

**Woodlake
Lutheran Church**

7525 Oliver Avenue South
Richfield, MN 55423
(612) 866-8449
www.woodlakechurch.org

Pastor Charlie Plaster
Pastor Brice Eichlersmith

*Woodlake Lutheran Church is a
congregation of the ELCA.*

Worship Schedule

Sunday Morning

10:00am in the Sanctuary

Saturday Evening

5:00pm in the Chapel

Wednesday Morning Matins

8:00am in the chapel

Church Office Hours

Monday..... 9am – 12pm
Tuesday..... 9am – 4pm
Wednesday..... 9am – 4pm
Thursday..... 9am – 4pm
Friday..... 9am – 12pm
Saturday..... Closed
Sunday ..Before and after worship

**Building will close on Monday,
Dec. 26 in observance of
Christmas Day.**

*Articles for January's issue of The
Messenger are due to
office@woodlakechurch.org
no later than December 15.*



December 2016

Messenger

Advent Worship

We'll worship with the beloved Holden Prayer service, Wednesdays at 6:30pm (Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, and 21)

**Sunday, December 4
Lessons and Carols**

Join us during worship on Sunday morning at 10am for a festive service to get us into the season! Followed by Cards and Carols (more info on page 4)

**Sunday, December 18
Children's Christmas Pageant**

Join us during worship on Sunday morning at 10am for a beloved tradition! Please turn to Page 3 for more information.

**Saturday, December 24
Christmas Eve Worship**

4:00 pm and 10:00pm in the Sanctuary
No communion at Christmas Eve services

**Sunday, December 25
Christmas Day Worship**

10:00am in the Sanctuary
With Communion

Pastor's Corner

"PREPARE"

"Prepare the way for the Lord: Matthew 3:3

What are you doing for Christmas? It's a question that will be asked often in the coming weeks. What are you doing for Christmas? Are you traveling for the holidays? Are you having a special meal? Some special gifts in mind? What are you doing for Christmas?

If we heed the words of John the Baptist, what we should be doing for Christmas has nothing to do with buying gifts, special foods, or taking special trips. It has to do with faith. So with that in mind, here is what I am going to do in the weeks ahead to prepare for Christmas during Advent:

#1. I am going to worship. It seems to me that this is where we start. We go to worship. We do it on Sundays as we light the Advent candles. We do it for the mid-week Advent Services. If we are Matins people, we are there. We prepare first and foremost through worship

#2. I am also going to prepare by being in the Word, the Bible. Maybe I will read the story in Luke 2 about the birth of Jesus several times a week in several translations, each time looking for something just a little bit new. I will do daily devotions. I recommend the online ones. They are good for the faith and they cost nothing. Try "God Pause" from Luther Seminary or "Stillspeaking" from writers at the United Church of Christ.

#3. During Advent, I am also going to find ways to serve and give back. As a family, we are going to give some of the special gifts that are a part of the ELCA Good Gifts program. Gifts like bees, chickens, or pigs. Gifts that give life and sustain life. I am also going to volunteer to ring the bell for the Salvation Army as often as I can during the month of December. Find what works for you. But do something.

So, what are you doing for Christmas?

Let me know.

Pastor Charlie

Did you miss our Annual Meeting on November 20? You can still pick up a copy of the Annual Report in the church office. Highlights include all financial information for the past year, the approved budget for our next year, and reports from staff members and Leadership Board Commissioners.

Around the Table

Notes from Your Leadership Board

On behalf of your Leadership Board I thank you for your support, and yes, even your hard questions, this past year. The Board has worked through many difficult issues and some more rewarding ones: like a balanced budget (special thanks to Julie Windler, Orv Holland, and Bob Larson for that), increased missions to our surrounding community, and collaborations with our Community in Christ partners, House of Prayer and Oak Grove Lutheran churches. Thank you for your stewardship of resources like prayers, encouragement, money, time and talent which always showed up when most needed. Pastors Fred, Charlie, and now Brice have given us spirit-filled, gospel-centered sermons and leadership providing a smooth transition to our coming years as a vibrant faith-filled community. May the season of the Advent and Birth of our Lord and Savior give you renewed faith and energy to pray for, listen to and follow without fear what God has in store for all of us.

Anne Romstad

Children's Ministry



Wednesday Night Suppers, Every Wednesday night from 5:30-6:30!

A perfect family fun night out!

- Children eat **Free** (up through 12th grade!)
- Great food with plenty of options
- Good company and fellowship
- **Free** children's activities

Come join us!

VEAP Toy Drive!

Bring new toys, children's books, children's winter gear and games to the Woodlake Church main office, and put it in the VEAP toy drop box by December 9th



Check out our Giving Tree for gift ideas, with ornaments you can take! The children at Woodlake Church made all the ornaments, and came up with the gift ideas.



Christmas Program

for the play, and we can't wait to share it with you!

Children's Program

December 18th during Woodlake Church service, the children will sing Christmas carols and perform the 12 *symbols of Christmas*.

The children are working hard learning songs and lines

From the Records

Deaths and Funerals

Thank you for keeping these families in your prayers.

Edward Sorensen, 12/18/1921 – 9/20/2016; service held on September 24, 2016 at Woodlake

Steve Becken, Service held on October 15, 2016 at Woodlake

Harlen Skjefte, 3/16/1927 – 10/22/2016; service held on October 27, 2016 at Woodlake

Thomas Perkins, 5/19/1929 – 11/4/2016; service held on 11/9/2016 at Woodlake

New Members

During worship on October 23, we welcomed the following new members into our community.

- **Jim, Kristi, Casey, and Nathan Gay**
- **Linda King**
- **John Riddell and Jackie Zemke**

Ekka Update

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ at Woodlake Lutheran Church!

In this season of Thanksgiving, we are especially thankful to the Lord for your partnership in the mission of God in India. Our hearts are filled with praise and gratitude to you all for your generous support and continued prayers. We are excited more than ever as the Lord is leading us to new ministries for the sake of his kingdom. We pray for God's continued guidance and blessing for each of you.

The Ekkas are here on a home visit and will be at Woodlake on Sunday, February 26. See the kiosk for a newsletter regarding their work and new ministries.

Worship and Music Notes

Is your definition of a “normal family” a married mother and father and their biological children living together under one roof? If not, what do you think a “family” is – or can be? Do you think a new definition of family is starting to emerge in our society? If so, how do you see that in your own life or community? If not, why not? What experiences do you have with alternative family structures in general?

I saw this topic in an issues of the New York Times from 2011. What is your definition of a “family?” Let’s take a few minutes to think about it.

A long time ago, I had an opportunity to discuss this topic with my friends. My answer was not much different than the regular definition you would see in dictionary. Since then, I have been thinking about the question. I haven’t come up with a clear definition yet. Here is a comment that I want to share from the question in the New York Times.

“A family is a group of people that will support you no matter what, will love you no matter what, and will be there for you through the good and bad times. They are the ones that will stick with each other and have each other’s backs, even in tough circumstances. Family isn’t determined by blood: it’s about who stuck by you and never left you.”

Solidarity, support, understanding... Personally, I think these words represent the definition of family. After I lost my mom, I regretted that I didn’t spend much time with her because I was busy – at least that was my excuse. I should have spent more time with my mom because she was very precious to me. Time waits for no one. Another regret is that I didn’t support my mom with my all heart. I should have supported her no matter what, on any occasion. I thought I was supporting my mom when she was alive. But, I realized it was not enough. My love and support of my family needed to be with all my heart.

Solidarity... Why should we go to church? Why are we attending Woodlake? There are lots of good resources like the internet, radio, or television to watch good sermons and listen to fantastic music. But, it is hard to build relationships or fellowship only through media. The Bible tells us that we need to attend church to worship God with others and to grow spiritually through the Word. Regular gathering is a part of our lives as Christians, to build our relationship and fellowship.

“Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur someone another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another- and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” - Hebrews 10: 22- 25

We are the church that cares others as a family. This is the season of Advent. The season is coming for you, for me, and for everyone, to let us feel and share His love.

HyeonJeong Lee, Director of Worship and Music

Cards and Carols

Sunday, December 4, 11:00am

Join us in the Fellowship Hall after worship to make Christmas cards and enjoy a Christmas Sing-along! We will provide supplies and snacks (apple cider, sweet rice cakes, nuts). Please pre-register by November 30 by emailing jlee@woodlakechurch.org or via the signup sheet in the office. Suggested donation of \$2/person or \$5/family; all proceeds will go to Missions.

Small Group and Circle News

Circles

Circles meet once a month and are times for women of all ages to have fellowship, devotions, and Bible study. December *Gather* magazine with Bible Studies are now available in the church office (one for each circle).

Esther Circle: Dec. 6 (1st Tuesday), 11:30 am in the Yorke Room at 7500 York.

Faith Circle: Dec. 6 (1st Tuesday), 7:00 pm, at Bev E.'s home

Lydia Circle: Dec. 13 (2nd Tuesday), 12:30 pm, Fireside Room.

Rebecca / Sarah Circle: Dec. 14 (2nd Wednesday), 12:00 pm, Fireside Room. (Time changed for December luncheon.)

Sunday Morning Circle: No December meeting

Faith and Fiction Book Club

Our book for November/ December is *Stillwater* by Nicole Nelget. Meeting is Thursday, December 1, 7:00pm in the Heritage Room.

Senior Fellowship Event – Daytripper Theatre, Thurs., Dec. 8. Lunch at 12:15, Play at 1:15 “Guess Who’s Coming to Christmas Dinner!”

A Christmas family gathering is thrown into chaos when Andy brings his Jewish fiancée home for the holidays. A wise and witty spirit provides a miracle through Andy’s younger brother, sending everyone on a hilarious journey. **Cost: \$38.75, (previous announcements had an incorrect price); checks payable to Woodlake. Sign up in the office today!**

December Matins Speakers (Wednesdays, 9am in the Fireside Room).

Dec 7: Eliza Olenick, “Arcane Device”

Dec 14: Sheryl Hills, “Depart Smart”

Dec 21: Christmas Sing-a-long

Dec 28: No Program

December SALT Event – Christmas Party

Saturday, December 17th, 7:00pm

The Winkers are hosting this year’s Christmas party again, and we hope you can come! All adults are invited to join SALT (Socializing Adult Lutherans Together). Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share and RSVP with which you plan to bring. We will again do a \$10-15 gift exchange per couple/individual. Please bring it wrapped. RSVP and get directions: 952-983-0132.

Timber Lodge continues into 2017!

Now you can mark your calendar for our favorite fundraiser, all the way through the end of 2017! All you have to do is head out to Timber Lodge Restaurant, have a great meal, tell your server that you’re a friend of Woodlake, and they’ll donate 15% of the ticket price back to us!

Monday, December 12th, 2016

Wednesday, June 7th, 2017

Monday, December 11th, 2017

Tuesday, January 10th, 2017

Wednesday, July 12th, 2017

Thursday, February 9th, 2017

Wednesday, August 9th, 2017

Monday, March 6th, 2017

Monday, September 11th, 2017

Tuesday, April 4th, 2017

Tuesday, October 10th, 2017

Thursday, May 4th, 2017

Thursday, November 9th, 2017



Poinsettia

Order Form

Poinsettias are used to decorate the church for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services. Make a purchase in honor or in memory of a loved one, or to mark a special occasion. Your dedication will be printed in holiday worship folders.

Plants (in 7" pots) have 8-10 blooms

Price is \$13.00 each

**To ensure you receive a poinsettia, order is due to office
no later than 12:00 Noon on Wednesday, Dec. 7**

Check enclosed for \$ _____ (payable to Woodlake)

Ordered by _____
(Name as it should appear in bulletin)

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

(Other): _____

**Plants should be picked up following 10 a.m. Christmas Day service.
Plants not picked by Sunday, January 1 will be made available to anyone who wants
one.**