youth will be lending a hand, and Ingrid Krafve will once again be the associate director. Sasha Jensen will also return as a helper as well as the inimitable Ralph Johnson leading us in songs. Youth Director Mark Halvorson, as always, also helps out in so many ways.

Our theme this summer is "Fishing for People and Other Miracles with Jesus." We've created our own curriculum for VBS, focusing on the first disciples of Jesus and some of the extraordinary miracles (like turning water into wine and calming the storm, that took place during his lifetime on earth). I've written another script that we will be presenting on Friday, July 1, at 9:15 a.m., which will include songs interspersed throughout. All are invited to attend this fun, end-of-VBS presentation in the sanctuary!



DRAMATIC PLAY CAMPS

Dramatic Play Camps will be taking place Aug. 1-12, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The first camp, for first to third graders, will take place Aug. 1 to 5. The second camp, for fourth to sixth graders, will take place on Aug. 8-12.

The camps will provide all kinds of fun activities for the kids, including theater games, writing five-minute plays, working on monologues, dancing, juggling, drumming, and visual art projects. The kids will rotate every 45 minutes to a new activity during the morning hours.

After lunch and recreation time, we will rehearse for our final presentation, which will include dancing, presentations of five-minute plays, and group monologues. The final presentations will be held on the closing Fridays, Aug. 5 and 12 at 1:30 p.m. in the sanctuary.

As has been our tradition over the years, we provide job opportunities, challenges, and fun experiences for middle- and high-school youth. Ingrid Krafve serves as associate director again and provides a very artistic, organizational, and professional touch with all of her years working with children of all ages.

Good Shepherd's Parent Church History From the NELCA to the ELCA, 1853 to 1988

BY RON HOVLAND, MEMBER OF 100TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

Our congregation's first name was Morningside English Lutheran Church. The congregation was founded by the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (NLCA). We are now a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). But, how did we get here?

NORWEGIAN LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AMERICA

In February 1853, several Lutheran ministers organized the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, commonly known as the Norwegian Synod, at Koshkonong and Luther Valley outside Madison, WI. Fifteen years later, in 1868, the name was changed to the Synod for the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – a minor change since many of its members still referred to it as simply the “Norwegian Synod.”

In the early years of the Norwegian Synod, its seminary students were sent to Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO, for their religious training. However, in 1876, the synod founded its own seminary, Luther Seminary, in Madison, WI (later moving it to St. Paul). Before the founding of its seminary, in 1861, the denomination founded Luther College in La Crosse, WI, only to relocate it to Decorah, IA, the following year, where it remains today.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNODICAL CONFERENCE OF NORTH AMERICA

Desiring unity and cooperation with fellow Lutherans, in 1872, the Norwegian Synod was a co-founder of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America along with the Missouri, Wisconsin, and Ohio synods. However, the unity was short-lived. The Norwegian Synod soon experienced internal division over questions concerning predestination and conversion. During the 1880s, about a third of its congregations left. These

dissenting “Anti-Missourian Brotherhood” congregations joined in 1890 with the Norwegian Augustana Synod and the Norwegian-Danish Conference to form the United Norwegian Lutheran Church of America.

NORWEGIAN LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AMERICA

While that first attempt at uniting Lutheran synods failed, further attempts at Lutheran unity still continued into the early 20th century. After much work and compromise, three Norwegian Church Synods came to an agreement in 1916, and on June 9, 1917, a merger of the three bodies – the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Hauge Synod,* and the Norwegian Synod – was finalized under the newly named Norwegian Lutheran Church of America.

The three church bodies that merged each had a seminary and agreed to merge them as well into a single location. The United Norwegian Lutheran Church's Seminary in St. Paul became the choice location because it was the most developed and elaborate. Its name was changed to Luther Seminary because that seminary was the oldest of the three, having been founded in 1876 by the Norwegian Synod. Luther Seminary continues to be a primary seminary for educating Lutheran ministers for the ELCA and is a valuable partner to our congregation. Our own member, Rolf Jacobson, serves as a professor and dean there.

* The Hauge Synod was named after Norwegian revivalist lay preacher Hans Nielsen Hauge. Our second pastor, Wilhelm Pettersen, wrote a book about Hauge, *The Light In The Prison Window, The Life Story of Hans Nielsen Hauge*. Our Heritage Committee has obtained a copy of the book that was originally published in 1921 and reprinted in 1926.

1853 – Lutheran ministers organize the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the “Norwegian Synod”).

1868 – Norwegian Evangelical Church in America becomes part of the Synod for the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

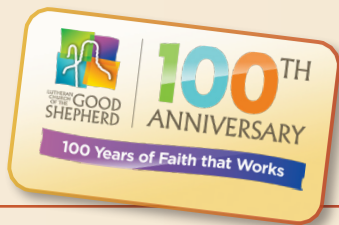
1872 – The Norwegian Synod is a co-founder of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America along with the Missouri, Wisconsin, and Ohio synods.

1876 – United Norwegian Lutheran Church's Seminary becomes Luther Seminary in St. Paul.

1890 – Due to internal division within the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America, dissenting “Anti-Missourian Brotherhood” congregations join with the Norwegian Augustana Synod and the Norwegian-Danish Conference to form the United Norwegian Lutheran Church of America.

1917 – The Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (NLCA) is formed, comprised of a merger of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Hauge Synod, and the Norwegian Synod.

1922 – Morningside English Lutheran (now Good Shepherd) is founded as a member of the NLCA denomination.



A TRIBUTE TO PASTOR OSCAR A. ANDERSON

BY DEL JACOBSON

On Feb. 17, 1922, Morningside English Lutheran (our congregation) was founded as a member of the roughly four-and-a-half year old NLCA denomination. But change was still to come.

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

In 1946, the NLCA again changed its name, becoming the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC), and in 1960, as a result of a series of mergers, the ELC became part of the American Lutheran Church (ALC). Good Shepherd was a significant congregation of that church body, offering many leaders at both national and district levels. In addition, many national staff members found their home at Good Shepherd.

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Finally, on Jan. 1, 1988, that church body merged again with the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC) to become the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), our current parent denomination.

During these years of change in our parent denominations, we also experienced two congregation name changes: Morningside English Lutheran Church became Lake Harriet Lutheran Church in 1925, after purchasing a building from St. Thomas Catholic Church. Lake Harriet Lutheran Church became Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in 1949 as the congregation prepared to construct and move into a new building at 48th Street and France Avenue, our current location.

Are there more moves or name changes and/or mergers in our future as a congregation and as a denomination? Only God knows.

1925 — Morningside English Lutheran Church (now Good Shepherd) becomes Lake Harriet Lutheran Church.

1949 — Lake Harriet Lutheran Church becomes Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd and moves into its current location at 48th Street and France Avenue.

1960 — As a result of a series of mergers, the Evangelical Lutheran Church becomes part of the American Lutheran Church.

1988 — The American Lutheran Church merges with the Lutheran Church in America, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches to become the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Oscar A. Anderson was pastor of our congregation when it was called Lake Harriet Lutheran Church. A wonderful preacher and teacher, Pastor Anderson went on from our congregation to become first, International Youth Director of the Evangelical Lutheran Church; then Senior Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Moorhead, MN; and finally the president of Augsburg College, Minneapolis.

A man of great wit and humor, Pastor Anderson especially loved teaching catechism classes. In his years in this congregation (1942-1948), his senior catechism classes averaged between 11 and 25 students per year.



The story of how he came to this congregation is striking. Toward the end of his senior year at Luther Seminary, Oscar received calls to two congregations: one in out-state Minnesota, the other to Lake Harriet Lutheran Church. He wondered, “What should I do? Which call should I accept?” As he prayed, wrestled, and wondered, he decided to seek the advice of seminary president, T. F. Gullixson. Gullixson listened and prayed with him but gave no direct advice.

The next morning, there was a single note in Oscar’s seminary mailbox. The note was a copy of a poem by Scottish poet George McDonald. Here is the first verse of the poem:

I said, “Let me walk in the fields.”
He said, “Nay, walk in the town.”
I said, “There are no flowers there.”
He said, “No flowers, but a crown.”

Oscar had his answer.

Of further note, Pastor Anderson and his wife Lee were the godparents of Pastor Karl Jacobson.

Editor’s note: The congregation that is now Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd contributed some significant leaders in the denominations to which it belonged. None is greater than Dr. Oscar Anderson, who served for many years as president of Augsburg College and as an influential leader in the church at large.



QUESTIONS WITH RALPH JOHNSON

BY LAURIE JOHNSON

“Make a joyful noise!” Ralph Johnson takes the words of the Psalmist to heart as he plans worship for Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, directing the Good Shepherd Choir, Alleluia and Cantare Choirs, as well as utilizing the talents of many instrumentalists who are part of our congregational family.

Ralph has been commissioned to compose new music to help celebrate our 100th anniversary through song and mission: “100th Anniversary Commission of Music for Good Shepherd and Beyond.” The new music will be part of our Pentecost worship on Sunday, June 5, at the 10 a.m. service. You will not want to miss it!

Through these ten questions and answers, you can get a “behind the scenes” peek at the process of creating new music, what makes composer Ralph Johnson tick, and why he loves Good Shepherd.

1 AS WORSHIP AND MUSIC DIRECTOR FOR NEARLY 11 YEARS, WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT GOOD SHEPHERD?

I love the quirky and unique personality of our congregation, made up of wonderfully different people who work and worship

Ralph (right) with Herb & Virginia Morgenthaler, who commissioned the composition, and the Morgenthaler’s grandchildren, Lily and Marlin Klabo

together as a caring community. I think of individual folks and families, members of the choirs, our fine instrumentalists, and appreciators. We’re able to be light and serious at the same moment. I love the fact that we have children of all ages among us as part of the fabric of everything we do. I have always felt supported in my work by the congregation and our great staff.

2 IN HONOR OF GOOD SHEPHERD’S 100 YEARS OF FAITH, FELLOWSHIP, AND SERVICE, WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEW MUSIC YOU HAVE BEEN COMMISSIONED TO WRITE. COULD YOU TELL US HOW THIS CAME ABOUT AND WHAT EXACTLY IS A COMMISSION?

A commission comes about when a person or organization asks/contracts with a composer to create new music for a specific occasion, group, place, or ensemble. In Good Shepherd’s case, it’s all of the above.

This would not be a reality without Good Shepherd members Herb and Virginia Morgenthaler’s vision and generosity who, with Pastor Jacobson’s support, made the commission possible. I am grateful to Herb and Virginia for this gift and opportunity.

3 HOW DOES THIS COMPOSITION CELEBRATE OUR 100TH ANNIVERSARY?

I am weaving together a number of threads: One of them is the fragment of Psalm 16 that Pastor Jacobson and the 100th Anniversary Committee chose to be the theme text. I’ve also considered the history and character of Good Shepherd. Singing has always been important, so the congregation should be a part of it. That means – a hymn!



Ralph, composing at his computer

4 WHAT HYMN TEXT ARE YOU USING?

Right away, I decided one of the threads would be the work of Susan Palo Cherwien who was at Good Shepherd with David for many years. The Cherwiens had a significant impact on this congregation and are well-loved and well-remembered. Susan's beautiful hymn text, "O Blessed Spring," was inspired by the Paul Granlund sculpture above our baptismal font. I poured over her hymn texts and found "We Sing the One God" which is, really, the story of our faith.

5 WHAT KIND OF A COMPOSITION IS IT? WHOM DO YOU HOPE TO INVOLVE?

The involvement is evolving, as we speak! The choir (adult and high school) is the primary instrument; the accompaniment, at this point, is organ, harp, flute, and perhaps a group of strings. We want to make it usable and to create something that will live beyond Good Shepherd. That is our movement as a congregation – outward!

6 HAVE YOU WRITTEN OTHER MUSIC FOR GOOD SHEPHERD?

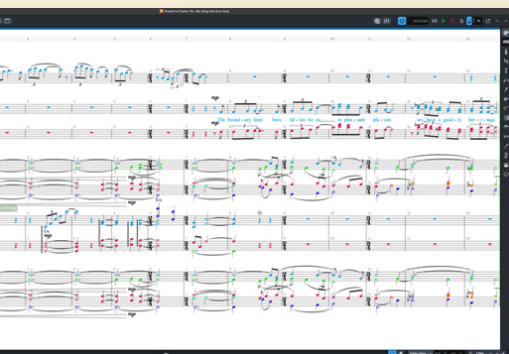
Yes! Lots of arrangements for the choir, occasional pieces, especially if I come up to a Sunday and can't find something that fits the theme of the day. In 2017, Pastor Jacobson and I collaborated on a new setting of Psalm 136 for organ, choir, and congregation for the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. Thursday Jacobson created the wonderful cover art.

7 CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR PROCESS? HOW DO YOU KEEP ALL THE NOTES STRAIGHT? (IN YOUR HEAD AND ON THE PAGE!)

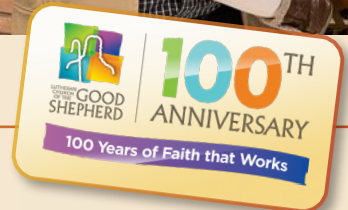
The very first step in the process of any composition is abject terror: I say to myself, "I have no ideas. I'll never have any ideas. Why did I say yes? This time I will embarrass myself!" Well, I finally settle down and ask, "What is this about?" I search for and find a text, then sit down at the piano and improvise until something clicks and catches my ear. I work at finding the right melody until

the form and harmonies clarify and begin to live in my imagination. Sometimes I hear the ending and sometimes not. Getting there is

A screen shot of the composition at one point in time.



Laurie and Ralph Johnson with their granddaughters, Fern (with Laurie) and Birdie (with Ralph)



often tricky. I work, by the way, on a keyboard connected to my computer.

8 WHEN DID YOU BEGIN COMPOSING MUSIC? WHAT SPARKED YOUR INTEREST? WHO ENCOURAGED YOU?

When I was little, my adoptive parents, who were not musical at all, noticed that I was drawn to the piano. By the time I was about six, I started piano lessons and loved listening to my piano teacher's recording of *Ben Hur*, among other classical pieces. When I was in junior high and taking piano lessons from composer Ronald A. Nelson at Westwood Lutheran Church, I showed him something I had written. Composition became part of my lessons. He was very encouraging. I call Ronnie my musical godfather. I had a couple of pieces published during those high school years, and I'm amazed that they're still around. Also, my experience as a member of the St. Olaf Choir, under the direction of Kenneth Jennings, was a tremendous musical education.

9 BESIDES MUSIC FOR THE CHURCH, WHAT OTHER MUSIC HAVE YOU WRITTEN?

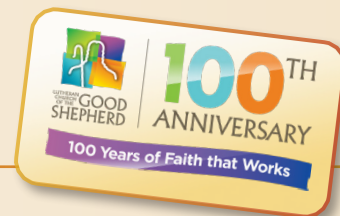
I've written concert choral music, cantatas, vocal solos, instrumental music, and a couple of smaller orchestral works. I have also dabbled in musical theater, incidental music for the theater, and lately music for short films (thanks to all the new skills I learned creating music for online worship during the pandemic).

10 WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR JUNE 5? WHAT ARE YOU MOST GRATEFUL FOR?

One: That the piece gets finished in time for everyone to learn it! Two: That the music will be a meaningful part of the 100th Anniversary – that God's spirit will move in the text and music. June 5 is Pentecost Sunday, so I hope we can have good energy around this festival day. I'm grateful to Herb and Virginia for their generosity and for the trust and commitment of our Good Shepherd community to sing and rejoice.

Paul Granlund's "Life Tree": The Sculpted World of a Swedish American

BY CEES-WILLEM VAN VLIET, TRANSLATED BY HANS WIERSMA



Editor's note: Cees-Willem Van Vliet wrote this article for a Dutch-language magazine, reflecting especially on the Granlund sculpture at the baptismal font. His interest was first piqued by Susan Palo Cherwien's hymn text, "O Blessed Spring."

Paul Granlund (1925-2003), an American sculptor, was raised in a Lutheran preacher's family in Minneapolis, MN. He is known for his bronze sculptures in which he combines human figures with abstract geometrical forms. You will find his sculptures all over the world, but the largest concentration is in and around Minneapolis with Gustavus Adolphus College at the epicenter.

For 25 years, Granlund was Sculptor-in-Residence at the liberal arts school. The school is one of the largest American institutions still rooted in the strong community of Swedish immigrants (Swedish Americans) who, at the end of the 19th century, settled in the Midwest – especially in Minnesota. They brought with them the Lutheran Church and its rich traditions and organized themselves as the Augustana Synod. In 1988, the synod became part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the largest Lutheran denomination in the U.S. – a denomination with a liberal bent and an episcopal structure.

Granlund was greatly influenced by the faith of his father. Granlund said in an interview that he always tried to communicate two things: the death that often overshadows life and the life that transcends death. Granlund found that connecting the human form with geometrical forms – a reference to the world – is relevant to death and life: the world is, at its deepest, human.

Granlund's sculptures communicate the idea that one can draw a line from one point on earth to another, straight through the planet's center. On both sides, one will encounter a person. Such is the characteristic dialectic of 20th-century Lutheran theology: thinking in contradistinctions that become united in Christ. For Granlund, casting bronze and shaping an image was a form of offering, a pouring out of what Martin Luther said about grace: "The miracle of life arises up from the earth. The organic comes forth from the inorganic: God's free gift of resurrection from sin and death."

Granlund's contemplation of the religious aspects of art is also characteristically Lutheran. Such contemplation may be best

expressed in an anecdote about Granlund on his deathbed. A visitor said to Granlund how much he admired his sculptures, especially the religious ones. At which point, Granlund removed his oxygen mask and said, "All of my works are religious." Art as manifestation of the divine, is what the artist may or may not have intended to say. . . .

In the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Minneapolis, hanging above the baptismal font is one of Granlund's later works: "Life Tree." In this work, all elements of Granlund's seem to come together. It is an image of the various phases of life, a circle of birth, maturation, old age, and death. The old man at the bottom right of the image has assumed the posture of a fetus: death as a new birth. All the phases of life are connected to the crucified Christ rising from a grapevine. The sculpture is based upon a text from the Gospel of John: "I am the vine and you are the branches."



According to Susan Palo Cherwien, the spouse of this congregation's former cantor, the sculpture is the inspiration for the hymn, "O Blessed Spring." This hymn was translated as "O Christus, bron van lentebloei" ("O Christ, Source of Spring's Bloom," hymn 817 in *Liedboek: Zingen en bidden in huis en kerk* – *Hymnbook: Songs and Prayers for Home and Church*).

You can read more about the connection between song and sculpture in an article written by Jan Smelik for www.liedboekcompendium.nl. An overview about the American songs that were translated for *Liedboek* can be found elsewhere in this issue.

Provision Restaurant Provides Meals to People in Need – a New Partner

BY MARK HALVORSON, DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

For years, we as a congregation have supported the mission and ministry of Simpson Housing Services. Groups have served meals onsite, we have collected supplies for their residents, and our children and youth have made thousands of sandwiches for them to share with the guests calling that space home as well as with those on the streets. As with everything, the pandemic forced their staff to make adjustments and respond in ways that kept their shelter residents safe and cared for.



While they are now welcoming groups back into the shelter to serve meals, there was a long time that they were unable to have volunteers onsite or prepare food in any capacity. During those difficult months, Simpson Housing Services partnered with a variety of commercial kitchens and restaurants to keep the meals coming for those in need.

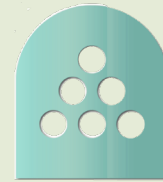
One of those restaurants is Provision Community Restaurant at Lake Street and Harriet Avenue. Provision is a pay-as-you-can, open-to-all restaurant that stepped in and began cooking and catering meals for the 100 or so residents living at The Simpson Shelter only a few blocks away. Simpson Housing Services was able to financially make this happen due to the generous donations from congregations that once had come to prepare and serve meals as well as additional outside funding.

Good Shepherd remained in constant contact with Simpson Shelter as the pandemic continued, provided supplies as needed, and when the opportunity presented itself, again served our neighbors with meals. This past February, we jumped at the chance to gather and assemble 275 simple sandwiches. These were delivered to Provision Community Restaurant, which then immediately brought them to Simpson. The sandwiches, along with homemade soup, were served the same day to guests in need of a nourishing and warm meal.

On Mother's Day, May 8, 2022, we gathered again as a group of 40 in the Fellowship Hall and constructed nearly 300 additional sandwiches for this ministry.

Provision Community Restaurant and Simpson are partnering in their mission to feed the hungry, and we as a congregation are blessed to have remained connected to Simpson Housing Services. We're excited about this new connection with Provision.

Based on the "One World, Everybody Eats" model, Provision has created a welcoming space where lunch is served daily between 12 noon and 2 p.m. The café itself is open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. There are no set prices, because patrons are invited to pay what they are able. This creates the opportunity for individuals with fewer resources to still be able to eat, while providing the opportunity for others to pay more than they may normally – with the knowledge that someone else will benefit from their generosity.



PROVISION
COMMUNITY RESTAURANT

The restaurant's website www.provisioncommunity.org does a wonderful job of laying out their mission, the ways they have been able to make a difference in the community and lists upcoming events and opportunities to volunteer and help out.

We will continue to collect supplies as needed, and Simpson Housing Services keeps an updated needs and wish list online at www.simpsonhousing.org if you are interested in donating directly. We will keep making sandwiches, working with Provision as they provide meals to those in need, and get back in that wondrous basement kitchen and cook up a meal for a 100 or so in the months to come.

Stay tuned.

Good Shepherd's Ministry Board Celebrates Envisions Faith That Works

BY JOHN MENDESH

As we celebrate our 100th year, we endeavor to reimagine and recommit to our ministry within this body of Christ. As a reminder, this Council and the prior Council has clarified our vision and hopes for the future. That very inspiring and aspirational vision is:

OUR CORE

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd has/enables/stands for a "Faith that works."

OUR VISION

This is a congregation of God's people founded in a faith that works; a faith that works by helping us make sense of daily living, and is at work through us for the good of the world.

We believe that "the Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world."

There are many ways in which you can find a place with us – in worship, service, learning; in caring conversation that is open to questions and welcoming of new ideas; in music, theater, and the arts; but above all, in our shared life as people of God, and followers of Jesus.

Jesus calls his church to make disciples (Matthew 28:19), and this is our purpose.

OUR MISSION

We make disciples.

We center ourselves in worship.

We develop Christ-centered relationships.

We focus on other-centered service.

We dream of a faith that works, building on our rich history, our strengths as a congregation, on our stated mission, and a hopeful vision.

As part of carrying out that dream, the Ministry Board has been charged to help bring this core/vision/mission to life in our

ministries. And one of the ways we will be doing that is to shine a light on our various ministries in order to give our thanks and show our appreciation for the folks who so generously give of themselves and their time to make these ministries happen as well as to invite others to join in.

With that as background, let's explore the story of the Easter Cross.

The Visual Arts Team: The Easter Cross

Bringing Scripture to life into today's realities and everyday times – not just church decorations!

The goal is an art piece for a moment in time with an intergenerational and community focus that aims to develop a better understanding of the Word that taps into all types of learning from audio to visual and more.

That's the purpose of our wonderful Visual Arts Team – Linda Kerker, Brita DeRemee, Mary Zeleny Arimond, and Bill Kerker. They do so much more than "decorate the church." They very intentionally, purposefully, and creatively "bring Scripture to life," reflecting the times we live in and in ways that move us deeply.

Here's a behind the scenes look at their work: Take paper, paint and PVC pipe. Add a few prayers for the Holy Spirit to show up, some wire, and a bit of glue. What do you get? A giant, jubilant Easter Cross!

The liturgical art pieces created by the Visual Arts Ministry at Good Shepherd always have a back story. The Ministry Board sat down with artists Linda and Bill Kerker, Brita Taracks, and Mary Zeleny Arimond recently to find out more about what inspires these pieces.

Their creative process relies on a biblical text, on faith, and on creating in community. They say that it's always when they look back and muse on how these art pieces get made that they clearly see how the Holy Spirit guides the entire process.

This year's Easter Cross had its beginnings in Advent. A mosaic-like paper installation of four large, blue "candles" was created

ates,

on the back of the chancel wall. Each Sunday in Advent, a candle was “lit” by a paper yellow “flame.” The flame was made by steam bending pieces of heavy watercolor paper. On Christmas, there were four candles and four flames signifying the light Christ brings to the world at Christmas.

The paper flames from the Advent candles then kindled an idea for an Epiphany Star. The fire of Advent light could grow into a giant star. About a week before Christmas, Linda, Mary, and Brita made a whole bunch of the yellow flames and attached them within a large circular frame made of PVC. The giant star was raised high in the chancel on Epiphany Sunday. Bathed in the Sunday morning light, one worshipper said she saw a dove amidst the shapes in the cross. The dove wasn’t something that had been consciously created, but others saw it, too.

As Ash Wednesday arrived, it was time to put the Epiphany Star away. Art for Lent needed to be purple and somber and lead to the darkness of Good Friday, not a bright star. With the sad news of Pastor Jacobson’s cancer diagnosis, a staff member suggested that the Epiphany Star could remain hanging throughout Lent this year. As untraditional as it might be, the star would remind us that God’s light is in the world and still leads us, especially through hard times. As children of God, we must bear witness to that light and share it with others. It is *always* the season of light!

For Holy Week, the Epiphany Star was draped with a black veil on Maundy Thursday. Before Good Friday, it was entirely removed to leave the chancel dark and bare.

The next task was creating an art piece to celebrate Easter. What would it look like, and what were the materials? An inspiration finally came, as always – led by the Holy Spirit.



Ideas for these art works always develop in community. No one had planned on the Advent candle “flames” growing into an Epiphany Star. Why couldn’t this star that stayed throughout Lent reappear on Easter morning? It was time to get busy.

The team built a 10’x 15’ cross out of PVC and figured out how to suspend it from the chancel ceiling. The morning before Easter, they cradled the Epiphany Star in the middle of the cross, and then filled the arms of the cross with white curvy paper shapes. Raised high in the chancel for Easter morning, this cross sent out jubilant rays of hope in all directions. How many dove-like images can you see? Isn’t it a joyful expression of our Easter joy all season long?

Creating liturgical art at Good Shepherd is a faith-growing experience open to ALL. The Visual Arts Team is a living example of “faith that works” – inspiring us both inside the four walls of the church and well beyond, as we take their message with us, marching out into a world that needs us.

Many Groups Fill Up Good Shepherd's Building Calendar

BY TOR JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES AND PERFORMING ARTS

Over the past year and a half, I have come to know and appreciate the many groups that use our building for meetings, rehearsals, and



performances. The Good Shepherd building offers spaces ideal for all sizes of groups and activities. As I have filled the role of Facility Liaison, it has been interesting and inspiring to see how we are involved in the lives of so many people.



Of course, our building is filled with Good Shepherd groups who carry out ministry and planning right here: The Good Shepherd Quilters, Altar Guild, the Men's Book Group, the Men's Discussion Group, Third Friday Women's Book Group, Midrash on France, and Vacation Bible School are just a few.



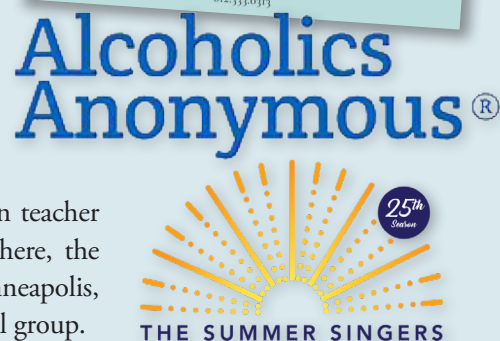
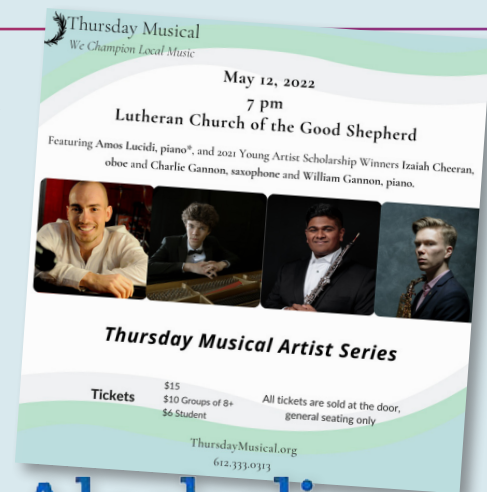
Then several groups are headed by our own

members, such as the Glad to Bee Quilting group and the Harmonica Choir. Because these groups are led by members of Good Shepherd, they are not required to pay a rental fee.

We also have several ongoing, outside groups that pay a rental fee to use our facilities, such as the Montessori school, three women's AA groups, Al Anon, a violin teacher whose studio is located here, the Civic Orchestra of Minneapolis, and the Thursday Musical group.

Scattered throughout the year, we also have many recitals and concerts given by piano studios and strings studios. The summer is a time when the group, the Summer Singers, uses the sanctuary for many rehearsals, a concert, and recording space. This summer, their concert will be taking place on Saturday, July 23 at 7 p.m.

As Facility Liason, I serve as the contact for all individuals and groups using our church for their various activities. The calendar is updated daily. To see the variety of activities that happen at Good Shepherd, check out the calendar on the front page of our website.



If you have any need to schedule a meeting or gathering for yourself or for your group, please contact me at tor.johnson@goodshepherdmpls.org, and I'll reserve the space you need and put it on the calendar.

Our building is well-used, with fees to cover expenses. But in this way we also show good stewardship of our primary capital resource.



SCRIPTURE STORY

Embracing the Enemy

BY PASTOR ELISE POKEL

Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem (Acts 9:1-2).

When we first encounter Saul in the book of Acts, he has just carried out the execution of St. Stephen. He is a dangerous, vicious man. Things are escalating for the early church. Saul is on his way to Damascus in Syria in order to search out and destroy the lives of the people of the Way of Jesus Christ. Persecution has become his vocation, and he devotes his considerable energy to this project. Jesus' voice quite literally stops him in his tracks and upends not only this current project, but Saul's entire life and belief system. Saul is blinded by brilliant light and goes without food and water for three days. He has a vision of a stranger named Ananias who will come to restore his vision and initiate him into the Christian Way.

Ananias, too, receives a call. God instructs him to go to Saul and enfold him in Christian community. This is one of the most astounding asks in all of Scripture!

Ananias is a fellow Jewish man who is a believer in the Way of Jesus. He knew that Saul was heading his way like a wrecking ball, ready to destroy his community and haul his friends and loved ones away in chains. Saul is a murderer. And now God has come to tell Ananias that he will be the one to lay hands of healing on Saul. Ananias is called to welcome and mentor Saul into the very community Saul was set on dismantling.

Here are the pieces of wisdom from this text in Acts that I so desperately needed to hear in these days.

We cannot know how God is working or moving through the other. I have ideas and assumptions about other people that I think keep me safe. Like Ananias, I might tell God that he's got the wrong individual if he thinks I'll talk to certain, dangerous people! However, I believe in the power of the Holy Spirit and the Spirit's ability to radically transform lives and hearts. God is always at work, chipping away at human hearts.



Ananias of Damascus lays his hand on Saul, by Ciro Ferri, 1660

We are called to be ready to embrace and patiently walk with new believers. Whether it's our little ones or adults who were not immersed in the Way of Jesus, we have a responsibility as committed Christians to walk with humility and joy alongside the ones Jesus puts on our path. We are called like Ananias to point out where we see God healing and stretching us and our neighbors.

It doesn't matter how radical our conversion stories might be. We cannot be disciples of Jesus on our own! Most of us will not be struck down by blinding light on a road trip. (Thanks be to God!) Most of us have been blessed by the space and love we have been given to take small steps of faith each day that have led us into a more mature spiritual life. We cannot be disciples without being nurtured by our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

St. Paul became a titan in the church and had a personality larger than life, but he was dependent on the apostles and the churches around the known world to support him, guide him, and shape him as a leader and teacher. Ananias was the first to embrace him.

When Paul started to preach and teach about Jesus, most Christians still feared him because of his past acts of violence. Barnabas embraced him as a friend and fellow missionary, which helped to calm the spirits of other Christians. We have to know one another deeply in order to best serve the church. I can't vouch for you if I don't know you!

What the world so urgently needs at this moment is for Christians to commit themselves to gentleness, humility, forgiveness, and love. We radiate that with practice! And what better place to practice than at church?

How Can I Help When Disaster Strikes?

BY KAREN WALHOF,
DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH MINISTRY

When disaster strikes, in this country or around the world, we often ask, “How can I help?” Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) is the ministry of our church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), which works locally, nationally, and internationally to respond quickly and fully when something disastrous happens – either by natural events or major disruptions in the world.

According to the ELCA, Lutheran Disaster Response brings God’s hope, healing, and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters. When the dust settles and the headlines change, LDR stays to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

LDR has been active in many national and international crises – responding to the crisis in Eastern Europe because of the war in the Ukraine, U.S. wildfires, U.S. tornadoes, hurricane response in the U.S. and in other countries, the Haiti crisis, the Afghan humanitarian crisis, the Middle East crisis, Ethiopian conflict, and COVID-19 response – only some of LDR’s work.

By collaborating with other disaster response organizations and religious entities in the United States and around the world, LDR enables the best stewardship of resources and maximum impact of response. Recognizing that every disaster is local, their work is rooted in the community, accompanying that community from immediate relief through long-term recovery.

In international work, LDR partners closely with companion churches and other Lutheran and ecumenical relief agencies to make sure local needs are being addressed and met. In the United States, they work through an extensive affiliate network and other partners to address these same concerns.

Some key areas of their work include:

- Providing emotional and spiritual care for people who have been affected by a disaster and for leaders who respond to a disaster
- Coordinating volunteers through local affiliates
- Assisting refugees in a holistic way by meeting the varied needs of the community
- Promoting disaster risk-reduction by helping communities build assets, thereby reducing the effects of ensuing disasters
- Providing long-term recovery efforts by addressing the unmet needs months or even years after a disaster strikes



A Lutheran Disaster Response worker provides food to Ukrainian refugees.

The stories are powerful. In the U.S., for example, when a storm system moved through several southern states last year, including Texas and Louisiana, a congregation was identified to coordinate with other organizations to distribute food. The congregation also welcomed neighbors whose homes were damaged in the storms.

In the Ukraine right now, the crisis is staggering. More than 3.5 million people are estimated to have left Ukraine, most of which are women and children. The refugees are primarily fleeing to Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Moldova. Another two million people are displaced within Ukraine. LDR already has committed over \$2 million to companion churches and ecumenical partners that are accompanying refugees impacted by the war. These include Lutheran churches in Germany, the Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, as well as the Lutheran World Federation. These churches are distributing food, bedding, and hygiene items as well as providing pastoral care and shelter.

Another example of LDR’s work is in Ethiopia. Since November 2020, an ongoing conflict in Tigray, a region in northern Ethiopia, has caused a humanitarian crisis. An estimated 1.2 million displaced persons are faced with food insecurity, COVID-19 threatens their well-being, and possible natural disasters loom. LDR is addressing this humanitarian crisis, working through Lutheran World Federation and our partners in the Ethiopia Evangelical Mekane Yesus Church by assisting displaced persons with assistance to purchase essential relief items.

How can you help? Give to LDR through Good Shepherd by making a check payable to Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd. Write “Lutheran Disaster Response” in the memo line on your check, and place your gift in the offering plate. Staff will make sure the money gets there! You can be confident that your contributions to LDR will be put to use quickly and responsibly to serve our neighbors who face destruction and despair.

Then, please hold the LDR staff and all those injured by natural disaster or war in your prayers.

A Look Back at Lent 2022

BY MARK HALVORSON, DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Every Lent is good. Every chance or opportunity that we have to gather together in person or online around the events that unfold between Ash Wednesday and Easter morning is good.

That being said, this year was extra good. During the previous two years, we have had to rely on recorded worship services and we have not had the opportunity to be together, shoulder-to-shoulder or on a screen at the same time. This return to “normal” was definitely good.

We know that this season extends far beyond Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd. Partnering with St. John’s Lutheran Church just down the street was a great reminder that we are a part of something much, much bigger than our walls.

As we moved through those weeks and approached the celebration of Palm Sunday and the turn of events that happen on Maundy Thursday (even without grilled cheese and soup in the basement), there was a feeling of community and fellowship that served as a reminder and a reinforcement of why we are here and how important it is to be together. That includes those who worshipped online week-in and week-out both on Sundays and Wednesdays.

This community and fellowship continued throughout Holy Week. The events that we mark by worshipping together on Maundy Thursday, keeping watch over the fire in the courtyard, and returning to worship on that Good Friday had a powerful thread running through them. I think it’s fair to note that there

was a great number of individuals who were present not just at one of those, but they attended or took part in all of them back-to-back-to-back. Many people saw the same people over those several days that led us through the quiet of Saturday and into the triumphant excitement of Easter Sunday worship.

It’s not about the numbers, although we’ve always kept track of those in the building for services. We now have this online count and capability to know what those numbers are. While those numbers are not the most important thing by far, they help us know just how we’ve been invited into people’s lives and how what we’re doing is being received.

So, in the online side of this season, we saw:

- Roughly 425 online views between Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and two glorious Easter morning worship services.
- An additional 250 online views of the Wednesday evening Holden services.

These numbers include livestream views as well as those that have gone back and watched and worshipped yet again. Those views are not individual viewers, however. It’s fair to say that many people are worshipping online in groups of two or three.

The fire watch had more than 65 individuals show up and brave the weather around the clock to keep the fire going. We saw a consistent three to five views throughout its 24-hour livestream. While that may not seem like something to get excited about, I’m pretty sure there’s a line in scripture about “wherever two or three are gathered. . . .”

The emotions and the hope and the promises of the season of Lent help push us forward into these summer months. As each day passes on this side of the empty tomb, we can be reminded and encouraged by this story that we get to keep telling, we get to keep experiencing, and we get to keep bringing to a world that needs it.





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