



## Pastor's Page

### Woodlake Lutheran Church

7525 Oliver Avenue South  
Richfield, MN 55423  
(612) 866-8449  
[www.woodlakechurch.org](http://www.woodlakechurch.org)

Pastor Micah Pearson  
Pastor Joanne Sorenson  
Intern Pastor Deanna Bassett

*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](mailto:office@woodlakechurch.org) no later than January 15.

*"God's love is upon you, our church, and our world now and as we step into an unknown future." Psalm 33:22 (translated)*

2018 was an exciting year for Woodlake. In my 11 months at Woodlake, we created a vision for the future called **Woodlake 2020**, focusing on children, youth, and family outreach. While I'd like to take credit for this idea, I really can't as it was a genuine consensus from the church. CYF outreach seemed like a faithful way to move forward, so I got to work enacting this vision. 2018 was an incredible year and I'm proud to say we accomplished the following:

- ✓ Created a strategic vision for Woodlake.
- ✓ Analyzed commitment cards and contacted everyone who turned one in.
- ✓ Incorporated Woodlake 2020 into all communications Woodlake sends out.
- ✓ Collected data from Leadership Board commissioners each month about their implementation of Woodlake 2020.
- ✓ Created a Woodlake 2020 timeline
- ✓ Analyzed Woodlake's budget and made a proposal to Leadership Board for the creation of a CYF budget.
- ✓ Spoke with the Endowment committee about designating support of Woodlake 2020 for the next 2-4 years.
- ✓ Planned using MICC rental to be dedicated to CYF, specifically to call a new pastor.
- ✓ Started the pastoral call process to call a pastor with specific CYF outreach focus.
- ✓ Updated and submitted Woodlake's ministry site profile.
- ✓ Created a short-term plan for VBS, confirmation, Sunday school, youth group, and family ministries.
- ✓ Found space for:
  - Nursery
  - Suitable access to playground
  - Sunday School
  - Confirmation Classrooms
  - Youth Group

A common question that came up during our Woodlake 2020 listening campaign was **"Why are we calling a pastor for Woodlake 2020?"**

During the past 11 months, I analyzed that most of my time at Woodlake has been spent on maintaining what we have, and we have a lot of good

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things happening. But there is a difference between maintaining and growing.

Right now, our worship, mission, and programs are aimed to maintain what we have. This is good ministry, but not growth ministry. If we want to grow, we must change the way we do things. This will not be easy considering Woodlake hasn't grown in 29 years. The last time Woodlake has seen growth was in 1990. Of course, moving to a growth church model means changing our style and structure from maintenance to growth. Without additional support, Woodlake will maintain what we have for approximately 20 years, then we will die. The statistics and financial outlook are bleak.

Thankfully, we have an opportunity to redirect this trajectory, but it's going to take a commitment from each member of Woodlake to do so. So far, we have 99 people who have signed covenant cards stating they are committed to Woodlake 2020 and its goals of children, youth, and family outreach.

I'm hopeful 2019 will bring renewed commitment, hope, and even growth to Woodlake. We plan to:

- † Form a team to contact those who have not filled out a commitment card.
- † Add a youth representative to the Leadership Board.
- † Create a plan to deal with sound/tech related issues at Woodlake.
- † Locate cost saving measures in our current budget.
- † Consider nametags and if they should be used on a permanent basis.
- † Create a CYF outreach team.
- † Improve signage
- † Form a team to consider updating the welcome center to meet Woodlake 2020 goals.
- † Work with the worship committee to address how worship and building space could accommodate CYF outreach.
- † Make changes to the Narthex and Sanctuary space that meet Woodlake 2020 goals.
- † Create a Mission statement tag line to be used for advertising purposes.
- † Plan with a new outreach pastor for implementation of Woodlake 2020 in fall of 2019.
- † Create a system to record and track sermons online.
- † Produce communication videos for Woodlake 2020.
- † Incorporate CYF outreach in all worship services and music ministries at Woodlake.
- † Look at new ministries to meet our Woodlake 2020 goals.
- † Study current ministries to see what might need to change or end to meet our Woodlake 2020 goals.
- † Address building use policies and analyze how they create or limit congregational life. i.e.
  - ❖ Food/drink in certain spaces
  - ❖ Access of rooms
  - ❖ Could certain spaces be used more effectively?
- † Work with a CYF outreach pastor to create long-term plan for Woodlake 2020 and CYF outreach.
- † Gather statistics on CYF ministries to adequately monitor the progress of Woodlake 2020 and its strategic vision statement.

I am incredibly hopeful for 2019. I hope you are too.

*In Christ, Pastor Micah*



**Woodlake Town Hall  
Meetings: 1st Saturday/Sunday  
of Each Month (beginning Jan  
5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>)  
Saturday, 6:00pm in the  
Chapel; Sunday, 11:30am in  
the Fireside Room**

Meet with your pastor and Leadership Board to discuss what's on your mind. This is another opportunity to hear from you about things you might be wondering.

Bring any questions or concerns that you might have such as: What is Woodlake 2020? What's the future of Woodlake going to look like? Who's using Woodlake's building during the weekdays? How are Woodlake's finances? What's going on with collaboration? We look forward to hearing from you.

*In Christ, Pastor Micah & Woodlake  
Leadership Board Commissioners*

**Staffing Update:** Sharon Boodoo joins Woodlake as its new part-time Business Administrator. With over 15 years of nonprofit management and leadership experience, she will be overseeing the financial stewardship, human resources and property management aspects at Woodlake. She holds degrees in International Management and Computer Science. She is also an alumnus of the University of St Thomas' Executive Leadership program. In her spare time, she enjoys broadening her culinary skills with family and friends, attending local festivals and watching crime mysteries.

# Around the Table

*Notes from Your Leadership Board*

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## Finding Light in the Darkness of Winter

Many folks who live in the Northern regions have a difficult time coping with the long, dark, cold days which accompany the Winter Season. Those who have the condition called SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder), a type of depression that's related to changes in seasons, are especially sensitive to the lack of sunlight this time of year.

The effect that light has on our well-being is profound. So what can we do to help us cope with Winter?

In the Scandinavian countries, where the darkness of winter is more severe than it is here, the people have developed a few strategies to help them cope with the long, dark days.

Their first strategy is to CHANGE THE MINDSET. By viewing Winter as a season to be enjoyed rather than being dreaded. Think of the positive aspects of Winter such as, the natural beauty of a snowy landscape, the lovely Christmas lights and decorations which are still on display, getting together with friends, going to a choral concert or ballet, taking the kids or grandkids skating or sledding and watching their rosy cheeks light up with excitement. Put up a bird feeder and watch our fine feathered friends flock to it for your own window on nature. Light a candle, say a prayer. Listen to your favorite music and dance in the privacy of your own kitchen.

Instead of buying into small talk complaining about the weather try to engage in more positive conversations. Creating a positive vibe with those you come in contact with can make all the difference in the world and becomes habit forming. Think happy, and you will be happy.

Still having a hard time imagining something positive about Winter? Slip into that warm cozy sweater of yours, light a few candles, curl up with a good book (the Bible perhaps?) and a cup of hot cocoa or tea and get lost in the story.

The story of Jesus and the light he brings to the world are guaranteed to bring you joy and improve your mood. His light has a profound effect on us. It is all around us if we simply open our hearts and minds to it each and every day.

"In him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." John 1:4-5

*A Blessed New Year to All,  
Mary Olson, Vice-President*

# Worship and Music Notes

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It's the beginning of a new year calendar-wise, and I hope you all had a very happy, joyful, and peaceful Advent and Christmas season. Thanks to all who helped with the services.

As the interim music director, I was very busy in December getting all music and people organized for the services. Now I will be planning the weeks ahead until a new music director is hired. For this interim period, the Spirit Singers have joined the choir. Alice Olson will be the handbell choir director. Jeong gave me a list of people who played instruments like the harp, oboe, trumpet, etc., and I'm looking forward to working with you for special music to enhance the services.

I want to tell you about the first time I walked into the Woodlake Church narthex for my interview/audition as organist. My first feelings were of warmth and peace. I felt like I had found my new church home! And I have!

You have been so gracious, helpful, and supportive since I have been at Woodlake, and I am looking forward to working with you, playing with you, and playing for you, all in celebration of our Savior. It is my greatest joy to hear you singing the hymns because, of course, Lutherans sing very well!

After the services on Sunday, I love to sit down and talk with people and drink coffee. I am Norwegian Lutheran, so I really need my coffee in the morning!!

Feel free to make suggestions for what you would like for the music at Woodlake.

*Blessings, Eileen Berge*

Thank you, thank you, one and all: Kirsten Hargreaves, Eileen Berge, Pr Micah, Carol Olson, Julia, Wayne & Anne Schmieg, Cheryl Buranen, Collette Venson and Molly Olson, choir members, ushers, parents, pageant and worship participants, volunteers, AND the congregation: "*The Best Christmas Present Ever!*" was a delightful success because all of you helped tell The Story - the greatest gift we will ever receive. You are all a blessing to Woodlake.

*Annie Romstad, CYF Commissioner*

# Collaboration and Community Events

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## Collaboration Update: Hear! Hear!

Over the past two months our collaboration has been engaged in an intentional process of listening. Our goal was to learn more fully the similarities and differences within House of Prayer, Woodlake, and Oak Grove. We formed six teams with a person from each congregation to learn more about: staffing, finance, leadership, worship, ministry, and mission. Collectively the teams conducted 55 interviews of congregation leaders, staff, and members from our churches. Needless to say, they learned a lot! The team members all expressed how much they enjoyed the experience as they not only learned more about our congregations, but formed new friendships with one another. We are thankful for all who took the time to be interviewed and the openness to share and learn from one another.

The Collaboration Task Force met in late November to share the key learnings from each interview team. At this point no concrete plans have been made for next steps (this will happen when the task force meets in January), but we are able to share several important insights. The biggest takeaway was that the process of listening to one another truly helped us understand one another in significant ways. We discovered that we have more similarities than we expected both in terms of opportunities and challenges in ministry and mission. We also have a shared desire to reach out to the community and to minister to youth and families. As we move ahead, we will seek to identify strategic initiatives that we can work on collectively. As these initiatives become clear, we will share our plans and provide opportunities for congregation members to get involved.

The Collaboration Task Force would like to thank those who served on an interview team. They have many hours of service to this effort and are much appreciated.

Worship Team: Kris Brehmer, Cara Wright, Carol Olson

Finance Team: Carol Tveite, Jim Bauer, Scott Dahlquist

Staff Team: Bonnie Oien, Paul Danielson, Jean Kass

Leadership Team: Mike Tveite, Les Bauer, Bev Erickson

Ministry Team: Kelly Sandin, Julie Tveite, Ann Miller

Mission Team: Leanne Hyde, Jan Philibert, Laurel Johnson

*God's Peace,*

*The Collaboration Task Force*

Oak Grove: Pastor Tom Zarth, Bonnie Oien, Mike Tveite, Julie Tveite

Woodlake: Pastor Micah Pearson, Laurel Johnson, Scott Dahlquist

House of Prayer: Pastor Ben Sandin, Cara Wright

## Bible Study: Book of Job

Universally recognized as a literary masterpiece, the Book of Job skillfully intermingles poetry and prose to deliver a delightful rendition of creation. The sovereign grace of God is revealed in its glory. Don't think this is only a sad account of life. Let's dive in together and discover what we can in what some say is the oldest book of the Bible.

Six Wednesdays Starting January 16, 2019

6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall of House of Prayer

Led by pastoral intern, Deanna Bassett  
Just bring your Bible. No fees! No new books to buy!

## YOU ARE INVITED!

**Bread of Life Deaf Lutheran Church 3rd Annual Fundraiser Saturday, February 16, 1pm—4pm 2901 38th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55406**

Get cranked to join in the Third Annual BOLD Festival: "1956 Bash." With fab food, the gangbusters games, and silent auction items that will scream out the door, we will have a blast! Come, expand your horizons, eat good food, laugh, and get to know our congregation. No worries if you don't know Sign Language, we are patient and kind, excellent communicators, and we will have interpreters available!

**Timber Lodge in 2019** – mark your calendars! All you have to do for this easy fundraiser is head out to Timber Lodge Restaurant on our specified day of the month, have a great dinner, tell your server that you're a friend of Woodlake, and they'll donate 15% of the ticket price back to us. Timber Lodge is located at 7989 Southtown Drive and opens at 4pm.

Thurs, Jan 10

Tues, Feb 12

Thurs, Mar 14

Tues, April 9

Thurs, May 9

Tues, Jun 11

Thurs, Jul 11

Tues, Aug 13

Thurs, Sep 12

Tues, Oct 8

Thurs, Nov 14

Tues, Dec 10

# The Numbers

## Offering Summary 11/20/18 -- 12/19/18

Saturday Chapel Services	\$ 5,598.00
Sunday Sanctuary Services	29,389.00
Simply Giving Receipts	7,477.68
IRA's	822.71
Woodlake2020	3,521.00
Properties Projects Fund	325.00

TOTAL	\$47,133.39
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## Worship Attendance

Date	Time	Attendance	Weekend Total (where applicable)	Notes
Weds, Nov 21	7:00 PM	210		Collaborative Thanksgiving Eve Service (with HOP, OG, Tapestry), located at Woodlake
Sat, Nov 24	5:00 PM	18	168	
Sun, Nov 25	10:00 AM	150		
Weds, Nov 28	8:00 AM	18		
Sat, Dec 1	5:00 PM	9	124	Snow (active winter weather advisory)
Sun, Dec 2	10:00 AM	115		
Weds, Dec 5	8:00 AM	17		
Weds, Dec 5	6:30 PM	82		Advent
Sat, Dec 8	5:00 PM	23	248	
Sun, Dec 9	10:00 AM	225		Lessons and Carols; Farewell to HyeonJeong Lee
Weds, Dec 12	8:00 AM	20		
Weds, Dec 12	6:30 PM	77		Advent
Sat, Dec 15	5:00 PM	22	200	
Sun, Dec 16	10:00 AM	178		Children's Pageant

## Wednesday Night Supper

Date	Attendance	Notes
11/21/2018	x	No supper; Thanksgiving Eve worship
11/28/2018	35	
12/5/2018	40	Advent Service followed
12/12/2018	45	Advent Service followed

# Mission and Outreach

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**Families Moving Forward:** Sheltering homeless families and assisting them to move into stable housing through Families Moving Forward (FMF), a program of Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, has been a part of Woodlake Lutheran Church since 1999. In addition to FMF Beacon works to address the issue of affordable housing on a broader policy level. According to their website, "Beacon is a collaborative of congregations committed to making sure all people have a home. Together, we build homes. Together, we shelter families. Together, we impact policy. Together, we act on our faith to build stronger communities. We hope you'll join us in this amazing work."

Beacon will have a congregational convening on Tuesday, January 29th, 7 PM, at Bet Shalom Congregation, 13613 Orchard Rd., Minnetonka. Governor Elect Tim Walz has been invited to this event, the main purpose of which is to express the notion that communities of faith believe in home and expect action from our elected officials to end homelessness by creating affordable housing.

I have been involved with FMF for many years, and I will be attending the convening, if you would like to attend as well, please let me know so I can let Beacon know how many will be attending. For further information about Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative check out their website: [www.beaconinterfaith.org](http://www.beaconinterfaith.org) – *Scott Dahlquist, FMF Lead Coordinator*

**VEAP** extends its best wishes to everyone for the holiday season and also THANK YOU! for over 400 lbs of food from November 1 through December 15th plus the monetary donations you have given. This is helping many families in the area have a wonderful Christmas and New Year! If you picked something up but haven't delivered it yet, or planned to put money in one of our special envelopes, that's ok because it will be a blessing at any time of the year. Thank you again for your overwhelming generosity.

# Small Groups, Circles, and Events

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## Circles

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

**Esther Circle:** January 8 (Moved from usual 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday due to New Year's Day), 8:30am at the Yorke Room of 7500 York.

**Faith Circle:** January 8 (Moved from usual 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday due to New Year's Day), 7:00 pm, Diana O's home.

**Lydia Circle:** January 8 (2nd Tuesday), 12:30 pm, Fireside Room.

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

**Deborah Circle:** January 20 (3<sup>rd</sup> 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 9: Pastor Joanne Sorenson, Sandy Engen, and Cindy Hanson, "Service Sampler – Twin Cities"

Jan 16: Pastor Melissa Melnick, "Biking the Mississippi: A Journey in Grief and Hope"

Jan 23: Health Nurse to perform blood pressure checks and speak about "Winter Safety Tips"

Jan 30: Bible Study

## Senior Fellowship Event

**Thursday, January 17, Time: 12pm**

Lunch followed by program: Dave Thompson, one of our own, is a medical missionary and will talk with us about providing health services at the community level in Nigeria and Chad. More info will be in upcoming bulletins with the opportunity to sign up.

## Faith and Fiction Book Club

Next meeting is **Thursday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm** in the Heritage Room (fourth Thursday). Our book for January is *Evergreen Tidings from the Baumgartners* by Gretchen Anthony, and we will be joined by the author for our discussion! All are welcome to join at any time.

## Annual Valentines for the Homebound

We are going to make valentines for our homebound members on **Sunday, January 27, from 11:15 AM - 12:15 PM** in the Fireside Room. Woodlake Ink will provide the supplies and give assistance in making the valentines. A light lunch will be provided. All are invited, young and old, but particularly children, youth and families.