



Messenger

Woodlake

Lutheran Church

7525 Oliver Avenue South
Richfield, MN 55423
(612) 866-8449

www.woodlakechurch.org

Pastor Fred Hanson
Pastor Charlie Plaster

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

Worship Times

Sunday Morning

9:00am Worship in the sanctuary
11:00am Worship in the sanctuary

Saturday Evening

5:00pm in the chapel

Wednesday Morning Matins

8:00am in the chapel

Wednesday Evening Lenten

6:30 pm in the sanctuary

Church Office Hours

Monday9am – 1pm
Tuesday9am – 4pm
Wednesday9am – 4pm
Thursday9am – 4pm
Friday9am – 4pm
Saturday9am – 12pm
Sunday9am – 11am

Weekdays: Church Office is
closed for lunch from
12:00 – 12:30.

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

Lenten Worship Continues

Wednesdays from 6:30 – 7pm at Woodlake's Sanctuary

We are so thrilled to welcome Pastor Tom Zarth from Oak Grove and Pastor Ben Sandin from House of Prayer to preach for Wednesdays in Lent! Pastor Fred will head out to our fellow churches, while we get to hear Pastor Tom and Pastor Ben preach here at Woodlake. List of themes and who's preaching each week is below.

Feb 24: Hear the Word and Share in the Supper (Pastor Ben)

Mar 2: Proclaim the Good News in Word and Deed (Pastor Fred)

Mar 9: Serve All People, Following the Example of Jesus (Pastor Tom)

Mar 16: Strive for Justice and Peace (Pastor Ben)

Holy Week Schedule

*We're excited to host Families Moving Forward during Holy Week!
More info on Page 7.*

Sun, March 20

Palm Sunday

ONE SERVICE at 10am

Cub Scouts Pancake Breakfast! *Details to be announced soon*

Weds, March 23

NO SUPPER OR WORSHIP

Thurs, March 24

Maundy Thurs

7pm at Oak Grove Lutheran Church

Collaborative service with Oak Grove and House of Prayer

Fri, March 25

Good Friday

3pm and 7pm in Woodlake's Sanctuary

Sat, March 26

NO WORSHIP TODAY

Sun, March 27 Easter Sunday

Worship at 9am and 11am

Easter Egg Hunt at 10am

The House of Prayer, Oak Grove and Woodlake Lutheran churches' Collaboration Joint Task Force met at Woodlake on Tuesday, February 16, 7:00-8:30. The main discussion points were to clarify where we have been, where we are now, and where we think we want to go, together, as missional people of Richfield. All of our small breakout groups agreed that collaborating with each other's congregations in worship, education, and outreach was a worthy goal and definitely something we wanted to do together. In order to go forward we want to form a Joint Discernment Team which will serve as a guiding, prophetic voice and help us live into the question, "How can we embody Jesus in and with our community?" To do that, we can think and act through a process called "Three Great Listening":

> Listening to God in new ways -- remembering that God is always listening to us

> Listening to each other in new ways -- listening with our hearts as well as with our ears

> Listening to our community in new ways – how are our neighbors witnessing to us?

Please be in prayer for our task force team: for strength to be good listeners, always remembering that we are our neighbors and one in the Spirit. *"The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood."* John 1:14 (The Message translation)

A Sad Farewell to Greg Anderson

This letter is to notify you of my resignation as pianist of Woodlake Lutheran Church, effective date March 1, 2016, with my last Sunday being February 28, 2016. I have made many friends here, and it is with mixed emotions I take this step at this time, however, an opportunity has presented itself that I cannot ignore. In the future, if my schedule permits, I would be happy to help out if needed. Do not hesitate to stay in touch with me. – Greg Anderson

Thank you, Greg! It was with great sadness that I accepted Greg's letter of resignation. I am in awe of his talent and deep spirituality. I think of him as a friend and fellow companion and follower of Jesus. Greg has blessed the people of Woodlake for over 24 years! Wow, what an amazing ministry in which he helped people experience the presence of God through his gift of music. However, as Greg shared with me, his new position is his dream job, and we need to honor that and rejoice for Greg in the midst of our sadness. The good news is that Greg is still available to help with special services and summer worship. Sometime after Easter we begin a new search for an accompanist to assist us, so pray the God will bless us with someone special like Greg. *In Peace, Pastor Fred*

Join us for Greg's last services: Sun, Feb 28, 9 and 11am, with a reception at 10am.

Worship and Music Notes

Worship at 11am has moved into the Sanctuary. Tisa and Greg have been doing wonderful things during this service - so check it out! We will miss Greg's gift of music at Woodlake and hope to have him back for special events/services.

We have begun a worship design team that will meet quarterly in order to do some visioning regarding the Sunday Morning worship services. Our next meeting will be after Easter to plan through the summer. I am also gathering a team of people who will help with worship support. This team will work on some of the details that support worship such as communion, worship assistants for 9am services, and environmental arts. Please contact Deb Heinecke at dlheinecke@gmail.com or [612-801-2789](tel:612-801-2789) if you have questions or are interested.

We are always looking for people to sign up to assist with worship. We have opportunities for Worship Assistants, Cantors, and Communion Assistants. There is a new way to sign up to assist with the 9am worship. You can now find the link on the Woodlake Church Website under volunteer opportunities, or you can go to <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0e48ada6238-woodlake> to sign up electronically. People can still sign up in the book in the church office as well if unable to do it electronically.

Welcome back Jeong from vacation! A big thank you to Monique Rupp and Alice Olson for their leadership with the Adult Choir and Praise Ringers in Jeong's absence.

- Deb Heinecke, Worship and Music Commissioner

Pastor's Corner

Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise the words of prophets,^[a] ²¹ but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²² abstain from every form of evil. ²³ May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound^[b] and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

The Simplicity of Gratitude

Rejoice always...give thanks, be grateful in all circumstance." Really, Paul? In all circumstances? But then, I guess he was speaking from firsthand experience. Jesus said that Paul would suffer for the sake of the gospel, and boy did he ever. Listen to his own account in 2 Corinthians: "Five times I have received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I received a stoning. Three times I was shipwrecked; for a night and a day I was adrift at sea; ²⁶ on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from bandits, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers and sisters;^[a] ²⁷ in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, hungry and thirsty, often without food, cold and naked. ²⁸ And, besides other things, I am under daily pressure because of my anxiety for all the churches. ²⁹ Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I am not indignant?"

What Paul understood and what we need to remember is that gratitude is the ability to have hope in what seems like a hopeless situation. Gratitude helps us to see that God can take something negative and transform it into something good. Take an oyster for example. It's sitting on the ocean floor minding its own business when all of a sudden an intruder slips into its shell and irritates it. But then something miraculous happens over time...layer by layer, the oyster transforms the irritant into a pearl.

Gratitude provides us with the courage and strength to endure and persevere. This enables us to co-create a new future that is filled with hope.

Gratitude enables us to do this because it lifts our eyes from the problems confronting us and puts them on Jesus. In that moment we realize that we are not alone, and we come to understand that even our suffering can be an opportunity to glorify God.

In 1946 Victor Frankl wrote his seminal book entitled, *Man's Search for Meaning*. It was based on his experience as a concentration camp survivor from Auschwitz. Frankl has noticed that some people became jaded or gave up all hope, but where were others that were able to transcend the evil of the Nazis and their own suffering, and were seen caring and providing hope to others. Frankl learned from his own experience that power and freedom comes from a spirituality of gratitude. Frankl realized that while he could not control what the Nazis might do to him, they could not control how he responded. In a sense, gratitude was a courageous act of resistance to the suffering he was experiencing, and in the midst of it he realized that the God of the cross, Jesus, was with him. He discovered a whole new deeper understanding of grace: that God's grace was with him in the midst of it and that God's love, reflected in gratitude, had the power to set him free.

As we journey through Lent and Easter, let us make time each day to be mindful of those things for which we are grateful.

Grace, Peace, Love and Joy to you!

Pastor Fred

Easter Flower Order Forms Now Available in Office

Order a beautiful flowering plant to decorate Woodlake for Easter! Your purchase can be dedicated to honor or remember a special person or event, if you wish. Place forms and payments in the offering plate, or bring them to the office. Plants should be taken home after the last service on Easter. **In order to ensure you receive your order, please have it to the church office by noon on Sunday, March 13th.**



Children, Youth and Family Newsletter
!2016 MARCH! Living into Lent!
BE, BELONG, BECOME, HAVE FUN!



Children's Ministry - All
Come check out our new format! (Info on page 5)
Sunday school - 3 years-6th grade
Sundays 10:00-10:55, Rooms C&D
March 6 and 13th

Confirmation Class for youth in Grades 7-9
Sundays 10:00-10:55, Room F
March 6 and 13th
Lenten Mentors Continue!!!
Celebration for the end of mentoring MARCH 16th,
7-8PM in the Fireside Room.

Youth Group for youth Grades 9-12
Wednesdays 6:30 to 8:00PM, Room F
March 2,9,16, 23rd (not the 30th-that's spring break)
Looking forward to seeing everyone there!!



Easter Egg Hunt!!
Sunday morning
March 27th
10:00AM
Easter Sunday worship
services will be at
9:00 and 11:00AM
Hunting for eggs that
are hidden in the church
yard is always fun for kids of all
ages! Bring your friends and
family for a great adventure.

Children, Youth, and Family News:

A Note from Kris Bjorke

My time at Woodlake is winding down. What this means in the short term-- I will move to only being at Woodlake on Wednesdays in an official capacity. I will continue to provide support to volunteers by regularly meeting with Sunday school and confirmation leaders on a monthly basis.

Most importantly, I'm excited about the direction we as the children's ministry transition team and key staff are going with Sunday School. In a nutshell: Starting February 7th, we began to take Sunday School in a little different direction. It seems like when there has been a goal for Sunday school (i.e. Christmas Pageant), there is a lot of energy leading up to the time the kids lead the pageant in worship. So we would like to try this idea with a production later this spring. What's great about this is that kids will learn music with a Bible backdrop. Our Sundays mornings now look something like this:

10-10:55am in Rooms C&D

10 min opening-Sunday school teachers-take offering

30 min on task music- Director of the production/ development of story

15 min snack or craft that solidifies the message— some kind of take home-

email/link— Led by the Sunday school teachers

Our goal would be to do two productions a year. Tisa will serve as the director of the production. Additionally, we will be hiring a 5 hour a week assistant to work alongside the director and together they will provide communication, connect with volunteers, and get all the supplemental needs to put the production into place.

Expected FAQ (frequently asked questions)

Why this change now, mid year?

Historically, and this goes for all churches not just Woodlake, Sunday school attendance drops off after Christmas and continues to decrease in numbers throughout the spring. We would like to re-energize kids and their families by getting a goal in mind to put together a production they could lead in worship and perhaps out in the community

as well.

What does this mean for Wednesday night choir?

Wednesday night choir will remain the same utilizing some of the same music from Sunday. The choir will continue to sing (giving you a sneak peek) on the 2nd Sunday of every month.

What are your hopes for the participants?

Our hope is that by learning music related to Bible stories, participants will experience God in new and refreshing ways that will stick with them forever (think of the songs that you may know from childhood — “The B-I-B-L-E” or “Jesus Loves Me”).

Is there something for parents?

Why yes there is....we hope first of all that you get to meet and know each other. We also hope you would choose to use your gifts and talents in some way to support the production effort. Like— assisting with props, designing sets, providing a meal when there is practice. Additionally during the 10-11 time frame on Sunday mornings there is a Bible Study opportunity as well.

What if my kid doesn't like to sing?

That's okay. Everyone will learn the music, but there will be plenty of areas to lead in other places such as building props, acting, audio/visual stuff and providing behind the scenes support. All gifts are important.

Do I have to be a member for my child to participate?

No, this opportunity is for any child who wishes to grow and learn as well as for families who want to

My child hasn't had first communion instruction yet, what should I do?

Please let me know if you would like your child to receive the this instruction and we will set it up at a time that works for the group.

Who is leading the youth in 7-12th grade?

This position, called the Director of Family Mission and Youth, is an open position that the Youth Transition Team is beginning to interview candidates.

Please let me know if you have other questions.

In Christ, Kris

Keeping in Touch

The Congregational Care Corner

“THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD”

The greatest story ever told. This is the label that has been attached to the story of the life of Jesus. In fact they even made a movie by that name. By any measure it is a great story, especially for me when you come to the last week of the life of Jesus. The week that we in the Christian Church call Holy Week. What more could you ask for in a story?

You have all sorts of interesting characters. You have a follower, Peter, who wants to be strong but wilts under pressure. You have a political leader, Pilate, who is willing to do whatever is necessary to keep the peace and his job. You have the family of Jesus dealing with the sorrow of losing a loved one. You have a fickle crowd who one day (Palm Sunday) want to make Jesus king and five days later (Good Friday) wants to crucify him. What a cast.

You also have the plots and sub-plots. Religious leaders doing everything they can to maintain their privileges. Politicians wheeling and dealing. Disciples who seemingly have bet all they have on the wrong man and now what do they do? One follower (Judas) willing to sell his soul for a little amount of money.

This story has it all.

It is a great story in so many ways. But most of all, it is great because of what this story means for us in terms of our life of faith. For it is through the characters and the plots that we see God working to save us, to redeem us, to make us His own forever. Great? You bet. Does it get any better? Don't miss it this year, March 20-27.

Christ has Risen, Pastor Charlie

HOMEBOUND MINISTRY

-If you have a homebound ministry communion kit at home, please return it to the church. We are still missing a few.

-Homebound ministers, please fill out a card when you have made a call and turn it in to the church office. This will help with our record keeping.

-Homebound ministers, if you are no longer visiting the people we have you down to visit, please let the church office know this also.

-We will have a check-in meeting with all of you who are doing homebound ministry on Sunday, April 17, at 10am, in the Fireside Room.

In Our Community

Benefit Concert for China

Service Ventures

Saturday, March 5, 3:00-5:00 pm at Norwegian Memorial Lutheran Church, 924 E. 21st St. in Mpls:

Enjoy top young classical pianists of the Twin Cities in recital! Hear youth share about their experience as volunteers last summer, working with children in China, and join an informational session after the concert if you want to know more!

Admission is \$12 adults/\$8 students & seniors, and all proceeds and donations go to the work of China Service Ventures.

First Fridays at St. Richard's Church

On the First Friday of each month at 7:30pm, St. Richard's Church (7540 Penn Ave S) hosts an ecumenical Taizé Prayer service for Christians of all traditions. This is a wonderful opportunity to enter into this Lent through this moving form of prayer centering around sung psalms, scripture, and periods of holy and healing silence. We look forward to welcoming you on **March 4**.

Mission and Outreach

Families Moving Forward, an emergency shelter program operated by Beacon Interfaith Housing (www.beaconinterfaith.org) will be at Woodlake Lutheran from the evening of March 20th through the morning of March 27th. Families who are experiencing homelessness work with staff at a day center in North Minneapolis on transitioning to stable housing. In the evening they are bused to participating congregations where they are fed, sheltered, and provided hospitality for the night before being bused back to the day center in the morning. Our hosting week was not chosen because it was holy week, but perhaps this coincidence will allow us to reflect upon how we as a congregation can embody the Good Shepherd and provide some grace and dignity to families in a tough situation. Look for the sign up table in the Narthex, or contact lead coordinator Scott Dahlquist at (612) 798-5708 or at sjaadahlquist@comcast.net to see how you can help out.

Training from Beacon Interfaith on March 10 or April 2

Topics will include:

- ⦿ What does it take to be a great hosting volunteer?
- ⦿ What is the right job for me?
- ⦿ How do we support parents as they parent their children?
- ⦿ How do we plan meals families will love?

Trainings will be offered at two locations, and hosting volunteers are welcome to attend either training. Registration is required and space is limited. Complete this online registration form (<https://beaconinterfaith.wufoo.com/forms/families-moving-forward-hosting-volunteer-training/>) or call Kristin at 651.789.6260 x205 to sign up for either training.

Hennepin Training Details:

Thursday, March 10, 2016

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Valley Community Presbyterian Church
3100 Lilac Drive North
Golden Valley, MN 55422

Southwest Training Details:

Saturday, April 2, 2016

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

St. John's Lutheran Church and School
300 E Fourth St
Chaska, MN 55318

Serve a Meal at HCC

Saturday, March 19

The Hospitality Center for Chinese (HCC) has a mission to share Christ's love through hospitality to Chinese students and scholars at the University of Minnesota, as well as their families. The students and scholars carry the experience of Christian hospitality back home, where their education makes them influential.

Woodlake's Global Missions has supported the HCC for over 20 years. **On March 19th** we will join volunteers from Oak Grove Lutheran to host a Friendship Meal. Donations of food and help to set up, serve, and clean up are needed. Call Mary E. at 952-832-5306 to say that you will help and join in this opportunity to meet the Chinese being served by the Center.

This event would be a good activity for families, a small group, or youth who need to do community service. After the meal, while the adults listen to a speaker, there is an activity for children, which Woodlake children are welcome to join, and youth could help.

Small Group and Circle News

Circles

March "Gather" magazines with monthly Bible studies are available to each Circle for pickup in the office.

Dorcas Circle: March 1 (1st Tuesday), 12:00 pm, Fireside Room

Esther Circle: Scheduled for March 1 (1st Tuesday)

Faith Circle: March 1 (1st Tuesday), 7:00 pm in member homes

Sunday Morning Circle: March 6 (1st Sunday), 10:00am in the Heritage Room

Lydia Circle: March 8 (2nd Tuesday), 12:30 pm, Fireside Room

Rebecca / Sarah Circle: March 9 (2nd Wednesday), 1:30 pm, Fireside Room

Faith and Fellowship Program: The Plymouth Rockers!

Thursday, March 17, 12pm in the Fellowship Hall

Lunch catered by Dave Larsen at 12pm, and the program starts at 1pm. The Plymouth Rockers are a performing senior chorus from the Twin Cities that perform spiritual jazz, golden oldies, show tunes, and more! <http://www.plymouthrockers.org/>

Sign up sheet will be in the office soon. Cost is \$13.00 for lunch and show. Checks made out to Woodlake, please!

Faith and Fellowship Speakers for March – Wednesdays, 9am, Fireside Room

March 2: "Rain Gardens – Metro Blooms," Laura Scholl

March 9: "Air Force Middle East," Marty Schulting

March 16: "Parkinsons," Rose Wiehmann

March 23: Bible Study with Pastor Charlie

March 30: "FBI," Unnamed Agent

Faith and Fiction Book Club

Meets Thursday, March 31, 7pm in the Heritage Room. Our book for March is *Wonder* by R. J. Palacio.

Women's Spring Retreat?

April 29 – May 1

"Blessed Is She Who Has Believed"

Mt. Carmel in Alexandria, MN

We are currently seeing if anyone from the congregation would be interested in this retreat. Ladies will have opportunities to reflect on their own lives, perhaps recognize times when they felt God's calling them to His plans and purposes, and discover how God is calling them today to obedience that leads to God's blessings.

Interested? Questions? Please call Carol O. at 612-281-7137

Men's Spring Softball

The Woodgrove Saints, a softball team made up of members from Woodlake Lutheran, Oak Grove Lutheran, St. Richards Catholic Church, and their friends, plans on playing again this coming spring. After two winless seasons with many lopsided losses in the Bloomington church league, the team will be trying to get a berth in either a Bloomington or Richfield D league on Thursday nights. Play starts on April 28th and lasts for 10 games. Men (18+) on any ability who can play in at least half of the games are welcome to join the roster. Contact team manager Scott Dahlquist for more information at [\(612\) 798-5708](tel:6127985708) or at sjaadahlquist@comcast.net

Timber Lodge in March and Beyond!

You can go ahead and mark your calendars up through July! On our assigned days, head out to Timber Lodge Steakhouse, have a good meal, let your server know you're with Woodlake (this is necessary!), and they will donate 15% of the ticket price back to us. Tell all your friends and family – you do not need to be a Woodlake member to count!

Mon, March 21

Tues, April 19

Thurs, May 12

Mon, June 6

Tues, July 5