



Pastor's Page

Becoming a Gathering Place for All God's Children

The day I left for paternity leave, everything changed. A new life transformed our house by giving us more love, joy, and baby snuggles! Of course, it also gave us more diapers and less sleep. On my worse days when I've been up for hours in the middle of the night I wonder, why on earth did we take this on?

On my better days after a full night's rest with a sleeping baby in my arms giving me sleep smiles, I know why we did this. We did this because we're better with Lucas in our lives.

The day I came back to Woodlake from paternity leave, everything changed. Woodlake had adopted a new mission and vision. Praise God! A mission and vision statement might not seem transformative to you, but it is. This month, we'll break down each important phrase of that vision, and explore what it means for Woodlake.

"Becoming" - The Christian life is a life of becoming. Woodlake is being called into a new chapter in the history of the church. Led by the Holy Spirit, we are becoming something new for our community.

"A Gathering Place" - Gathering is central to who we are as a church for when we gather, Jesus promises to be there with us. Today, we gather not only in our own space at Woodlake, but we also gather outside our walls as guests in other communities.

"For All God's Children" - We believe that all people are created in the image of God, no matter where they are in their faith journey. Our vision is to be a welcoming place for everyone regardless of color, gender, economic status, age, language, or any other factor.



Woodlake Lutheran Church

2120 West 76th Street
Richfield, MN 55423
(612) 866-8449

www.woodlakechurch.org
youtube.com/woodlakelutheranchurch

Pastor Neal Cannon
Pastor Micah Pearson

Woodlake Lutheran Church is a congregation of the ELCA.

Worship Schedule

Sunday Mornings

10:00am in the Sanctuary
(also livestreamed to YouTube)

Church Office Hours

Mon, Tues, Weds, Thurs,
9am-12p.m. 1- 3pm

*Articles for November's issue of The Messenger are due to office@woodlakechurch.org by **October 15**. Our theme for November is "Trust in Jesus – Form Relationship – Create Community" We'd love to hear from you!*

Editor's Note:

In our September 2021 Messenger, I was trying to enhance the Worship and Music article by Joshua Lindgren and the song listed from 1943 *Comin' in on a wing and a prayer*. I searched for WWII planes and inserted an image of a plane. Little did I know that the plane I choose was a German Messerschmitt Bf 109, one of the main fighter plans of the German Luftwaffe during WWII. I sincerely apologize for any offense this image might have caused you or anyone who fought in WWII. We have removed the offending plane and it's Nazi connection and substituted with something more appropriate.

-Pr. Micah

To truly become a gathering place for all God's children, it will mean asking a lot of hard questions. Do all people really feel welcome here, or only people like us? Do we expect new people to conform to our norms when they enter the building, or do we hear their voices and change to better include outsiders?

What would it take for ALL of God's children to feel welcome here?

Including new people in our community, especially new people who aren't like us, will be challenging. It will mean actively being a part of our local communities to hear and understand outside voices. In some circumstances, it might mean a change in our approach to ministry. It will mean more work for us, to be sure. It will mean there will be some challenging times ahead. But on our better days, it will be clear why we're doing all this. We do it because we're better with new people in our lives.

-Pastor Neal

Upcoming Events



Life Groups: Conversations about Race start October 20th and will be led by our Service and Justice Commission.

We'll be using the series, "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man" by Emmanuel Acho as our guide. If you are interested in participating please contact Kristi Gay, Life Groups Coordinator. kristigay44@gmail.com

Upcoming Fall Stewardship Series:



Moment of Gratitude: Every Sunday in October

Guest Preachers sharing the gift of gratitude.

Oct. 17: Rev. Charles Lane

Pastor Charles (Chick) Lane serves as the Director of the Center for Stewardship Leaders at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. He graduated from Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, and Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. He served St. Mark Lutheran Church, Butler, PA; St. Phillip's Lutheran Church, Fridley, MN; and Immanuel Lutheran Church, Wadena, MN. He served as Assistant to the Bishop in the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA, from 1996-2005, and as Director for Stewardship Key Leader, ELCA, from 2005-2010. Pastor Lane is the author of *Ask, Thank, Tell: Improving Stewardship Ministry in Your Congregation*, published by Augsburg Fortress in 2006, and the annual stewardship program *Walk with Jesus*, published by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 2006. https://seiasynod.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2013/01/chick_lane_bio.pdf

Oct 24: Rev. Pastor Susan Weaver

Pastor Susan Weaver retired four years ago from Immanuel Lutheran Church in Eden Prairie. Her passions are Christian faith formation, spiritual direction, and prayer. Besides being a spiritual director, she's an avid reader, a doting grandma, a faithful wife and daughter and a frustrated gardener. She and her husband are excited about

their new electric bikes, which help us get out of our hilly neighborhood and onto the beautiful Minnesota trails. <https://www.workingpreacher.org/authors/susan-weaver>

Congregational Care

Adult Forum on November 6: "Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body"

The Alzheimer’s Association will present the class “Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body” on Saturday, November 6 at 10:00 AM in the Fellowship Hall. Masks are required and we will sit socially distanced. The class will provide this important information:

“For centuries, we’ve known that the health of the brain and the body are connected. But now, science is able to provide insights into how to make lifestyle choices that may help you keep your brain and body healthy as you age. Join us to learn about research in the areas of diet and nutrition, exercise, cognitive activity and social engagement, and use hands-on tools to help you incorporate these recommendations into a plan for healthy aging.”

Please RSVP by emailing the church at office@woodlakechurch.org or calling the church office at 612.866.8449. The Alzheimer’s Association would like a count of the number of people who will be attending.

The Numbers

Offering, August 2021

Envelope Offering	\$17,616.00
Simply Giving	7,816.51
IRA's	2,155.42
Loose offerings	160.00
Rental income	13,850.00
Misc.	<u>23.00</u>
Total Income	\$41,620.93
Operating Expenses	<u>(55,729.00)</u>
*Net Income (Loss)	(14,108.07)

*Once endowment distributions are distributed and calculated, the loss will become balanced.

Worship Attendance, August 2021

8/1/2021	In Person 92	Online 83
8/8/2021	In Person 79	Online 79
8/15/2021	In Person 88	Online 74
8/22/2021	In Person 95	Online 33
8/29/2021	In Person 90	Online 89

Endowment Fund Requests

Endowment Fund requests are due by October 15. Submit endowments requests to Orv Holland. They may be placed in his office mail-box or emailed to oholland@woodlakechurch.org. Pickup request form at the church office or email the office at office@woodlakechurch.org or email Orv Holland at address shown above."

Meet our New Communication Director



Hello! I'm Logan Pankratz, your soon-to-be Communications Director! I'm originally from a small town and ELCA church in central Wisconsin, and now I live in St. Paul with my wife, Michaela, and our growing-up puppy, Pippa. In my free time I like to explore the beautiful parks our state

has to offer or learn about graphic design, marketing strategies, and photography. A fun little story about me is one time I was pranked by elementary schoolers while I was serving as a group leader for vacation Bible school at our church. These kids sent out an innocent, nice older lady with a plate of oreos to give to those of us serving. I decidedly took two and popped a whole oreo in my mouth, only to find that the creme middle had been substituted for toothpaste! Well done kids, well done. Looking forward to meeting you all soon! - Logan

Around the Table

Notes from Your Leadership Board

To the friends and members of the congregation of Woodlake Lutheran church, good day. I have had the pleasure of using this opening for the past two years in service as your Treasurer. At the end of October, I will conclude my service and wish to thank the church staff, the volunteers, and all the friends and members of your church for your stewardship.

As I have shared my view of stewardship with you these past two years, the act of stewardship is more than just financial giving for the good works of our church. It is also the efforts of volunteering and good works to make the church go. From paying bills to filling potholes in a parking lot, staff and volunteers all pitch in to help Woodlake do ministry and support the works of our congregational life at Woodlake.

We are in the month of October and this is the traditional month of our yearly stewardship drive for the next fiscal year. The theme for fiscal year 2022 Stewardship Drive is **'Gratitude'** and will focus on the Vision and Mission for the church for guiding us.

Vision: *Become a Gathering Place for All God's Children*

Mission: *Trust in Jesus / Form Relationships | Create Community*

The stewardship drive began officially on Tuesday, September 28th, announced in the Faith & Funding segment. The drive will conclude on Tuesday, November 2nd. We would ask everyone to prayerfully consider this coming year's pledge and send in your card to the church office. The Leadership board is setting plans for the coming fiscal 2022 year and using the Vision and Mission statements as a guide.

We will have Stewardship Talks each Sunday in October, sharing our theme of Gratitude. I would like to thank each of you for your continued stewardship and giving for fiscal 2022 and beyond.

*Regards,
Augie Schauer
Treasurer*

Business Manager Musings



Over the past few days, staff and some members walked around the building and spent some time imagining the possibilities of what Woodlake could look like with the thought of creating an intentional place of gathering for all people of all ages.

I am struck by a few items. First, yes, it matters how we feel when we enter a space. We have to ask ourselves... Are we welcomed in? Do we feel safe? Do we want to stay? Does the space excite us? Does it calm us? Does it serve its purpose to welcome?

Second, I was stuck time and time again by the thought that - we can have the most beautiful building but none of that matters unless it is filled with people who are welcoming.

Two years ago, I wrote a letter about just that. I watched all of you be Jesus' hands and feet to an new member at Woodlake. Your smiles, willingness to listen, gentle conversations about faith, deep honesty, welcome and caring was felt. You were seen and your actions mattered. You made a difference.

As I work on the details of supporting Woodlake's mission to be a gathering place, details like is the dishwasher ready to be installed, is the roof fixed so that the floor can finally be replaced? Are the rooms scheduled for CYF, the book club, knitters, and prayer circles? Are the windows clean? Is there toilet paper in the bathrooms? It is so easy to get caught up in all of that....all of that is important, and, yes, it has to be done. Yet.... everything could be perfect on the outside and without each and every one of you coming to Woodlake and welcoming all God's children in, it doesn't matter.

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Woodlake's building, property, finances, and staff are here to support your new mission - **Becoming a gathering place for all God's children.**

- Linda Lutgen, Business Manager



Worship and Music Notes

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches; for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

-Isaiah 43:19-21

To the Woodlake Lutheran Congregation:

I am being called to lead the Worship and Music Ministry of St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church, and will be saying "goodbye" to you soon. My final Sunday with you will be October 3.

Please know that this decision did not come lightly. I truly cherish and have deep love for you, the people of Woodlake Lutheran Church, especially those involved in the dedicated leadership of Worship and Music. As you all move forward with your new Mission & Vision, my prayer is that the Holy Spirit sends the best individual(s) to enrich your worship and music life together going forward.

-Joshua Lindgren

"All Are Welcome!"

...All are welcome...

...Are all welcome here?

How many times have you said "all are welcome!" We have certainly sung it as a congregation too many times to count! Where have you seen this three-word phrase written: Above a door frame? In a church? A synagogue? A playground?

When we think we are living out "all are welcome" specifically as the Woodlake Lutheran Community, we prepare and live out our worship life together - what themes come to mind?

Anytime anyone gives kudos to the Praise Ringers Handbell Ensemble (ringing bells is NOT easy, friends) or thanks our JoyfulNoise or Sanctuary Choir through applause or reverent, appreciative silence, I try to take the opportunity to say ALL ARE WELCOME! All are welcome to join any of the choirs! Don't let our excellent handbell group make you think this is some sort of exclusive "Club Brass" and new members have to purchase a senate seat or bribe a local official to gain entrance. When I say ALL ARE WELCOME to any of our music ensembles, I'm trying to let people know that the music which is chosen for these groups is for these groups! Whether it is a group of four (try Orff or Handchimes! You can ring anything to "Amazing Grace!") or twenty-five (four-part, SATB-mixed choir anthem with obbligato organ and brass quartet accompaniment, ahoy!), ALL ARE WELCOME in these groups because the very members who make up these groups inform what we do!

As we have journeyed together through our Mission and Visioning process here at

Woodlake and as we aim to be a community **Becoming a Gathering Place for All God's Children**, how might all of this reframe the words we speak and sing and the actions we take when we say "All Are Welcome"?

When we sing in worship, is there a goodly mix of hymns and songs that our "core" congregation knows so well that we sing out loud and proud, making any visitor immediately want to join this vibrant community? When those "others" do join our community, are we doing everything we can to let them know that this place is for them? In this time of still- pandemic, are we making all God's children feel safe, loved, and cared for by our masking and physical distancing protocols in worship and beyond?

Hear the words anew from stanzas 1 and 5 of Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymn 641:

*Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell
how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,*

Let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:

*All are welcome,
all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.*

*Soli Deo gloria,
Joshua Lindgren,
Director of Worship and Music*

CYF Updates

Boys and Girls Club

The Richfield Collaboration (Woodlake, House of Prayer, and Oak Grove) are excited to announce that we will begin our partnership with the Boys and Girls Club to start an after-school program with Richfield Middle School. The program will be held at Woodlake from 4-5pm on Wednesday afternoons.

We need volunteers who are interested in:

- teaching youth learn to cook/bake
- playing cards and games with youth (e.g. Uno, Connect 4)
- sharing other fun skills with youth
- helping with snacks.

Programming for Richfield Middle School Youth begins on October 6th! We're looking forward to seeing what God will do through this engaging community ministry. Contact Pastor Neal Cannon ncannon@woodlakechurch.org if you would like to volunteer.

Godly Play

Godly Play, our Sunday morning ministry for kids in grades pre-K-5th grade, will begin **after worship on September 26th**. All kids will be invited to Room H in the Sunday School hallway where they will be greeted by one of our Godly Play Leaders. No registration required. Come as you are!

If you are interested in volunteering for Godly Play, please contact Pastor Neal ncannon@woodlakechurch.org.



