

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

June 2022 Newsletter

From Pastor Nancy Hong & River:

1 Corinthians 1: Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God...

³ Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴ I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus...."

How do I say goodbye after such a year? How do I say goodbye to such wonderful people?

With tears and smiles, of course, as well as inadequately! How could it be anything but inadequate even if I tried—which I won't!--to go through the past year month by month, or experience by experience, or service by service, or person by person...?

So I ask your grace as I inadequately state: For all that this past year has been, and for each one of you, I am grateful. Thank you for giving me the honor and joy of being your pastor, for you being you, for letting me, and River, be ourselves, and for showing me the face of God; I am grateful. And know, that because of you, and Jesus through you, I have been changed, and healed, and fed, and loved here. Actually, both River and I are beyond grateful!

"But what's next," many of you have asked? At some point, maybe by the fall, I'll take another call, and since I live up the shore, that un-known call will be in the area! But in the meantime, I am looking forward to a relaxed summer with a trip to the Tetons, trips back to Sioux Falls, and some local hiking and kayaking. Oh, and of course, River will accompany me on these adventures!

Lastly, dear people of God, to say "goodbye" means "God be with you." So with a full heart of love, with deep gratitude & joy, with tears & smiles, River & I bid you "goodbye."

***Nancy--a fellow sheep in
flock of our Good Shepherd!***

We would like to announce with love and blessings that our Interim Pastor Nancy Hong's (and River's) last Sunday with us will be May 29th, 2022.

Her role as Interim Pastor has allowed us to grieve the retirement of Pastor Tim and to evaluate what the future holds for us at as a ministry of the Lutheran Church.

You may still send your best wishes to church and we can get them to her!



***Report on NE MN Synod Strategic Plan 2022 Synod Assembly
Cragun's Resort, Rural Brainerd, MN April 29-May 1 2022***

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd Voting Members

Cyndi Venberg, Rachael Perlinger, Joyce Piper, Pastor Nancy Hong, Pastor Dave Mesner

Introduction: Synod Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan was developed through an intense listening process in the past year. "Big questions" were asked of as many leadership groups and individuals as possible, using both Zoom and in person meetings. The Strategic Planning Team distilled the responses to formulate one purpose statement, four core values, and eleven goals. This data will be invaluable to our LCGS mission and vision update process. Please consider how these core values and goals may be lived out most effectively in our ministry. The full text of the Strategic Plan is available [here](#), as well as in the offices of LCGS and the NE MN Synod.

NORTHEASTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD, ELCA - STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY SPRING 2022

Our Purpose: The Northeastern Minnesota Synod is empowering congregations and ministries to encounter and share the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Our Core Values: -Welcome -Connect -Reform -Support

Our Goals:

Core Value: Welcome

Make a plan to invite people into relationship with God and each other. Understand our physical and digital neighborhood.

Work together to understand what it means to make all people welcome. Equip all to create a place of welcome and engagement.

Think outside the building. Imagine new ways of being church, using technology and welcoming diversity.

Welcome the full diversity of God's people: age, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity and socio-economic location.

Core Value: Connect

Develop and encourage new networks. Share resources. Create a gift sharing network.

Network, share, and learn from people outside of our denomination. Expand ecumenical and community-based ministries.

Core Value: Reform

Begin every meeting deeply rooted in scripture, end with heartfelt prayer.

Explore new ways of being church. Create innovation hubs that experiment with new ideas, encourage risk-taking, learn from mistakes and share what is learned.

Advocate for social justice. Educate, empower, and engage leadership in anti-racism work, creation care, LGBTQ+, mental health and reconciliation work.

Core Value: Support

Expand Mental Health Resources.

Create a plan for Christian leadership formation. Create systems for growing leaders of all ages with a deepening faith.

Preach and teach these values.

From our LCGS Representatives:

Hello,

I want to thank the congregation for enabling me to attend my first Synod Assembly. It was a faith building experience. The group of people who put this event together were talented forward thinking members of the Synod and did a wonderful job. I especially appreciated the parts in the program where ideas were expressed about issues we face in our church right now. Much of the strategic planning at the synod level reflects what our congregation is trying to achieve. There is concern for drops in attendance, inviting all to come through our doors and providing worship and experiences that match the needs of today's members. The resources that are available will help us to move forward in our Mission and vision.

I was also excited to participate in some activities that involved scripture and study. I will be bringing this to the women's circle to see if we want to pursue some of the ideas. There is an effort by the Synod to reach out to the world and help with missions with Afghanistan, Ukraine and the gas emission elimination mission in the US. The gathering gave me a new sense of excitement for our church. I would highly recommend each of you attend some time to see how our governing body works. Thanks again for the opportunity to be engaged with other members of our church in spirituality and knowledge.

Peace in Christ,

Cyndi Venberg, Vision Council President.

It was certainly a special synod assembly after the Zoom-only possibilities in assembling in the past two years. But thank goodness for Zoom, then and now. It was inclusive to have the hybrid in-person/Zoom assembly this time for many reasons; some were home with children, others were uncomfortable about mobility or COVID issues, but still able to attend. I have recommended to the assembly planning team that they continue the hybrid model for future assemblies that don't have bishop election complexities and the like.

This synod assembly was my first time out of confinement in 9 months, into larger public space beyond clinic and quick grocery stores visits. I was rather starved for conversation and it was such a delight to get to know better the other members of our Good Shepherd voting team, Pr. Nancy, Rachael, and Cyndi, and to chat with old and new friends in attendance. Assembly conversation was also pleasantly both deep and respectful regarding delicate resolution matters with varying perspectives. Fortunately not like the divisive rhetoric we experience too often elsewhere. I left wanting to attend another synod assembly in the near future and I can only imagine others felt that way also.

The quilt auction with online voting was easier than checking bids in person. Thanks to Amy Loken, Lois Krueth, Barb & Bob Murray, and other quilt auction specialists who navigated the online change along with bidders. Dave and I ended up with a lovely quilt made by my dear friend Barb Murray from Messiah Lutheran in Mt. Iron where I was interim pastor for 18 months from Feb 2018 to June 2019. (Pr. Tim is interim there now.) During my time at Messiah, Barb led a team in making 38 quilts for Camp Vermillion. So that's how she rolls!

And talk about dedication . . . We have such a gifted synod staff, Bishop Amy and every single soul serving that office for the sake of the entire synod. We are of course blessed by our churchwide ELCA connections as well with joint missions beyond our own limits and efforts. Looking forward to reports following the churchwide assembly in Columbus OH in mid-August! Pr. Liz Davis (Our Savior's in West Duluth & United in Proctor) and Mark Hollabaugh (Trinity in Hovland) are our voting members from Lake Superior Conference.

Thanks for allowing me to attend synod assembly as a voting member from Good Shepherd. I'm obviously still full of words while carefully emerging from seclusion.

Joyce Piper

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This was my first time being able to serve our congregation at the Synod Assembly. It was an honor representing Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd alongside so many other ELCA churches from the area. I was moved by the energy, the love of neighbor, and the love of Christ at the Assembly. Over \$10,000 was raised towards hunger relief, thanks to the quilt sale. We heard speakers representing young clergy struggling with student debt, international clergy who've overcome incredible adversity to be able to go to Seminary, and from those who could speak for marginalized members of our society. It was thought-provoking and incredibly spirit-filled. As a synod, we passed resolutions that ensure we will love our neighbor as ourselves.

### ***Rachael Perlinger***

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With all of the in-depth summaries from the others who attended the Synod Assembly, I struggled for something, anything, to add! So, I'll add this personal note on what stands out for me:

To be in communion with other Jesus followers after my move from South Dakota to Minnesota which included a different "neighborhood," home and pastoral call, and a different synod, and after two years of church-isolation during the pandemic including an on-line synod assembly last year, all of us—a bunch of Jesus-Followers—were in one place, together.

That's it. Simply to be with each other was my biggest take-away. I had multiple conversation with folks I'd never met before as well as sharing breakfast and dinner with our group. We prayed together, sang together, studied the Word of God together, laughed together, were both bored at times and were inspired together!

Acts 2.1 "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place."

Next time you're in a group, just pause, and look around at the other human beings that you're with. They are the beloved of God, all together, in one place. And you, dear one, are one of them, the beloved of God.

Thank you for the opportunity and experience of attending the Synod Assembly. Consider going next year yourself!

Together in Christ,

Pastor Nancy

Hunger Team is collecting food and money for **CHUM** throughout June!! Bring foods with you on Sundays or leave a check or money designated to CHUM. Thank you!


The Rhubarb Festival is June 25th 10am—3pm at Holy Rosery this year! They still need volunteers!

www.chumduluth.org

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,
Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
In John Chapter 21 verses 15-18 Jesus asks Peter three times if Peter loves Him. Peter response is yes to each time. On each response Jesus tells Peter to do three things. The first was “feed my lambs”, the second was “tend my sheep” and the third is “feed my sheep”.
For a long time I did not understand what exactly it was that Jesus was telling Peter. After a lot of thought about who was in this conversation, I got a glimmer of what Jesus was telling Peter. It was the crucified and risen Lord Jesus telling Peter to continue to carry on with the news that Jesus was the long awaited Messiah. He was telling Peter that He wanted all of His followers to continue to be spiritually fed so that their souls would be filled with the Holy Spirit, and He wanted Peter to do the job along with the rest of the disciples. Jesus wanted to insure that the message of God’s love would be carried out to all the people of the world.

Now we, as professed Christians are tasked with the same message. To go out to a world that seems to have lost its way, about the way, that God expects us to act towards our neighbors. We were told to love our neighbors as ourselves. That doesn’t seem to be the case more and more each day. Using God’s commandment as a guide, it appears we don’t love ourselves very much either. Maybe we should do an inventory of our own Christian values to find out whether we are able to love our neighbors as ourselves. I know there are a lot of people who love God with all their heart and souls. It now comes to us that we, who still have the Faith, Hope and Love of Christ to go out and spread once again the Good News of Christ. More than ever we all need to have the Love of God and Christ at the center of our lives.


Your Brother in Christ, Sulo Kangas

 **Steve McConnell's Celebration of Life** -Steve was the guitarist and also a singer with the LCGS Chicago Folk music group since 2005, so many members of our church are very familiar with him. He rarely missed a performance in all those years until COVID forced the church to temporarily close.

The Celebration of Life is Saturday July 2nd 2022 at the Buffalo House Junction (2590 Guss Road, Duluth), from 11 am until 4 pm with a memorial and sharing time at 1:30. There will be lots of food, drinks, and of course Music!

Everyone who knew Sue and Steve are more than welcome to join us.

Thank you! Sue Ramsey

THE OWLS ARE BACK! 
Remember OWLS? Older, Wiser, Lutherans.
Join us Wednesday, June 8th from 11:00-1:30
We're talking DOWNSIZING!
Are you thinking of downsizing your living space? Do you have question about where to start? We are going to tour a brand new apartment building at The Vue by Bluestone, on Woodland Ave. Views of Lake Superior and near UMD. Following the tour, were going to have lunch at Tavern on the Hill. To RSVP call Jerry A. 218-724-7733
Looking forward to seeing everyone!

Watering Flower Pots

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd is looking for some people to water the flower pots at church. We are hoping to have someone come to church on Monday and Thursday, Pull the hose out of the brown hose holder to the length needed to reach the front door pots. Then use the faucet key, found in the hose box to turn on water and water generously. Also condition the pot by taking off dead leaves. Then roll up the hose, put the key back in it's spot and you are done. The pots are under the roof so they will still need watering but if it's raining on your day just come the day after. Thank you for your generosity of your time and energy. Any problems can be answered by Cyndi Venberg 218-391-8953.
If you need any help signing up please call (218-525-1922) or e-mail (office@lcsduluth.org) the church office.
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10cod45a8a72faafcc61-watering1>



A Ministry of Listening: Stewarding our Attention

(Part Two)

In this “age of distraction” how do we focus our attention?

Paula Tsufis, Stewardship Committee

Years ago, I worked with a pastor who told me that she tried to look directly into a person’s eyes when talking to them. She said that you could tell a lot about the person’s emotional state through eye contact. Many mental health professionals agree.

In her book *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age* author Sherry Turkle notes that “Conversation is on the path toward the experience of intimacy, community, and communion. Reclaiming conversation is a step toward reclaiming our most fundamental human values.” A vital church is one in where the relationships are strong- with God, with one another and our neighbor. Good relationships require good conversation.

So, won’t text messages meet this need for conversation? Sherry states in her work that “From the early days, I saw that computers offer the illusion of companionship without the demands of friendship, and then as the programs got really good, the illusion of friendship without the demands of intimacy.” She differentiates between a “connection” and a “conversation”, and a key element is eye contact and physical presence. So not anti-technology, rather pro-conversation. Conversation is especially important to the development of children. Psychiatrist Daniel Siegel teaches us that children need eye contact to develop parts of the brain that are involved with attachment. Without eye contact and physical presence, there is a persistent sense of disconnection and problems with empathy. I believe this continuing alienation applies to teens and adults as well.

Sherry offers the following “guideposts” in pondering use of technology and our human values:

Remember the power of your phone. It’s a psychologically potent device. The mere presence of a phone signals that your attention is divided, even if you don’t intend it to be.

Slow down and listen to your own voice (and I would add the voice of God.) Personally, I think the lakeshore is a perfect place for a little solitude.

Create sacred spaces for conversation. “No Device” zones perhaps at dinner or in the car or at a restaurant. As parents or grandparents, model this behavior for children and teens.

Think of “uni-tasking” as the next big thing. In every domain of life, it will increase performance and decrease stress.

Our challenge in today’s time-crunched world is to love one another more deeply. Theologian Andrew Root notes in his book, *The Congregation in the Secular Age: Keeping Sacred Time Against the Speed of Modern Life* that “Through deep encounters of love, friendship and care, time is subordinate to the sacred action (motion) of the ministry in relation. Love is stronger than time but love always happens in time. And the love, friendship and care for persons unveils that eternity is still in time.”



What is your Favorite Bible Verse?

Sue Ramsay’s Favorite Bible Verse: Psalm 23

Sign up for the LCGS weekly newsletter from Constant Contact. You will receive up-to-the-minute news and reminders! Go to the main page of our website and scroll to the bottom of the page!

Www.lcgsduluth.org Look for news every Wednesday!

A BIG THANK YOU! Thank you for your generosity!

Sunday, May 15th's brunch and refugee project was a celebration of renewal with friends and a reminder that connecting with each other brings us hope for the uncertainties in life.

We want to thank everyone who promoted the event, planned food, donated personal care goods, money for supplies, shipping, and food, sewed bags, cleaned and scrubbed tables and dishes, decorated with spring colors, served food, and packed the toiletry kits.

AND most of all, each member of this congregation who helps us write our own stories of the living Jesus through your actions!

Refugee Totes: We have collected and packed **90+ refugee totes** from LCGS!! A donation of \$150 was also received for the LSS Refugee Service in Minnesota!!

Lutheran World Relief Kits: LCGS is sending:

- 29 quilts
- 15 school kits
- 17 sewing kits
- 14 baby kits
- 15 personal kits



We would like to sincerely thank all who supported the Refugee Totes and Lutheran World Relief Kits projects. Both projects were extremely successful due to the amazing generosity of our congregation.

The Women's Ministry of Ruth Circle

Youth and Family Ministry!! There are so many exciting things happening in June!

- **We are excited for the Graduation Milestone on Sunday, June 5.**
- **We are excited for Day Camp June 20-23.**
- **And, we are excited to be trying/hosting something *new* here at church:**

“Growing Little Loves” Art Play Group Mondays 10:00 – 11:15 am

Including Monday June 6, June 13, and June 17 (no playgroup on June 20 because of Day Camp)

Here at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd! Hooray! We are so excited to host this amazing group!

Art play group is a sensory and art based experience created for children ages 2-6, however because our group is open-ended and exploratory in nature, children of all ages can enjoy materials in some way. Playgroup is an experience for the child(ren) and caregiver to explore new and engaging activities together. Explore together at your own pace; more importantly-- let your child explore at their own pace. Here is what you can expect from a Growing Little Loves Art Play Group:

-- hands-on, child led art and sensory activities (materials may include: playdoh, slime, paint, clay, collage, mixed media and more!)

-- focus on process art (process of creating and exploring) not art with an end result

-- messy fun, please wear clothes that are okay to get messy

Do you love the idea of offering your child(ren) a chance to experience art and sensory play but don't want to deal with the mess? Clean up is on us!

**** Each child must be accompanied by a caregiver. Caregivers are responsible for the health and wellbeing of their child(ren) at all times during art play group. ****

Each week is carefully planned and set up by artist, art therapist, and mom of two “little loves” Alison Kilpo. Alison is asking for \$10 per individual child artist (group will be capped at 10). This charge helps Alison cover the cost of supplies, especially the “make and take” craft of the week. Please email Katie Rich or Alison Kilpo (growinglittleloves@hotmail.com) for more information, including the link to sign up.

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd (ELCA)

1325 North 45th Avenue East, Duluth MN 55804-1507



Summer

2022

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Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

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

Phone: 218-525-1922

Website: www.lcgsduluth.org

MEET THE STAFF

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