

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

Pastor Charlie Plaster
Pastor Joanne Sorenson

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

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

Happy New
Year!



January 2018

Messenger

Pastor's Corner

"Back to the Sheep Time"

"The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God" - Luke 2:20

It is "Back to the Sheep Time." What does that mean? Well, think about it in terms of the shepherds who came to the manger to see the baby Jesus in the manger. They were out in the fields taking care of the sheep, being shepherds. The angel spoke to them and told them to go to Bethlehem and see the Savior in the manger. So they did as the angel told them. They went. They left the sheep and went to Bethlehem and saw Jesus. We are not told all of what happened there, but I will bet they had a great time. But they could not stay there forever. They needed to get back to regular life. They needed to get back to taking care of sheep. But as they went back to everyday life they had new hope. They knew that God had come near in Jesus. They knew they were loved. They knew that God in Jesus was with them.

Hopefully, this is what we have too as we return to the life after Christmas. We have had our Christmas 2016 and all that that means. We have experienced the manger and all that that means again. Now we go "Back to the Sheep." But as we return to everyday life, may the joy, the message, the promise of Christmas go with us to sustain, guide us, and give us hope in the coming year of 2018.

*God Be With You,
Pastor Charlie*

Pastor Charlie's last weekend with us will be January 27th – 28th. Thank you, Pastor Charlie, for your leadership over the past year and a half. You will be missed! Woodlake looks forward to welcoming our new senior pastor, Pastor Micah Pearson, and his family on February 3rd – 4th.

January Event Highlights

Senior Fellowship Program – Norwegian Hardanger Fiddle Music

Thursday, January 18

Lunch at 12pm, program at 1pm

Join us for fiddle music along with a history of the fiddle! Cost: \$13.00; sign up in Woodlake's church office by January 16th.

Valentines for the Homebound

Sunday, January 28 after worship

Children and adults of the congregation are invited to make valentines for our homebound members on Sunday, January 28 in the Fireside Room after the 10 AM service. The Woodlake Ink stampers will be there to help us. A light lunch will be provided.

Around the Table

Notes from Your Leadership Board

What's new? Because of Christmas, we all end the year with new things. The grandkids got some new toys, I got a new sweater, and there are a few new pounds from the Christmas cookies. There is a new calendar, new bills, and for some of us, new resolutions.

God promised the Israelites that he would provide for them by sending down bread from heaven six days a week. He instructed them to gather only enough manna for each day, except for the day before the Sabbath when they were allowed to store up two days' worth. When some disobeyed and tried to hoard extra manna, it became rotten and full of worms. (Exodus 16)

I am like that sometimes. God wants to do new, fresh things in my life, but I often try to hold on to yesterday's stale manna and won't let go of what is comfortable and familiar. I continue with the same way of thinking and the same old way of doing things. I may miss new and exciting things God has planned for me.

We here at Woodlake have lots of NEW to look forward to. We have material things like new flooring, a new Leadership Board who will try some new things and we will have a new Pastor with new ideas. One new thing the Leadership Board is initiating is an open forum at the beginning of each board meeting. The board meets on the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 in the Fireside Room. For the first fifteen minutes, we will welcome anyone to come and offer observations or suggestions to the board. It is our goal to give every member of Woodlake a chance to be heard. We value your input and welcome your voice.

New beginnings often give us a sense of hope and joy. There is a certain energy that comes with things that are new. Often, in our rush through life we miss this feeling or don't let it continue. What is new soon becomes old, and we see no reason to offer praise or even take notice. As the NEW comes to all of us, my hope is that we observe and embrace each new thing that comes our way and answer the question "What does God desire to accomplish in and through us as we experience our NEW?" Let us celebrate and live each day expecting new, fresh things from the One who promises, "I am making everything new!" (Revelation 21:5)

Father, we thank You for the promise and hope of all things new. Amen.

*Barbara Halsne
Secretary
Leadership Board*

Mission and Outreach

Opportunities with Conversations with Friends (CWF)

CWF is an organization interested in supporting people who are being detained by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) here in Minnesota. Through our group visits in jail classrooms, letter writing, and other programs, volunteers of CWF are in friendship with our brothers and sisters in ICE detention who suffer from isolation, loneliness, uncertainty, and fear as they face deportation and, as a consequence, possible permanent separation from their family, friends and communities. We show that we truly care; they are not alone.

Upcoming training: Saturday, January 6, 2018, 9 am – 1 pm, in English (location TBD, please inquire when you register).

Our training is primarily for new letter writers who, once trained, write a weekly letter to a person (usually male) detained by ICE in a Minnesota county jail, until the time the person is released or deported. You might be writing weekly to the same individual for as short as one-two months or as long as six-eight months. We are especially in need of those who can write in Spanish.

To register for our training, please contact director Steve Kraemer at [952-240-3501](tel:952-240-3501) or by email at CWFconversationswithfriends@gmail.com

Mission and Outreach – Hats and Wraps

The hats and wraps prayer knitters have given out a large number of items this year:

- 12 hat and scarf sets and 30 hats to Saint Louis Park High School
- 25 hat and cowl/neck-face warmers to Richfield Centennial Elementary School
- 18 hat and cowl sets plus 7 hats to Richfield Stem School
- 15 hat and scarf sets and 15 hats to Richfield Middle school
- 16 hats and scarf sets and 46 hats to Minneapolis South High School
- and multiple unrecorded donations to VEAP, Union Gospel Mission and STEP and various winter gear collections.

When I dropped off the Richfield donations the items were hugged by staff and one teacher had tears in her eyes as she has special needs students without winter gear.

"Mission and Outreach" continued on page 3

Building and Finances

Flooring Update

Hopefully by now you have seen the new carpet installed in the Narthex and main entry area. We are pleased with how well the new carpet blends in with the décor of the Narthex and hope you agree. A date for installation of the LVT (luxury vinyl tile) in the Fellowship Hall has been delayed due to excessive moisture test readings in the concrete floor. We are looking into various ways of addressing this problem and hope to have a resolution soon. Whether reducing the moisture level or better sealing of the surface, some additional cost will likely be incurred. We are also concentrating on other flooring issues in hallways where moisture in the concrete slab is also a problem, but not quite as severe.

“Mission and Outreach,” continued

All the schools ask if we have mittens. If anyone want to make or buy mittens we will get them to the social workers at the schools.

Though we get a grant for yarn from the endowment fund our need- the children's need- outpaces the money available. You are welcome to donate money or yarn as well. We have decided to focus on children at this time because they have little choice in the lot they are given. The schools are not wanting scarves as much because they are hard for some children to handle and present a choking hazard on playgrounds and buses and in some neighborhoods bullies catch kids by the scarves as well. We give the items to the school nurse or social worker to give out to ensure that they go to people who really need them.

Deb Olson for Hats and Wraps Knitters

Worship and Music Notes

“Starry night, noisy night”...

This was the pageant's title for children and youth did on Dec. 17. At first, nobody expected a children's pageant. But, I heard from Kirsten that Evelyn Smiley wanted to do it. Anne Romstad brought this to the staff meeting. That's why we started this work and we've done this project and we were able to do this with many people's support. Parents, grandparents, children, youth, choir, and the whole congregation. We made this miracle (I want to say a miracle) because we got together. It came from one girl's idea. It reminds me one song I've heard and sung from a young age. We all can be a spark!

It only takes a spark to get a fire going
And soon all those around can warm up in its glowing
That's how it is with God's love
Once you've experienced it
Your spread the love to everyone
You want to pass it on

What a wonderous time is spring
When all the trees are budding
The birds begin to sing
The flowers start their blooming
That's how it is with God's love
Once you've experienced it
You want to sing it's fresh like spring
You want to pass it on

That's how it is with God's love
Once you've experienced it
You want to sing it's fresh like spring
You want to pass it on

I wish for you my friend
This happiness that I've found
You can depend on Him
It matters not where you're bound
I'll shout it from the mountain top
I want my world to know
The Lord of love has come to me
And I want to pass it on

Since I've been in the music ministry from a young age, my dream is get together from baby to grand parents. Support each other.

Since I joined Woodlake, all my focus is on getting together. I know and you know that it is really hard to work by one person. But if we get together, it is much easier and we can make a difference. I hope we have more opportunities to have chances like children's pageant or family festival at Woodlake. It is not enough to have a dream. We need to stand up together.

Are you considering joining our church? Please do it, right now. Are you hesitating to play music or join a music group? Try, right now. Are you considering to sign up as a sacristan? This is the time - now or never!

- HyeonJeong Lee, Director of Worship and Music

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. January *Gather* magazine with Bible Studies are now available in the church office (one for each circle).

Esther Circle: January 2 (1st Tuesday), 11:30am at the Yorke Room of 7500 York

Faith Circle: January 9 (rescheduled), 7:00 pm, at Diana O's home

Lydia Circle: January 9 (2nd Tuesday), 12:30 pm, Fireside Room

Rebecca / Sarah Circle: January 10 (2nd Wednesday), 1:30 pm, Fireside Room.

Sunday Morning Circle: January 28 (fourth Sunday), 8:45am in the Heritage Room

Matins Speakers

Join us for the Matins Morning Prayer service at 8am, every Wednesday in the chapel, and stay for fellowship and coffee at 8:30, with a speaker at 9am.

Jan 3: No Program

Jan 10: Anthony Verderame, "Not-So-Normal Therapist"

Jan 17: Erin Parish, "Updates to Medicare"

Jan 24: Carmen Caurrieser, "Citizens' Utility Board"

Jan 31: Bible Study

Faith and Fiction Book Club

Next meeting is Thursday, January 25, 7:00pm in the Heritage Room (fourth Thursday). Our book for January is *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah. Join at any time – the schedule of books for 2018 is below!

February - *Born of Crime* by Trevor Noah

March - *Before the Fall* by Noah Hawley

April - *Small Great Things* by Jody Picoult

May - *Blood Work* by Holly Tucker

June - *The Rosie Effect* by Graeme Simsion

July - Faith Bass Darlings' Last Garage Sale by Lynda Rutledge

August - *The Lost Girls* by Heather Young.

September - *Welcome to the Great Mysterious* by Lorna Landvik

October - *The Origin* by Dan Brown

November / December - *Perfume River* by Robert Olin Butler

Timber Lodge in January –
Thursday, January 11th,
2018

Please update your contact information! If you have moved or changed phone numbers in the last year, please contact Julia in the church office at 612-866-8449 or by email at office@woodlakechurch.org to get your information updated. We will be putting together our new Guidebook member directory in January.

YOUR PRESIDENT NEEDS YOU! Since 2014 I have been the plant fundraiser coordinator for the Christmas and Easter services. The position requires about 10 hours for each service, spread out for several months before each. A detailed position description is available, and a three year commitment is asked for. Being able to create a Word document and familiarity with email are required. To use a maritime metaphor, I am clearing my own decks to prepare for action as your congregational president, I hope that someone (other than a current board member) will assist me with this. Contact me at sjaadahlquist@comcast.net or at (612) 919-9232 for further information.

WINTER SERIES

Bloomington-Richfield Grief Support Coalition
Thursday, January 4, 2018 – February 22, 2018
4:30-6:00 p.m. at Christ the King Lutheran
Church, 8600 Fremont Ave. So., Bloomington,
952-881-8600, Ctkb.org

January 5, <i>Happy New Year</i>	Donna Mathiowetz
January 11, <i>Transforming Grief</i>	Bob Bartlett
January 18, <i>What's Left</i>	Bob Bartlett
January 25, <i>Habits of Resilience for Grievors</i>	Beryl Schewe
February 1, <i>This Puzzle Called Grief</i>	Donna Mathiowetz
February 8, <i>Grief and Intimacy</i>	Bob Bartlett
February 15, <i>Grief and Family Systems</i>	Catherine Duncan
February 22, <i>Strategies for Getting Unstuck</i>	Beryl Schewe

Thank you... To everyone who has sent cards, called, and included us in your prayers. It has been a huge help! We are settled into our new home (church office has the address). – Terrie and Orin Solberg

Thank you one and all, for helping and participating in Starry Night, Noisy Night for our Christmas Pageant, a big thank you to all who made the Youth Bake Sale a success and a heartfelt thank you to the congregation for purchasing goods at the Bake Sale and for applauding for the Pageant. There were many fine comments about both events, making the young participants feel good about themselves and proving that we have a fine group of parents and youth eager to profess and witness the love of Jesus. Let's keep this up!! - Annie Romstad, Children and Youth Commissioner