



# Messenger

## 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

#### Wednesday Evening Lenten

6:30pm in the Sanctuary

### 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 April's issue of *The Messenger* are due to [office@woodlakechurch.org](mailto:office@woodlakechurch.org) no later than March 15.

## *Ash Wednesday – March 6*

### **Worship Services:**

8:00am in the Chapel (special Matins service)  
6:30pm in the Sanctuary

### *Lenten Services:*

## *“Change My Heart, O God”*

Wednesdays, 6:30pm in the Sanctuary

We have an international theme planned and will have people from different cultures share music and the message. The list below is tentative and still subject to change. See “Worship and Music Notes” on Page 4 for more info!

March 13: Hispanic (Richfield Adventistas, the Seventh-Day Adventist congregation that meets at Woodlake)

March 20: Indian

March 27: German or African

April 3: Chinese

April 10: Native American

## *Soup Suppers during Lent*

### *5:30 – 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall*

No signup necessary. Freewill offering only.

### **Menu:**

March 6: Chicken Wild Rice  
March 13: Cream of Potato & Ham  
March 20: Beef Barley  
March 27: Chicken Noodle  
April 3: Cheesy Broccoli  
April 10: Beef Chili

# Pastor's Page

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

We have embarked on a campaign called Woodlake 2020 which is about children, youth, and family outreach. I am committed to doing everything and anything possible to help the next generation experience the love of Jesus Christ. As we reach out to new people, we will grow in faith, have fun, and share our God-given gifts with others as the Holy Spirit breathes new life into Woodlake.

To meet our goals and focus on CYF outreach, we desperately need more help. With this in mind, the Leadership Board has committed to calling another full-time pastor. I am incredibly grateful the Leadership Board has a plan in place and are diligently following it.

## **What Have We Done?**

We have received many gifted and qualified pastoral candidates and have been truly blessed from conversations with these talented people. The candidates had excitement, energy, and passion to serve Jesus Christ and help others become disciples. The candidates had inspiring ideas and plans for CYF ministry. What a gift to know that the church will be served by these amazing people! It was difficult to narrow our search down to two finalists, as the Leadership Board truly could see each pastor we interviewed bringing something unique and valuable to Woodlake.

## **Where Are We Now?**

The Leadership Board has agreed upon two final candidates. Leadership Board members have been sent in teams to listen to our candidates preach and lead worship, we have checked references, held 2nd interviews, and had spirited discussions as to who would be the best fit at Woodlake.

## **What Comes Next?**

The Leadership Board will make a final decision and we will offer a call to one of our candidates. Once this happens, the candidate will have 30 days to accept our call. Usually, pastors take this time to pray, discern, and reflect if the Holy Spirit is calling them to a new place.

If the candidate accepts our call, the Leadership Board will schedule a special congregational meeting to vote to accept the proposed candidate. Out of respect for the privacy of the candidate and the church they are leaving, you won't know much about the candidate until this special congregational meeting.

Calling a pastor is exciting, spirit-led work. Losing a pastor is painful and difficult, and we pray for all those affected by our pastoral search. The process is long, but produces good, healthy, Holy Spirit led results. Each day, I am grateful for the opportunity to lead Woodlake into a new future.

*In Christ,  
Pastor Micah*

# Around the Table

*Notes from Your Leadership Board*

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Our February Leadership Board Meeting was on February 14, Valentine's Day. For devotions, I intended to find some scripture about love and God's love for us. Certainly something we should never forget. However, a devotion in "Christ in our Home" grabbed me and wouldn't leave my mind. That devotion was about change.

The scripture from Acts 9 was about Saul on the road to Damascus who was changed forever by meeting Jesus. Although Saul, Paul, knew he was changed by the grace of God, most who knew him, or knew of him were not easily convinced. As Saul's preaching became more powerful, and his proofs that Jesus was the Messiah became more convincing, the Jews couldn't answer him, and sought to kill him.

Sometimes change comes suddenly as it did for Saul, but other times it happens over time and others may not notice the change. Even we may not notice the change in ourselves until we realize we have moved from one place in our lives to another. We have a different understanding of life and relationships. Some will be uncomfortable with who we have become, causing us to make a choice between continuing to grow and pleasing others.

Woodlake is on a journey of change. We've seen what some consider a negative change as staff has left and some programs suffer. Is that the sudden change? Or is that the beginning of a slow change which will transform us into something new and responsive to our community. The one constant we can count on is that Jesus and the Holy Spirit is in the midst of the change will give it direction and purpose. When change seems painful, we must remember that God's grace is sufficient in our weakness.

*Laurel Johnson, Mission and Outreach  
Commissioner*



*This is where we share the latest Woodlake 2020 updates with you!*

### **Woodlake 2020 Commission Recaps for February 2019 Meeting**

#### **Mission and Outreach: Laurel Johnson**

- Sue Kelly and Laurel recently met with the confirmation youth to inform them about the Homebound ministry and invite them to go along on a home bound visit. One student has expressed interest. Laurel will accompany the volunteer student on a visit.
- Laurel met with a representative from Oak Grove and House of Prayer for the collaborative project of funding water wells through ELCA World Hunger. This will be a Lenten project. In the past, Oak Grove's Sunday School kids led the project during Lent. The collaborative group is working on displays and ways of getting the information to all members. One way they hope to get the kids and members involved is to have a noisy offering on Palm Sunday. The congregation will be encouraged to save coins and bring them on Palm Sunday. Then the kids will take tin cans or metal cooking pots and collect the coins.

#### **Properties: Paul Olson**

- We will diagram some options for Sanctuary modifications for both PrayGround and ADA wheelchair accommodations in pews to present for review by congregation
- Wayne Schmiege (Congregational Life) and Anne Romstad (CYF) will meet to discuss options for Welcome Center in Narthex. This should also have staff input and relate to suggestions from Church Consultant

#### **Music and Worship: Carol Olson/Deb Heinecke**

- Working on Children and Youth areas of involvement in the Lenten services.

#### **Congregational Care: Anne Schmiege**

- Valet parking continues to collect tips to go to the CYF fund
- Homebound Ministry did a presentation to the confirmation classes and was able to recruit one confirmation student to accompany a homebound minister on a visit. A recommendation was suggested to have ministers directly invite students and/or families to accompany them if appropriate.
- Woodlake Ink and Homebound Ministry together held their annual valentine making party. Over 60 valentines were made by 30-40 members of all ages which were mailed out to our homebound members for Valentines Day. The workers were given a light lunch.
- Norine Anderson has contacted families of graduates from the last 5 years and has been given 25 names and addresses to mail them care packages. She will have a table in the Narthex to collect \$ donations as well as gift cards from our congregation. She has sent Julia information about the care packages which will be seen by members soon. She is checking into daily devotionals for the packages.

#### **Children, Youth and Family: Anne Romstad**

- We are close to choosing a CYF candidate.
- Monique and Eileen are working with the children for songs on Intergenerational Sunday and Wednesday night Lenten Services. One family from the Sunday school is going on the Collaborative Family Mission Trip to Amnicom in July.
- Eileen and Monique are also working with the Confirmation students for participation in the Wednesday night Lenten Services. Two of the 9th graders are going on the Mission Trip to San Francisco, and one is going on the Collaborative Family Mission Trip to Amnicom in July.
- 10 High and post-High Youth and 3 (hopefully 4) adult chaperones are going on the Youth Works Mission Trip to the San Francisco Bay Area to serve from July 28 to August 2. Plans are in the works for fundraising which will be posted in the bulletins and Enews...all monies raised will be shared among the youth to help covers everyone's expenses equally.
- Possible fundraising: a Spring Bake/Craft Sale on April 7; flower sales; donation request letters; restaurant participation percentages, etc. Ideas are welcome.

- VBS dates are set for August 4 (afternoon) through noon, August 9. Luther Point Bible Camp will be running the sessions each day until Noon. Food/snack donations and afternoon field trip drivers will be welcomed.

### **Congregational Life: Wayne Schmieg**

A fun time was had by all at the recent family & friends snow tubing event which Woodlake hosted at Buck Hill on Sun Feb 10. 22 people went tubing plus a few watchers.

Other ideas are being explored for Spring and Summer outings:

- Loons Soccer game
- Bike ride from church to a park for a picnic

## Collaborative and Community Events

### **Racial Justice Conversations at Oak Grove**

Five people met January 31st at Oak Grove Lutheran Church for the first Racial Justice Conversation. We decided to read the book *Real American* by Julie Lythcott-Hains for our next conversation in March.

A second meeting will be meeting held February 26th at 6:30pm at Oak Grove in the church Fellowship Hall to watch the documentary Thirteenth. "Selma" director Ava DuVernay's Netflix documentary "13th" homogenizes a lot of discussion and history into a profound resource on the black experience in America with an emphasis on the post-Civil Rights era. To use the most relevant terms, it explains why, in fact, black lives matter." (Description on the Internet)

We welcome others to join our group as we grapple with what we are called to do to work towards racial justice in our communities. Questions can be directed to Jan Philibert, 612-401-7492.

**Men's Softball:** Enjoy softball and looking for a "joy of the game" experience rather than competitive success? Consider playing with the Woodgrove Saints, a composite team made up of members of Richfield churches and their friends. Games are on Thursday evenings at Dred Scott fields in SW Bloomington starting in April. Contact team manager Scott Dahlquist for further information at [sjaadahlquist@comcast.net](mailto:sjaadahlquist@comcast.net) or at (612) 919-9232. Men (18+) of any ability are welcome.

## Worship and Music Notes

It has continued to be a busy time in the planning of services and for the future Lenten services. For the Wednesday night services, the hymn "Change My Heart, O God," will be sung at each service. In addition, we will have an international element as people will speak on their religion or culture in relation to the Resurrection and perform music relative to the same. Sunday services during Lent will be focused on the theme of water as a sustenance of life, and we will sing some hymns about water, such as "For those tears I died," in which the refrain is "Jesus said come to the water, stand by my side. I know you are weary, you won't be denied." The theme of water also ties into the water wells needed in Africa. Services will be at 6:30 for the Wednesday night services beginning March 6th. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services will be at 7 pm.

As for our music groups at Woodlake, the handbell choir is looking for new members, with rehearsal at 5 pm on Wednesday nights. The adult ensemble is always looking for people that want to sing. Rehearsal is at 6:30 on Wednesday nights. If time commitment is an issue for you, consider joining one of our groups through Easter.

And mark your calendar for that wonderful Saturday night when you get to change the clocks again (when you lose an hour), so when you go to bed Saturday night on March 9, reset your clock for one hour later so that you're not late to church!

Also if any of you like satire, go to the Holy Herald website for some Lutheran satire on subjects like sopranos in the choir state outrageous demands and the trauma of singing new hymns!

See you in church!

– Eileen Berge, *Interim Worship and Music Director*

*News from the Ekkas, our partners in Global Missions {Excerpt}*  
In this letter we would like to share about our family situation. In September last year we had to come back to the US to take care of our children Maani (18) and Urbas (16). After coming here, we realized that our growing children need us here in US during these formative years ... After much prayers and sharing with others we sense God is calling us as Parents to provide and care for our children. For our children's faith formation and stable family situation for their education, we will be based in the World Mission Prayer League in Minneapolis at least for some years...

*Please see the kiosk for the full letter from the Ekkas!*

# Mission and Outreach

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## Serve a Meal at HCC: Saturday, March 16th

Founded in 1992, 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. Services provided include free furniture for students' apartments, Bibles, friendship groups, and classes in English, American cooking, and driving. The students and scholars carry the experience of Christian hospitality back home where their education makes them influential.

On Saturday, March 16th, volunteers from Woodlake, Oak Grove Lutheran, and Prince of Peace Church in Roseville will serve a Friendship Meal. Woodlakers are invited to donate food, to help set up, serve, and clean up. Volunteers are also encouraged to join the Chinese guests during the meal. Call Cheryl Buranen at 612-670-1016 to say that you will help. Come join in the opportunity to meet the Chinese being served by the center. This event would be a good activity for families, a small group, or youth. After the meal, during a speaker presentation, there is an activity for children in which Woodlake children may participate and youth can help.

## Beacon Interfaith (Families Moving Forward)

In December a free will offering was taken to help with efforts being undertaken by Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative for the homeless encampment along Hiawatha Ave. in Minneapolis. Their thanks is shown below.

For most of us, it is difficult to imagine experiencing the community we know with only a tent to call home. Just as someone asked when Beacon leaders visited the Wall of Forgotten Natives encampment, it may lead us to ask, "Where is God now?" Yet, as we are moved to come together and respond to the need our neighbors have shown us, we have the opportunity to create change. We answer this question by showing up and taking action.

Thank you for being part of the answer. As we work collaboratively toward our vision that all people have a home, we are grateful for your gift of \$987 to provide household items for our neighbors leaving homelessness at the encampment to find home at American House and other or other housing coordinated by our partner Avivo. Your donation has made a difference for our neighbors from the encampment moving from homelessness to home.

As you know from your ongoing commitment to the Families Moving Forward program, families and individuals experiencing homelessness face great challenges in staying safe and healthy, and finding home. At American House and other homes Beacon will build with a Housing First model, residents will have the support they need to find stability. Thank you for your commitment to ensuring that our neighbors who have been homeless can know the safety and comfort of home. If you have any questions, please contact me at (651) 789-6260 ext. 214 or [kvann@beaconinterfaith.org](mailto:kvann@beaconinterfaith.org).

Kat Van  
Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative

# Small Groups and Circles

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

**Esther Circle:** March 5<sup>th</sup> (1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday), 8:30am at the Yorke Room of 7500 York.

**Faith Circle:** March 5<sup>th</sup> (1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday), 7:00 pm, Cheryl B's home.

**Lydia Circle:** March 12<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday), 12:30 pm, Fireside Room.

**Rebecca / Sarah Circle:** March 13<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday), 1:30 pm, Fireside Room.

**Deborah Circle:** March 17<sup>th</sup>, 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. **Please note:** The nurse who takes blood pressures at 8:30am will now be coming on the third Wednesday of the month rather than the fourth.

**March 6:** Pat Dale, "Emotional Health"

**March 13:** Paul Rosenwinkel, "Confirmation at Woodlake"

**March 20:** Health nurse to conduct blood pressure checks followed by Don Draayer, "Literary Campaign" (Rescheduled from Feb 20)

**March 27:** Bible Study

## Faith and Fiction Book Club

Next meeting is Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 7:00pm in the Heritage Room (fourth Thursday). Our book for March is *Burial Rites* by Hannah Kent. Join at any time!

# The Numbers

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## Offering Summary: 1/20/2019 – 2/19/2019

Saturday Chapel Service	\$1,138.00
Sunday Sanctuary Service	\$30,599.97
Simply Giving	\$7,532.68
IRA's	\$2,282.71
Woodlake 2020	\$354.00
Properties Projects Fund	\$445.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$42,352.36</b>

## Worship Attendance

Date	Time	Attendance	Weekend or Day Total	Notes
Weds, Jan 16	8:00 AM	14		
Sat, Jan 19	5:00 PM	21	141	
Sun, Jan 20	10:00 AM	120		
Weds, Jan 23	8:00 AM	17		
Sat, Jan 26	5:00 PM	24	124	
Sun, Jan 27	10:00 AM	100		Below 0
Weds, Jan 30	8:00 AM	x		Weather cancellation
Sat, Feb 2	5:00 PM	29	167	
Sun, Feb 3	10:00 AM	138		
Weds, Feb 6	8:00 AM	12		Snow overnight
Sat, Feb 9	5:00 PM	17	117	Below 0
Sun, Feb 10	10:00 AM	100		Snow
Weds, Feb 13	8:00 AM	17		
Sat, Feb 16	5:00 PM	20	149	
Sun, Feb 17	10:00 AM	129		

## Wednesday Night Supper

Date	Attendance	Notes
1/16/2019	27	
1/23/2019	26	
1/30/2019	x	Weather Cancellation
2/6/2019	32	
2/13/2019	27	