



**Woodlake
Lutheran Church**

7525 Oliver Avenue South
On or around May 1, changing to:
** 2120 West 76th Street **
Richfield, MN 55423
(612) 866-8449
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

May Dates to Know

May 5: Confirmation Sunday with
reception after worship

May 12: Mother's Day and End-
of-the-Year Sunday School
Celebration (During Regular
Sunday School Time)

May 19: Eileen Berge's last
Sunday

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 June's issue of The
Messenger are due to
office@woodlakechurch.org
no later than May 15.*

Pastor's Page

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

Call

I'd like to thank Anne Romstad for her leadership as the call committee chair as she has worked hard to include many different perspectives (from young to old) throughout our call process. I'd also like to thank the Leadership Board for their wisdom and insight throughout this process.

We started the call process in July 2018, when the Leadership Board unanimously approved the Woodlake 2020 vision to call a new Children, Youth, and Family Outreach Pastor. The call process was moving, Holy Spirit-led, and challenging at times. My goal was to lean into your elected leaders' wisdom, skills, and insight to help choose our pastoral candidate.

We made sure that each candidate was qualified and brought with them a unique set of skills. We chose to interview candidates that both fit our Ministry Site Profile and were outside the box thinkers. We searched for consensus throughout this process and tried to find candidates that could withstand the difficulty of what this call will bring, but also bring a sense of joy and hope to our church.

In each of my conversations with pastoral candidates, I tried to imagine what it would be like working with them, and each candidate was exciting to me in their own way. I greatly valued each pastor and the gifts they shared with us and allowed us to see.

I am proud we were faithful to our discernment process, taking as long as needed to find the best candidate. I'm grateful for our collective understanding of Woodlake and its future goals. With that said, here are the votes from each Leadership Board member: (of course a pastoral call is extended by the congregation and not the Leadership Board, but this gives a good idea of what your leaders saw throughout the call process):

Scott Dahlquist, President

Pr. Neal Cannon: I felt he had the qualifications and enthusiasm to give the CYF initiative the best possible chance of reaching our stated goals.

Anne Romstad, Faith Formation

For this time in Woodlake's vision and growth development I choose Pr Neal Cannon: He will, in my mind, provide the energy and action necessary to complement [Pr Micah's] depth and visions.

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Pastor Micah

Pr. Neal: I feel his skill set is the most fitting to helping Woodlake and our Woodlake 2020 vision.

Mary Olson, Vice President

Pr. Neal: I felt we had awesome candidates to choose from and it has been difficult for me to narrow down my choice, but I have weighed the pros and cons of each and feel that Pastor Neal would be able to make the fastest start out of the gate. It's hard to say if a faster start is a better start but I believe the congregation is impatient and needs someone who can hit the ground running right away.

Molly Olson, Youth Rep

Pr. Neal: He seems like he would be the best fit at Woodlake.

Anne Schmieg, Congregational Care

Pr. Neal: As we take on the challenging task of reaching out to our neighbors to help them find and/or build their faith especially the children, youth and families, it seems to me to be essential that our leaders have a way about them that attracts people to want to know more. Pr. Neal Cannon was able to put everyone at ease, make us laugh, and hear his words. As a young parent, I believe he will relate well to children and parents which is my higher priority and biggest hope. I have no doubt that he will get along with our youth. I do hope that he will be able to build their faith and commitment in a way to be more active in our congregation so that they will be ready to be church leaders in whatever church they eventually call home.

Laurel Johnson, Mission and Outreach

Pr. Neal: I believe his experience working with youth will be valuable for Woodlake. I believe he showed enthusiasm for the position, and working with our kids. His experience working with

vulnerable adults will also be of use in our community outreach. I like that he listed Pastoral Care and Visitation as one of his strengths, as he can definitely be of help to [Pr Micah] in this area. His sermons were scripture based, but with real examples from his life or those close to him. I found him to be friendly and a good listener in the social setting at Pizza Luce.

My one hesitation is that with two white males, we are not very diverse in our leadership. But, I hope that together, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, you can show outreach to everyone in the community of Richfield.

Wayne Schmieg, Congregational Life

Pr. Neal: I liked Pr Neal from the first interview and liked him even more after meeting him in person. I think he is personally engaging; I like his light-hearted approach. His qualifications were impressive to me. His resume described several experiences that align with what we are looking for: an emphasis on youth and family ministry, Second Sunday, Youth Ministry Committee, Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry, Godly Play, the strategic team at his current church (also called '2020 Vision'). I liked his phrase: "God doesn't just talk; God does." This speaks to me that he wants to create experiences that help us be the means for doing God's work of helping others feel the joy of the Christian spirit. He made a point in the second interview that the church can offer something unique to people: face-to-face contact in a world of electronic communication; this was a positive insight to me... I feel that he will bring an energy to our ministry that will help us grow.

Anne Peterson-Schauer, Secretary

Pr. Neal: From the very first, I felt a light, happy spirit, wanting to dive in and do God's work. He

possesses energy that is contagious, connects with the community and other churches, but mostly he believes in building a foundation of rhythm from the ground up placing specific people in well placed positions for lay leadership. By doing the latter, it has the potential for creating youth leaders that will someday lead the rest of the church. I feel he relates well with people of all ages. Woodlake would be blessed having him as a pastor, and through God's grace, we would be a place for the Holy Spirit to grow in him.

Paul Olson, Properties

Pr. Neal: In review of both candidates, it seemed to me that Pr Neal Cannon is more prepared to "hit the ground running", and start work immediately. He has prior success with youth programs, and has convinced me that he can be a visionary thinker for CYF, and an "ideas person" to explore creative options and activities. It was apparent that Pr. Neal's experience and energy seems to better fit the needs of Woodlake.

Ed Morrow, Treasurer

Pr. Neal: Looking at the pictures of the youth Pastor Neal Cannon has assembled is impressive so my vote is for the "Pied Piper of Rockford."

Deb Heinecke, Music and Worship

Pr. Neal: I think he would get people excited, I think he would relate well to the youth, he seems to have a passion and excitement for ministry. I like the humor that he will bring.

*

Woodlake is in the midst of profound change and we trust that God will guide us as we step into an unknown future.

In Christ,



Pastor Micah Pearson



Staffing Updates

In addition to the call for a second pastor that Pastor Micah addressed in his column, we are pleased to announce the addition of two new key staff. Linda Lutgen

is our new Business Administrator and will be taking over building and financial management. She started work with us in April. Joshua Lindgren will be our Worship and Music Director. His first weekend with us will be May 25 and 26. Welcome, Linda and Joshua!

About Linda: Linda came to Minnesota, via Wisconsin and Connecticut, to attend the University of MN on a music performance scholarship, but decided history was more to her liking. Then of all things, her first career choice was in commercial insurance. It satisfied her passion to always be learning. After leaving the corporate world to spend more time with her children, she led various volunteer organizations and enjoyed teaching at the YMCA. The YMCA job morphed into a full time career, where she led a staff of 100 in the aquatics department and grew the programs over 25% within the last three years. Even though Linda loves contracts and policies, her heart belongs with people first. Take care of your people and they will help take care of your organization. Whether it is members, potential members, contractors, coworkers, or employees - meeting people where they are is key. On her bookshelf is Brené Brown's Dare to Lead.

About Joshua: Joshua was born and raised in Lindsborg, Kansas ("Little Sweden, USA") where he was surrounded by a strong sense of heritage and a great respect and appreciation for music in school and in the Church. Joshua began piano lessons in first grade, violin in fourth grade, and organ lessons in sixth grade. He has served ELCA churches for 18 years as organist, choir and handbell director, and lay worship ministry coordinator. Joshua moved to the Twin Cities in 2008 to complete the Master of Sacred Music Degree through Luther Seminary & St. Olaf College. His favorite thing about ministry in the Church is engaging the diversity of gifts that God has given us put to use in worship and community. A scripture verse that has come up repeatedly in his music ministry is Jeremiah 29:11 – "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Joshua loves to bike the myriad paths and trails of the Twin Cities Metro and plays violin with the Wayzata Symphony Orchestra.

Commissioner Report Recaps for April 2019

Properties: Paul Olson

The next steps toward the creation of a "Pray Ground" within the Sanctuary are being discussed with input provided by the commissioners.

Mission and Outreach: Laurel Johnson

The Lenten Collaborative "ELCA Water Project" was a huge success thanks to all those from Woodlake, HOP and Oak Grove members who contributed there was enough money collected from the noisy offerings for 4 spring boxes (almost 5!)

***A spring box is a structure engineered to allow groundwater to be obtained from a natural spring. The spring box functions to protect the spring water from contamination, normally by surface runoff or contact with human and animals, and provides a point of collection and a place for sedimentation. In many instances it also acts as the principal water storage for the household water supply.

Music and Worship: Carol Olson/Deb Heineke

The fifth Sunday of the month was focused on CYF with increased youth involvement and a temporary play area for children set up in the Narthex which was very well-received.

Congregational Care: Anne Schmieg

The April 6 & 7th "Minute for Mission" provided by Starr Carriere focused on our Prayer Knitter group. The members of this group create pocket prayer peaces as well as chemo caps, shawls and baptismal blankets. Members are encouraged to utilize these items for those in need and are encouraged join in this ministry. To find out more, contact Betty Hassenstab.

Children, Youth and Family: Anne Romstad

The new pastoral candidate who will focus on CYF was selected by the LB will be presented to the congregation for a vote on April 28th. All members are encouraged to attend this meeting to learn more about the candidate and to vote.

A Confirmation Retreat called Urban Plunge was held at Augsburg University, April 12-13.

Three Youth will be confirmed on May 5 during the service. A cake and coffee reception will be held afterwards.

The craft/bake sale fundraiser for the Mission Trip was held on Sunday, April 7 and raised approximately \$1200. Additional funding is still needed and donor letters will go out after Easter requesting funds and prayers. All who donate will be invited to a donor dinner, the date TBD.

Around the Table

Notes from Your Leadership Board

Properties and Facilities Commission

Greetings from the Properties Commission! Our Woodlake 2020 initiative has created fun and exciting ideas as we look forward to the future here at Woodlake. It's time to share a little bit about what has been happening around the building and property.

Let us begin with the "Pray Ground." We hope you have participated in the Town Hall discussions, or read about this in the Messenger. A Pray Ground is a place within the worship space where children and families can play, while still observing and being active in the worship experience. Similar spaces at other churches have shown that when located near the front of the church, the children could stay active, but also were more curious watching the activities in the front. We will continue to review options and update the congregation as more ideas develop.

The building address is changing. We hope you have also been reading about this in the bulletins and Messenger. When the current address is programmed into GPS software or devices, it will lead people to our West door, which is locked much of the time. Emergency vehicles also use this technology, and this change could also help response time. Scott Dahlquist has worked through the various city agencies and post office so that our new address will now be connected to 76th Street, instead of Oliver Avenue.

We are excited about the prospects for our future at Woodlake, but also recognize the legacy and history of our congregation. We are truly stewards to our people and our facility.

*Peace to all,
Paul Olson, Properties Commissioner*

Worship and Music Notes

What a whirlwind of activities we have had in these last few weeks! Our Lenten theme of "Change My Heart, O God" was well received in addition to the sharing of international cultures and religions. Plus our water theme for Sunday services with emphasis on raising money for the water wells!

Hosannas were sung and palms were waved high at our Palm Sunday service. What a celebration! In our collaborative Maundy Thursday service at Oak Grove, it was such a wonderful opportunity to have all 3 church choirs sing together. The Good Friday service was very dramatic as we continued the story of betrayal and the people giving up Jesus to be crucified. Easter Sunday - wow! What a celebration it was! I do miss people wearing their Easter bonnets and the girls wearing their dresses with the matching purses like I used to do. I distinctly remember one pink dress with white trimming and a purse to match!

I am glad that I was able to be the interim music director for you. Diving right into Advent and Christmas music was a challenge! My favorite hymn will always be Joy to the World!

Sunday, May 19th will be my last official Sunday as interim music director. I am so glad that the church has hired Joshua Lindgren as your new music director. He is a very good fit for Woodlake. I hope to join in the services every once in a while.

Now back to May 19th. Pastor Micah has said that I can play any songs I want!! So be ready for a lot of favorites, probably some toe-tapping, hand clapping, and some good old Lut'eran singing! To prepare for this bittersweet Sunday, I invite you to select hymns that you would like to sing and songs you would like to have me play for prelude, which could start about 20 minutes to 10 if I have so many songs to play. If I played all the songs I wanted to play, the service wouldn't be done until 2 pm! You can email me your song requests to my home address at casandtux@gmail.com.

I really can't fully put into words my appreciation to all of you at Woodlake. After playing at a church for 28 years, it was not until about two years later I felt that I could look for another church home. When I walked in Woodlake's door the day of my interview and audition, I knew I was home. And you hired me! Praise be the Lord!

Warning: this is a shameless disclaimer. No Lutherans were harmed! If you miss me so much after I'm not there on Sundays, you can always come to see me on Fridays and Saturdays at Dangerfield's in Shakopee! And I have lots of CDs for you to buy!!

Blessings, Eileen

Collaboration News

Collaboration Update: Work is in Progress!

Last Fall the Collaboration Task Force conducted a listening process within our three congregations. In this process, we were able to hear from key congregational leaders in the areas of finance, leadership, staffing, worship, ministry, and mission. There were many wonderful insights gleaned from this process and a plethora of avenues for actions for the short and long term. The Task Force met in January and decided to focus on some immediate goals and steps to continue to build momentum. We are happy to share we have made solid progress so far and continue to work toward the future.

One of the most visible outcomes of our collaboration has been the recent clean water initiative. As leaders for outreach and benevolence met from the three congregations, it was discovered all three churches financially support VEAP and Lutheran World Hunger. When Oak Grove leaders shared their tradition of a mission project for Lent, House of Prayer and Woodlake jumped in! Our goal was to raise \$5,000 for clean water to help build spring boxes in communities without consistent access to drinking water. Through the generosity of our members and the collective momentum of working together, we have more than doubled our goal (final numbers were revealed at Maundy Thursday worship). By working together on this project, we are encouraged and excited about how working collectively can deepen our missional impact.

Another area of collaboration we are working together in is administration. Intern Deanna is working with each congregation to assist with the audit process as part of her internship project. Her financial expertise is a real asset to the collaboration and the church at large. In addition, administrative staff from each church have begun monthly meetings to share vendor information and best practices in areas of building maintenance, contracts, and finances. We have already seen the benefits of this type of sharing and anticipate future sharing to a blessing for each congregation.

As we have been collaborating for the past few years, one of the most joyful experiences is worshipping together. We decided to share Maundy Thursday worship together this year. This service featured a combined choir and first communion. We also have already scheduled summer worship at Veteran's Park on August 18th. Watch for more details soon!

Two final areas of strategic importance for our collaborative work are: youth ministry and community engagement. In our listening process we heard a strong desire for collective work in both of these areas. The Task Force values the importance of these areas and also acknowledges it will take more time to fully develop our collaborative vision and plans. We are working in these areas and expect to make significant progress in the coming months.

For all of this we give God thanks and continue to ask for your ongoing support and prayers for our work together.

God's Peace, The Collaboration Task Force

Woodlake: Pastor Micah, Scott Dahlquist, Laurel Johnson
Oak Grove: Pastor Tom, Julie Tveite, Mike Tvette
House of Prayer: Pastor Ben, Cara Wright

Small Groups and Circles

Annual Prayer Shawl Knitters / Former Laughter Group Spring Salad Luncheon: Thurs, May 23, 12pm in Woodlake's Fireside Room. Dessert and beverages will be provided. Please bring a salad and a joke or two to share! Please RSVP to either Starr (612-866-2922) or Betty (952-835-3133) by Tues, May 21 so we know how many places to set.

Circles

Circles meet once a month during the programming year and are times for women of all ages to have fellowship, devotions, and Bible study. Our *Gather* subscription will resume for fall circle meetings.

Esther Circle: May 7th (1st Tuesday), 8:30am at the Yorke Room of 7500 York.

Faith Circle: May 7th (1st Tuesday), 7:00 pm, Bev J's home.

Rebecca / Sarah Circle: May 8th (2nd Wednesday), 1:30 pm, Fireside Room.

Lydia Circle: May 14th (2nd Tuesday), 12:30 pm, Fireside Room.

Deborah Circle Circle: May 19th, 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.

May 1: Rachel Lindholm, "Organic Recycling"

May 8: Kaycee Stanley, "Adoption"

May 15: Carol Olson and Cheryl Buranen, "Samaritan's Feet"

May 22: Health nurse to do blood pressure checks followed by Bible study. End of the programming year!

Faith and Fiction Book Club

Next meeting is Thursday, May 23rd, 7:00pm in the Heritage Room (fourth Thursday). Our book for May is *The Book Jumper* by Mechthild Glaser.

The Numbers

Offerings Summary: Mar 20 – Apr 19

Saturday Chapel Services	1,164.00
Sunday Sanctuary Services	18,443.00
Simply Giving (SG)	7,163.68
IRA's	4,732.71
Woodlake2020	365.00
Properties Project Fund	445.00
Water Opportunity	2,680.51
Other	37.58
	\$35,031.48

Worship Attendance

Date	Time	Attendance	Weekend or Day Total	Notes
Sat, Mar 23	5:00 PM	29	192	
Sun, Mar 24	10:00 AM	163		
Weds, Mar 27	8:00 AM	19		
Weds, Mar 27	6:30 PM	82		Lenten worship
Sat, Mar 30	5:00 PM	36	201	
Sun, Mar 31	10:00 AM	165		
Weds, Apr 3	8:00 AM	20		
Weds, Apr 3	6:30 PM	65		Lenten worship
Sat, Apr 6	5:00 PM	26	170	
Sun, Apr 7	10:00 AM	144		
Weds, Apr 10	8:00 AM	19		
Weds, Apr 10	6:30 PM	57		Lenten worship. Snow storm.
Sat, Apr 13	5:00 PM	22	237	Palm Sunday weekend
Sun, Apr 14	10:00 AM	215		Palm Sunday
Weds, Apr 17	8:00 AM	14		
Thurs, Apr 18	7:00 PM	182		Collab Worship with HOP and OG; Service held at OG
Fri, Apr 19	7:00 PM	103		Good Friday
Sat, Apr 20	x	x	x	No Worship

Wednesday Night Supper

Date	Attendance	Notes
3/27/2019	64	Soup Supper; Lenten Worship Followed
4/3/2019	57	Soup Supper; Lenten Worship Followed
4/10/2019	40	Soup Supper; Lenten Worship Followed. Snow storm
4/17/2019	x	No Supper