

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

April 2022 Newsletter

HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday April 10th Worship at 9:45am
Children's Easter Egg Hunt after worship!

Maundy Thursday April 14th 7:00pm worship

Good Friday April 15th 7:00pm worship

Easter Sunday April 17th

Sunrise 6:16am and

9:30am worship

Register for Camp Today!! Invite a friend! www.vlmcamps.org Join us this summer at Camp Vermilion and Camp Hiawatha. Spend time at Camp Hiawatha or Camp Vermilion this summer and you will experience a week of a lifetime! It's a chance to try some new things, meet new friends, explore your creative side, learn team work, *be silly, sing, laugh, and learn what it means to live as God's people in the world!*

We have programs for all ages - a one day experience for those new to camp, a two night program for those not quite ready for a full week, and week-long programs for elementary, junior high, and senior high campers.



**We're looking for awesome summer staff too!!
It will be the best summer ever!!**



VLM is excited to announce that we will be offering a **Young Adult Ministry program (YAM)** based out of the main VLM office in Duluth, MN and will offer opportunities for young adults ages ~18-35 to nourish mind, body and spirit. This pilot program will provide outdoor adventures such as hiking, canoeing, and as well as community-building experiences such as service-learning and intentional conversations about life and faith over a good beer or cup of coffee.

K-4th graders! "Day Trip" to Camp Hiawatha on Tuesday, July 12. Camp Hiawatha offers a 1-day "Discoverers" Program for those in Kindergarten-4th Grade. If you are ready for an overnight, you can stay the night before.

Or, they have a 3-day Venturers Program, and of course a full week of camp for anyone in 3rd grade and older.



Not to mention Hockey Camp, Family Camp, and more! (<https://www.vlmcamps.org/summer-camps>)



If you want to talk more about summer camp options, please reach out! We have a *****ton***** of scholarship money available (really, we do!!!) so I'd love to hear who's interested in going to camp this summer, and how we can help as a church.

I love Camp Vermilion! They have an **"Explorers" Program for 7-9 grade.** (<https://www.vlmcamps.org/summer-camps/explorers>)

There are multiple weeks that you can go to Camp Vermilion as an "Explorer" - but one of the dates we were talking about was the week of July 17. If we can get a group of Confirmation students to all go together, I would go to camp with this group for the first night. I'll help you get settled, and then get out of the way so you can have an amazing week at camp with the camp staff as leaders. Plus, we/your church will pay for your spot! We know that Camp is expensive, but we also know how important it is. If you register and pay the initial down payment, the church will cover the rest.

A third option, just for **9th- Graders, will be July 24-28**. The High School Youth Gathering planned for this summer was cancelled, and so we are planning an alternative high school experience. (Spoiler alert: we'll be spending part of the week at Camp Vermilion.) More information about that event will be coming very soon.

CAMP WORK DAY – VERMILION

Saturday, May 14, 2022

8:00 AM 3:00 PM



From Pastor Nancy Hong

April 5, 2022

Dear People of God at Good Shepherd,

The 9-piece quilt blocks were arranged on a large, square table in the basement of the church. Beautiful fabrics of bright florals, old-fashioned patterns, abstract prints, and all sorts of solid colors, had been cut into 4-inch squares and then sewn into three rows of three in order to create the 9-piece blocks. Sue Boutin, one of the church quilters, had done an initial arrangement of five rows of the blocks, when I walked over to see what she was working on this week.

The church quilters meet most Mondays from 9:00-1:00 and, when I can, I make it down to the fellowship hall where they work so that I can say "hi," look at the fabrics, and admire their creations.

When I stood gazing at Sue's project she told me that all of the quilt blocks that she was working with had been donated, including the ones spread out on the table and the substantial pile of 9-piece blocks at the end of the table.

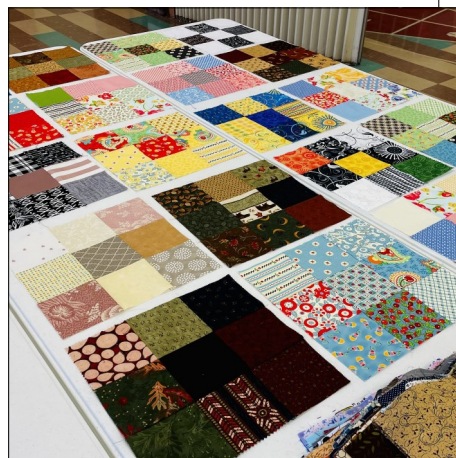
Sue and I were appreciating the work that had gone into these donated 9-piece blocks when she mentioned that she hoped that, once completed and donated to Lutheran World Relief, that all of these quilts would go to Ukraine.

Imagine what it would mean to receive one of these quilts made out of all of these beautiful fabrics. In the news the photos from Ukraine show burned up and blown out buildings. Destroyed from bombs or fires, the buildings are all grey, black, and soot, the colors of fire, wreckage and ruin. In poignant contrast, these quilters are creating beauty, warmth and hope, out of leftover fabric in a church basement.

The next time you're free on a Monday morning, you should check out what's going on in the church fellowship hall. What I found this past week was beautiful!

Nancy & River

Isaiah 61:1-4 The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, ² to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, ³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor. ⁴ They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.



LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE EASTERN EUROPE CRISIS RESPONSE Lutheran Disaster Response is accompanying our companions in Ukraine, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, as well as such ecumenical partners as Lutheran World Federation and Church World Service, in their humanitarian responses to the crisis. These partners provide refugees with immediate support and supplies such as food, blankets, water and hygiene kits. Your gifts designated for "Eastern Europe Crisis Response" will be used entirely (100%) to provide support for people impacted by conflict in the region.

Write a check to LCGS and we can send it or give digitally go to www.elca.org/disaster and go to Eastern Europe Crisis

THRIVENT GIFTING REQUEST

Good Shepherd's WELCA (Womens Ministries) is seeking Thrivent gifting to cover supplies and shipping costs for quilting, World Relief kits, sewing machine maintenance and incidentals which come up throughout the year. We support our youth service activities through hand made mittens and hats for our community as well as other service projects.

If you can make a Thrivent donation, please contact Christine at the office with the gift amount and designation to WELCA at Good Shepherd. Thank you for your generous hearts! We appreciate all the donations of materials and goods that reach our community. Call Thrivent for the necessary forms.

From Pastor Dave

Christ

- emptied himself
 - humbled himself: death on a cross
 - Therefore God highly exalted him
- Philippians 2:5-11

God is with us, in a very surprising but powerful way! Philippians 2 describes the “paschal mystery.” The passion (“suffering”) of Jesus Christ (emptying, humbling, death on cross) leads to resurrection life by the power of God. That passion journey to life is then extended to all of God’s people. Jesus’ death and resurrection were one-time unrepeatable events in history. But that seminal act touches each person every day in the process of emptying and rising.

The paschal mystery is “ground zero” for us as well. We are called to go deep enough (emptying, then being lifted by God’s power) to be fully alive. God is with us! In this surprising way!

Sabbatical

Thank you for the gift of sabbatical! I am so grateful to Pastor Nancy, our staff and our congregation for creating the space for my heart to sing during this time of spiritual renewal. I tasted the depth of emptying and rising in some surprising ways. It was a challenging time for Joyce’s long journey from lung infection diagnosis last September through steroid treatment, a process which is almost complete. Now in the final weeks of her taper, Joyce will soon be able to receive the COVID booster. We are deeply thankful for the spiritual and medical gifts in this community.

The surprise for us came when I was diagnosed with infection in my esophagus, and also placed on a steroid regimen. So my sabbatical renewal was lived out in a challenging context of physical tiredness, swallowing difficulty and weight loss. But the spiritual renewal of Psalms prayer, time in nature and opera listening was clear evidence that God was with me in that depth. I have gained a passionate appreciation for how the Psalms invite us to a life journey from God’s Word to Hallelujah that covers every human lament and thanksgiving. I have come to appreciate how the Bible invites us to experience an “arc of transcendence” that reaches from our hearts to the entire creation. God is with us!

Mission and Vision

Many have asked me where we are in the process of calling a pastor. This process presents us with an opportunity to renew our identity and ministry as a community of Christ. That process begins with the affirmation that God is with us in the death and life of Christ. Thank you to the Mission and Vision Task Force for leading us through a process of self-study, a congregational survey and many conversations. The Task Force has gathered all this information and on March 15 made recommendations to the Vision Council regarding mission/vision, staffing needs and self-study. The Vision Council will now study these recommendations and receive input from the leadership teams and committees. After much conversation through congregational forums and input, the Vision Council will bring a proposal to the congregation, to be acted upon at a meeting of the congregation.

This entire process has been happening in a time of tremendous complexity. Our staff transition by itself carries significant complexity. We are living out this process in a time of rapid cultural change. And we also happen to be more than two years into a world-wide pandemic that has touched everything we do. So, how is God with us in this time of complexity? God’s presence through the death and life of Christ is our deepest identity and the heart of our mission.

How long will this process last? We have an “ideal” timeline that takes us to the annual meeting next year. But on a deeper level I believe we will know when we come together in excitement over the identity and mission to which we are called. Just as the depth of our Lenten preparation determines the height of our Easter celebration, so the depth of our current process will determine the height of our mission together. God is with us in the paschal mystery: in our lives as disciples, our life together as a community of Christ, and in our mission to the world.

Thanks be to God!

Pastor Dave

Ascend Offering

Making a Difference: From Our “Burning Hearts” to the Ends of the World

Paula Tsufis, Stewardship Committee

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.” So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. 32 They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” - Luke 24: 28-32



Why give to your church when there are so many other worthwhile causes? This is an important question that needs to be carefully considered. The Road to Emmaus Story in Luke’s Gospel provides an extraordinary encounter of the risen Jesus changing hearts and allows us to see more clearly how our story resonates with God’s story.

Henri Nouwen, a Catholic priest, professor, prolific writer and theologian offers this explanation of what the “heart” means in biblical context: “By heart, I do not mean the seat of our feelings as opposed to the seat of our thoughts; I mean the center of our being, that place where we are most ourselves, where we are most human, where we are most real, In that sense the heart is the focus of the spiritual life.”

The disciples encountered Jesus on the road with very heavy hearts, grief-stricken over his death and making their way home. They don’t recognize Jesus as he listens to their story of crucifixion tragedy and the empty tomb and then “interprets to them all the things about himself in all the scriptures.” At their home that evening their eyes were opened during breaking bread with Jesus and they recalled their “hearts burning” during the conversation on the road. During Jesus final appearance to his disciples, he tells them that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem. They are the witnesses of these things and have been “clothed with power from on high.”

The Ascend Offering will take place the two weeks after Easter, April 19-May 8. This offering is part of the 2022 plan for financial support of our church mission and ministry. Our goal is \$25,000. More information will be provided via mail, announcements, and social media. Gifts can be mailed to the church or made online.

The story of the disciples is now our story as Christians and one to share. We are the Spirit-led witnesses today. This is our mission and an increasingly important one in our world besieged by widespread despair and yet another chapter of war violence. Walking with others, listening to their stories of joy and tragedy. Opening the scriptures, sharing hospitality, new hope, new life, new freedom to forgive, serve and love others. Our mission starts with you and me, people like the struggling disciples who have now experienced their hearts on fire to follow Jesus. Our vocation continues with deepening faith and support for our congregation to share our new freedom in Christ lived out today in our community and our world.

This is our extraordinary call as disciples this Easter to which I say ...
“Hallelujah, Thanks be to God!”

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd (ELCA)

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2022

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Holy Week begins April 10
Easter is April 17th

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

M-Th 9:00-4:00 Fri 9:00-12:00

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MEET THE STAFF

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