



Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church











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REPORT OF JANUARY 2017 CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 2017

Meeting called to order at 12:22 p.m.

Sue Goodspeed approved, by vote, as acting Clerk.

It was determined that the meeting was properly called, and a quorum was declared.

Prayer was offered by Pastor Root.

Minutes of the Congregational Meeting of 1/17/2016 were approved as presented.

REFLECTIONS from our experiences in 2016:

What have you loved?

- The baby explosion!
- Lisa' ordination – it was a good party
- Participating in Marty's courage as he shared his journey, and that we were meaningful participants
- Support for Dee
- Saturday services: quiet, individuality and 'message' – we have contemplative babies!
- Wonderful guest musicians!
- Lee Widga's funeral and John Bixby's memorial service
- The Penumbra workshop
- ArtSpace – Iris's mosaics and Anne's quilts
- Movie Camp – the last with the Seals
- Being new to this church family
- That we experience worship with/of two other congregations with their own styles – there is life in the building.
- Our support of organizations outside our walls through tithes and food donations
- Coffee & Donuts
- Krysta!
- Gary – and his care of the building and of us
- Westminster's VBS (which plans to return in 2017)
- Lisa PJ as our 'superClerk'
- Powerful sermons (as expressed by extended family at Christmas)

What has been difficult/challenging/disappointing?

- Marty's health
- Dee & Bobbe – transitions
- Communication glitches (Dick not hearing of Lee's service)

What do we want to stop/keep/try?

- Keep inclusive & inviting (eg: Fuego Pentecostes) "open door community."
- Spirit of Hospitality – that we exist for others

What do we/I bring into this new year?

- Concern for our society at large, and need for awareness
- Excitement: especially with Lisa Larges, Lisa PJ, and Krysta – *we are ready* for whatever comes across our path!
- Acknowledgement that the 'vulnerable' – especially children and elderly – are at our center and drive our ministry.
- Hope for a sense of permission-giving – that those who recognize a need feel encouraged to address it.

Who do we want to thank?

- Jane Onken and her music
- Joyce bringing Ham&CP leftovers to Andrea
- Congregation, for care of Kara after foot surgery
- Those who helped with the ordination service/party
- Linda Duncan – for organizing the music library
- Norm – for coffee hour
- Dick – for his sense of humor! (he'll be 80 in May)
- The new 'church basement lady' crew for events (Diane et al)

Comments on REPORTS:

- Worship: crumbly bread!
Concerns about ways in which the Saturday service does/does not engage young people.
- Music: Yea!! We love Jeanne.
- Children: Kara is still 'good' with leading, and has Carolyn as a backup, but we will need to 'adapt and change' as our littles grow? Be attentive to 'what will meet the needs of our kids?' (need to fix make sure the speaker in the Nursery is working well)
we enjoy the ways the children participate in worship.
- Congregational Care: support for the 5th Sunday visiting
- Personnel: thanks to Sue G for work in the background.
- Presbyterian Women: appreciate the open invitation to the Christmas Luncheon.
- Treasurer: We have a ways to go to fund our Building Maintenance Fund (roof replacement).

NEW BUSINESS:

Thanks to Sue Hensel for her work on Session. She rotates off now.
Nominating Committee nominates Joyce Tesarek for the Class of 2019. No nominations from the floor.
On vote, Joyce is approved unanimously.

2016 Nominating Committee of Diane Hansen, Carolyn Cochrane, and Joyce Tesarek is dismissed with thanks.

2017 Nominative Committee: no volunteers presented themselves at the meeting. There will be a request to serve 'out of joy, not obligation' in the weekly announcements. Vote will occur at a later date.

BY-LAWS: revised by-laws were distributed and reviewed. There was nominal discussion of the voting requirements. Motion to approve as received, seconded, approved unanimously.

MEETING OF THE CORPORATION:

Acting Clerk Goodspeed presented the Terms of Call for Kara K. Root.
There were no comments. Terms were moved and seconded and approved unanimously. Pastor Root was queried three times as to their sufficiency and her satisfaction, responding affirmatively!

MEETING OF CONGREGATION ADJOURNED

REOPEN CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:

Following the singing of 'Blest Be the Tie That Binds,' and prayer, the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Sue Goodspeed, Acting Clerk

LAKE NOKOMIS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STATISTICAL REPORT 2017

PASTORAL RITES

Baptisms	
Adult	0
Child	1
Weddings	0
Funerals	1
Communion	was served at least once each month

MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS FOR DENOMINATIONAL REPORTING PURPOSES

Number of members on the active roll as of January 1, 2017:	92
Additions	
By Profession of Reaffirmation of Faith	2
By Letter of Transfer	0
Reinstated	0
Losses	
Deceased	1
Transferred	0
Inactive Roll	1
Removed by Session	0
Total Active Members as of January 1, 2018:	92

(Membership is one way in which we commit to being the Body of Christ for one another. We have many who are an integral part of our community who are not formal "members," and this year we shared worship and community with Central Fellowship and others who are not connected in formal church membership, but nevertheless are part of the Body of Christ alongside us).

SESSION

The session met in 11 regular meetings. Session also met in a two-day retreat. Session membership is as outlined below; the ethnicity and age of elders serving on session is representative of the overall congregational body.

In 2017, the session was composed of six ruling elders:

Class of 2017: Andrea Domaskin, Andy Cochrane, Diane Hansen

Class of 2018: Amy Leafblad, Bill Fischer

Class of 2019: Joyce Tesarek

The session was moderated by teaching elder Rev. Kara Root.

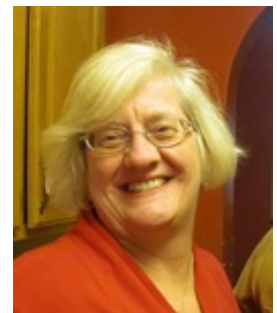
CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

There were 2 congregational meetings; the annual meeting January 15, 2017; minutes by Sue Goodspeed and a meeting to elect officers on November 19, 2017; minutes by Dennis Johnson.

OTHER INFORMATION TO NOTE

Lisa Larges was ordained and joined LNPC as Parish Associate on 11/01/16 and her position was approved for another year. In the fall, we welcomed Erin DeBoer-Moran on 10/1 as Director of Music Ministries. Two interns, Katie Holmberg and Shannon Farrand-Bernardin, began work with us this fall as well. Treasurer was Sue Goodspeed and clerk was Lisa Phillips Johnson.

Respectfully Submitted, Lisa Phillips Johnson, Clerk



PASTOR'S REPORT

Dear LNPC,

Writing my annual report every year fills me with gratitude, (once I finally sit down and do it!) It forces me to reflect back on all God has done in and through us, and I am always amazed and appreciative. Here are some of my highlights of 2017, and what came up for me when I asked myself, ***Where did I see God this year?***



¾ TIME MINISTRY: PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

(Preaching, teaching, pastoral care, administrative leadership, empowering the ministry of the congregation)

The place I most saw God this year is in how we shared each other's suffering and joy. We say, "We meet Jesus, who is with and for us, when we are with and for each other," and that was borne out powerfully in the life of our congregation this year.

Most notably, I saw God in:

- **Walking with Marty**

In March we held a "Saying Goodbye" service for Marty, which was just one of the many ways this congregation was brave and faithful throughout his illness. Paying for housecleaning, bringing him meals, driving him to appointments and emergency room visits, helping him move, praying and singing with him in hospice, the list goes on and on. Being his community together with you, transparently and overtly, as he came to the end of his life, is one of the greatest prides of my life. Watching you care for one another, watching him let himself be vulnerable alongside us, facing up to our fears and sadness, and embracing the joy and laughter in the midst of the pain – all of it was so beautiful. He was commissioned in 2016 to a Ministry of Dying, and took it to heart, serving the community so faithfully with his honesty.

Being Marty's pastor - for the times things got scary, the times that felt tedious, the times that felt overwhelming and momentous, and the moment when he quietly left this earth, blessed me deeply. I also loved how Marty shared us with his friends- making us a community with and for all these different people that his life touched.

Our year and a half long journey with Marty through this wilderness culminated at his funeral on June 23, a service filled with love and deep gratitude for his life.

- **Tiny People and their Amazing Parents**

This year has been a delight of babies and toddlers. We've welcomed three new babies! Andrew, Rowan and Ian joined us, making big brothers and sisters out of Robbie, Laurel and Helen. We've blessed their parents with meals, prayers, and lots of arms to happily hold babies. We've witnessed new crawlers and walkers, first teeth and first colds. I have loved watching the parents of these tinies become friends, and being the community that supports them. Our approximately quarterly Parents' Nights Outs have been wonderful – for parents to connect and bond, and for the kids to be "babysat" by the "big kids" and other grown people in our congregation.

Supporting one another through the ups and downs of parenting, joys and scares, loss and grief, fatigue and discovery, is what it means to be church with and for you at this time in the lives of your young families. This year we've widened our arms and opened our hearts to one another through our tiny people and their amazing parents.

- **Walking with Dee**

This year Dee moved out of her house and into assisted living; her life changed significantly and her memory deteriorated quickly. We helped her move and settle into her new apartment. We supported her niece through difficult conversations and transitions. After some falls and the need for more support, she is now in her third home this year, at Lyngblomsten. Throughout the year, Dick, Betty, Pat, Georgia, Barb and others continue to regularly visit and check in on Dee.

Loving one another through whatever life brings, and showing up for each other is ministry; this congregation knows how to be church. Every one of us has a body that will break down and a mind that will weaken, but who we are is held in God, and upheld in community. There is no shame in life's struggles; there is only the chance to love and serve each other in different ways, and to bravely accept one another's love and care.

- **Praying for our Nation**

Every Friday of this entire year, Prayer for the Nation has been held for a half hour in our sanctuary. Holding that space has been faith-shaping for me, because it makes me remember that God is God, and that God is good. On days I was unable to be there, Lisa, or Sue H. led the prayer. Diane, Amy, Katie, Shannon, Dennis, Gary, and Linda have helped hold the space, but my most faithful prayer partner is Norm. I am so grateful for his steady presence and commitment to showing up. "Where two or three are gathered, I am there among them" goes through my head sometimes as we sit side by side in silence. We meditate on scripture, read prayers, and hold in our hands names of people or groups—those for whom we feel compassion and those for whom we feel frustration or anger—and we pray for them, and then we light candles and place them on the flag with blessings from the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, goodness, gentleness, self-control.

The rhythm of this practice helps me put down all the noise and vitriol of our nation's politics and my own anxiety, worry or fear, and return to the Way of God. And prayer makes a difference. (Lisa likes to say, "Think how bad things would be in our country if you and Norm were not praying every week!")

Other Highlights for me:

- **Playing and Praying together, sometimes with waffles**

We played a dating game together this year, you guys! Our Waffle Worshipers have been a blast, bonding us as a congregation. And our *Summer of Praying & Playing* experiences that used voice, body, silence, walking, writing, and more, gave our summer Saturday services a fun emphasis and deepened our prayer lives. I love Coffee & Donuts

and PW - they are lovely times of conversation and connection. I am thankful for Session retreats, and events like Connections gatherings, the Black Nativity, the annual summer boat trip, Parents' Nights Out, the 82nd Annual Ham & Cherry Pie Dinner, and all the informal and multiple ways we share life with each other.

- **Watching what happens through, and in spite of, us**

Movie Camp with St. Joe's, Westminster Day Camp (with 200 kids!), Fuego Pentecostes worshiping in the building three days a week, and all the many and varied groups that use our space – from one-time gatherings to those who've been here for 20 years...It gives me joy to come in the building and see people I don't know who feel at home in our space. Our building is getting even more use now, and it is such a blessing to be a blessing!

We got a message midyear from J. Dana Trent, an author whose book, *For Sabbath's Sake* was published this year, saying she used our story in it. This brings the number of books out there in the world that contain parts of our story up to five!

Serving at our Saviour's Housing continued this year through Lindsay's leadership, and we continue to be one of the biggest contributors to Simpson Food Shelf, this year raising \$4122 through our Food Shelf Sundays. We gave over \$16,000 to other small ministries and needs in our world, and regularly got notes of thanks from people whose lives we impacted through our practice of tithing. Our Pentecost tithe, in particular, was such fun! (There is a longer report about that a few pages on...) God's ministry is always unfolding, and we get to find ways to celebrate it, join it, make space for it, or get out of the way for it to happen!

- **Sunday School shift from scarcity to abundance**

We began the summer praying for new Sunday school leadership in the Fall. We started out with a sense of scarcity (eg., we don't have enough people to teach the classes, etc.) and somewhere mid-summer realized that wasn't helping us, so we intentionally shifted to a mindset of abundance (eg., what are our gifts and places of plenty this year? Intergenerational! Love of learning! Lots of littles!, etc. How can we draw from those to learn well together and from each other?) Once that happened, we began planning for the new year with some creative options, even as potential interns and ideas didn't work out. In the end, we suddenly ended up with two wonderful interns, Katie and Shannon, and have watched both the youth class and children's class flourish under their leadership. In addition, these past four months I find myself - first time in nine years - in the position of *not* leading something before worship. This means I spend that hour praying for all the different classes happening during that time, connecting with Erin, and getting the sanctuary and my own spirit ready for worship.

- **Letting go & accepting change**

I've been at LNPC nearly a decade, so I've gotten to welcome and say goodbye to lots of people, for lots of reasons. This year had more of that, and I was impacted as a pastor and a person by the sorrow and joy of watching people's relationship with our congregation shift and change. I'm excited for Grace finding a youth group, and the

Cochranes finding ways to be involved in a couple different congregations in this chapter in their family's life as most meets their needs and callings. I wish the Valdez family all blessings in their new church home, as they find their calling to ministry and community deepened there. Closing the chapter on Jeanne's and my 8-year collaboration of creativity was poignant; aside from sad goodbyes, it meant letting go of the ease and mind-reading we'd developed over that time. Welcoming Erin and learning to work together has been joyful, finding our way into a new beginning together.

As some settle into assisted living communities, move away, or leave this earth, and others move onto places of deepening faith and new encounters, I am reminded that we get to be church with each other for a season – some seasons are longer than others. Some end by circumstances beyond our control, some end by choice, but no season lasts forever. Life doesn't sit still, and being community means holding open arms to one another as God works in each other's lives in unexpected ways. This was an area of challenge and growth for me this year, having gentleness with myself, and coming to a place of joy, gratitude and hope for all that has been and all that is ahead for our community. I am grateful for each individual person who is church with us, for however long their season with us may be.

- **Getting the grant!**

We worked really hard this year to write a grant application that involved some pretty intense dreaming – *What would make your heart sing?* I dreamed, my family dreamed together, and the Sabbatical Dream Team, led by Sue H., thought long and hard about what it would look like to come to the next sabbatical seeking such “heart-singing” as a congregation. This kind of application requires imagining your way into it so completely that you are literally looking up train fares and searching for housing options to give specific answers to detailed questions. And then: you put it all down. You hold it all lightly and let it all go, knowing these crazy wishes and dreams might be granted, but more likely they might not, so whatever happens, it is still a gift.

And then we got the grant!

2018 promises to be filled with adventure and heartsong – for me, for my family, and for our congregation!

¼ TIME MINISTRY: SPECIAL PROJECTS

(Teaching, writing and outreach, sharing our story and my learning to empower the larger Church's ministry)

This is the part you don't get to see, but I wish I could take you along with me so you could know the impact your faith and our life together is having in the world. It is so inspiring.

- **Confirmation Curriculum**

One long and exciting day in January, I was part of a small and brilliant team of brainstormers that helped develop a new confirmation curriculum for Presbyterians, which was released in October through Sparkhouse/Augsburg Fortress Press.

- **Ministry in Australia & New Zealand**

In February, I taught at a week-long camp in Christchurch, New Zealand for young adults from all over Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific Islands, and South Korea – lecturing on the Way of God and the Way of Fear, and daily teaching and leading different prayer practices. It was wonderful meeting young Christians from so many different contexts, seeking to deepen their relationship with God and follow God faithfully.

My family got to help restore a public art installation honoring victims of the Christchurch earthquake. And we heard from pastors what being church is like in the aftermath of a massive natural disaster that shifts a whole city's functioning and challenges crisis-weary people's capacity for hope and trust.

I connected with a pastor in New Zealand who had found our church's story online, and wanted to learn from our experience as his own congregation was going through significant change.

Finally, a professor from a seminary in New Zealand came across our cell phone liturgy that someone from the camp shared, and now our cell phone liturgy is incorporated into seminary classrooms in New Zealand.

This trip also meant revisiting places that were a formative part of my journey to become a pastor. I got to preach at Collins Street Baptist Church in Melbourne, Australia, in the pulpit of a professor turned pastor, Simon Holt, who, along with his wife, Brenda, took Andy and me under his wing when I was disillusioned and right out of seminary, unsure what God had for me next. It was a powerful experience to be back there with our kids, and to reconnect with such significant people in our lives. The congregation at Collins Street committed to holding LNPC in prayer, and later sent us a cross for our collection, to remind us that we are all part of God's Church, belonging to each other –even on the other side of the world.

- **Teaching pastors NVC**

In May, Pastors Jamie Schultz from Bryn Mawr, Phil GebbenGreen from Edgumbe, and I led a 4-day workshop for our presbytery at Bay Lake Camp, called "Empathy and Honesty: Compassionate Communication for Pastors." We had a great group of about a dozen leaders participate in this intensive course in Non-Violent Communication (NVC), gaining skills and practicing listening to others and ourselves for the deeper needs that open up new ways of relating and leading.

- **Encouraging pastors to watch for God**

In July, I led a workshop, a keynote presentation, and was part of a panel discussion at Luther Seminary's "Rethinking Church" conference, for 500 pastors and church leaders. The church is in a time of massive change, and congregations everywhere are struggling with what it means to be church today. Many pastors are tired and disillusioned. It was

such an honor to be part of that conversation, to encourage pastors and help people look not at what is lacking, but at where God is moving. The response to your story was enormous – for weeks afterwards I fielded requests for speaking engagements, written articles and follow-up conversations. I was interviewed for a research group looking at how to better train future pastors in seminary, and I continue to get messages from pastors who attended the conference, seeking ideas and support.

- **Making prayer more accessible**

In October I led a one-day presbytery event on Prayer, in Spicer, MN. I was the keynote speaker and led a workshop on *lectio divina*. It is a great joy to watch the things we learn and experience together at LNPC reach out and impact others, and then in turn, through sharing them outside our walls, refine what I bring back into my preaching and ministry in our community.

- **Supporting youth workers**

In November I attended the National Youth Worker's Convention for the 8th year, to serve youth pastors as a spiritual director and lead workshops. This event is attended each year by 3,000 church leaders and volunteers. This year I led workshops on Sabbath-keeping, Prayer for the Nation, and Spiritual Journaling, and met with a dozen youth pastors for one-on-one spiritual direction. It has been a great blessing to me to serve with a team of incredibly gifted spiritual directors offering support and opportunities for growth in faith, rest and renewal to those serving the church in a wildly diverse variety of contexts and locations.

Doing pure spiritual direction for three days each year feels like a booster shot: it reminds me that God is already active and helps me practice paying attention. It sharpens my noticing skills, and reminds me what I believe, and who I want to be as a pastor.

- **Writing our Story**

Throughout the year I have been writing – our story of trust, Sabbath, ministry and being church together and how we experience God, along with my own story of becoming a pastor, and what I've learned pastoring you. This project is harder than I imagined it would be, and it's been a year of ups and downs, feast and famine, breakthroughs and frustrations, as I continue to seek God's direction in the writing, and figure out how to prioritize regular writing time. Thank you for the encouragement and accountability to write (especially Sue H and Carolyn!).

Church: I love being your pastor. I can't believe we have come to our tenth year together.

I can't wait to see what God has for us this year.

Thank you for seeking God together and loving each other well.

In gratitude, truly,

Kara

ASSOCIATE PASTOR'S REPORT

It has been an honor to serve as the Associate Pastor for Congregational Care for 2017.

It was a year of deepening connections, quiet and raucous moments, learning and loving.

I have been grateful to get to know more members of our church more deeply.

It has been a joy to share in worship – in planning and preaching, and helping out where it was useful.



It's been both fun and challenging to lead our adult Sunday School time – discerning how best to shape our conversations together in order to build up a stronger community seeking to know and to follow the will of God.

It's been a true pleasure to work with Shannon, our intern from Luther. We've met weekly, and I have a deep admiration for her faithfulness, and for all that she brings to our church.

Looking Ahead: My goal in this next year is to create a plan so that I can regularly check in with each one of our congregation members, and those who are a part of our faith family.

I am excited about how God will move among us, especially in the Sabbatical time.

Lisa

INTERN REPORTS

Shannon Ferrard-Barnardin
Children's Ministry & General Pastoral Intern



Dear Lake Nokomis Community,

It has been my pleasure to learn and grow alongside you these past few months. I cannot believe how quickly the time has passed!

I have enjoyed teaching the children each week during Sunday School. You have a lively and big-hearted group of children, who think carefully about how God works in the world, and in their daily lives. It has been my pleasure to shepherd these children as they explore their relationships with God and other people. Each Sunday, we gather together to do art, share in prayer, learn about the day's Bible text, construct a way to teach and lead the congregation, and write an offering prayer. This time has given me the opportunity to reflect upon the importance of fostering community in children's ministry.

These past few months I have undertaken a project to share a monthly take-home family resource guide. These resource booklets offer learning and practices for families to undertake in their homes. I hope that they create opportunities for families to reflect on the seasons of the church year, the ways that God is at work in their homes, and the ways that Christians are called to share God's love with those around us.

This winter and spring, I will be preaching two more sermons. Thank you for your kind words, and your reflections about the sermon that I preached during Advent.

I am also excited to be studying the neighborhood around Lake Nokomis during these next few months. I will be learning more about who lives in your church neighborhood, and what changes are taking place. I will assemble this data in order to reflect upon where God is already at work, and how God might be inviting LNPC to participate in this work. I look forward to sharing these thoughts with you before I leave in June.

Grace and peace,

Shannon

Katie Holmberg
Youth Ministry Intern



My time at LNPC has not been very long so far, but a lot has come from it.

As the intern youth pastor, I have done a variety of different things. I have planned Sunday lessons for the youth bi-monthly, organized a Christmas party for the youth to put on for the congregation, participated in planning a 5th Sunday service, gotten to know the youth and congregation, helped decorate for Christmas... The list could go on!

What I'm learning from all of this though is how important and fragile relationships can be. This includes all kinds of relationships, relationships with one's self, others and God are a just a few. These relationships mean everything, and they're not ever going to be perfect. Because of this, a lot of grace is needed. In my time at LNPC I have received this grace, from God, others, and now myself. Grace is not something I have experienced a lot before, especially from myself, and I am very grateful to the LNPC community for teaching me about it.

Katie

CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL REPORT

*Responses from the congregation to the question, **Where did I see God this year?***

Through reconnecting with old friends, sharing over coffee and meals, through joyful worship.
-Cynthia Wunder

Racing Robbie in the narthex! Who has more energy, brings more life to our gathering, than our kids? I spent a wonderful few minutes - and many many 'on your marks' - challenging and being challenged by Robbie Martin to races on the carpet after church last fall. I don't think I ever won.

With every new person, young or older, that chooses to join in this journey, we are a changed group. We grow in wisdom and possibility, and are surprised by total joy!

-Sue Goodspeed

I saw God was in so many ways. Being at my granddaughter's graduation party. Lee's beautiful daughter's wedding. Then two weeks later return for Monica's daughter's wedding. So many tears but so much joy. He was with me when I was caregiver to people who really needed me I know he put me right where I belonged. Seeing the Hanson family if even for a night, it was the first I had seen them as a family♥. Praise God for so much joy.

-Barb Day

I see God when the kids in our community know they belong and are a part of our church, when they take the offering, read their prayers, and offer up prayers or milestones of their own.

I see God when I am reminded as a part of the church that I can live in the really real, the way of God and trust instead of the way of fear. When we remind each other that we all belong to God and we all belong to each other.

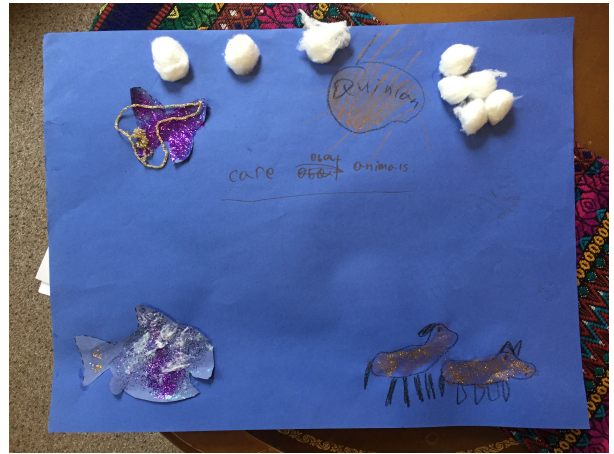
-Amy Leafblad



I saw God in my grandpa's birthday.

- **Siggy Leafblad**

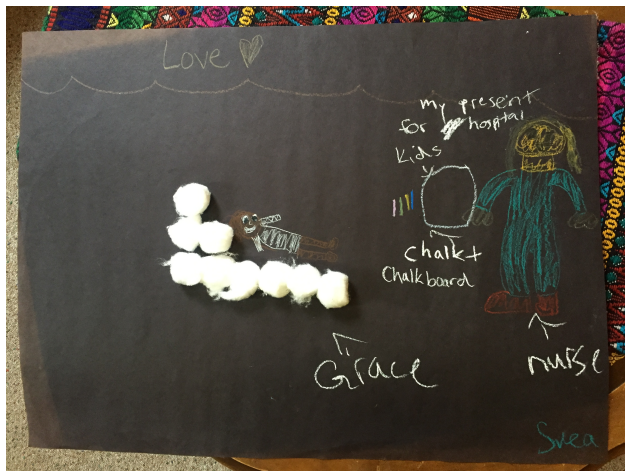
I saw God this year in taking care of animals.
 - **Quinlin Zeller**



I saw God this year in the first snowfall.
 - **Allegra Bernardin**



I saw God when I was born.
 - **Presley Zeller**



I saw God bringing toys to children at the hospital.
 - **Svea Leafblad**

REPORT FROM AN AUTHOR

J Dana Trent wrote, For Sabbath's Sake this year, and used our story in her book. Here is a message from here for our annual report.



Dear Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church,

In writing *For Sabbath's Sake*, I learned that I, as an individual, and we--as a church--must embrace the double portion of manna God us in the sabbath. But it takes humility and trust. We must be humble enough to understand that we are not the Creator, Maintainer, and Sustainer of this world--and we must *trust* that God really meant what God said when God commanded sabbath. Busy is a choice; sabbath is well within our grasp. And, when we practice sabbath, we empower others to do so as well. In this way, sabbath becomes a powerful tool not only of humility and trust--but of justice and activism. Sabbath is the one day per week that informs the remaining six, and not the other way around.

You--Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church--have inspired me and many, many, many readers. In an age of the "over-programmed church," you took a self-assessment and decided, maybe *less* is more--and it is. You are a leaving breathing example of embracing humility and trust, the double portion of manna that keeps us connected with God, ourselves, and others. Thank you.

This year, I saw God right before me, begging me to embrace sabbath as rest, worship, and community. This gift is free to all--we only have to open it. There's no need to be paralyzed by legalism or be fraught with the worry of getting it perfect--we have 52 beautiful chances per year to dive into this deep mystical space of spiritual growth. What a gift!

Thank you!

J. Dana Trent

REPORT FROM A VISITING PASTOR



In mid June 2017 I had the opportunity to stay in Minnesota for three weeks and visit a number of congregations on the Sundays, and meet with their Pastors during the week. I was interested in how different congregations were responding to the decline in church attendance and the increasing secularization of the western world. This is a major issue in New Zealand, where I am a pastor in a small central city church in Auckland. Lake Nokomis Presbyterian was one of the congregations that visited. I joined you for one of your summer series on prayer, and the Saturday I attended the focus was on body prayer. I was sort of glad that no one really knew me as I grappled with this way of prayer!

I was impressed with the creative way that Lake Nokomis was responding to the decline in traditional church attendance, by actively listening to God and to each other, and making the bold decision to practice observance of the Sabbath. For me this was a strong counter cultural statement and an assertion that faith is not a baptizing of business, but an embracing of slowness, connectivity, and community. As the world gets more hectic, and people retreat to their devices, maybe the place of the church is to remind people of the more gentle arts of friendship, and conversation, and provide a place where they can be practiced.

Here in New Zealand my congregation is grappling with its future mission. What I learned during my time in Minnesota was the importance of seeking God and listening again to what is important in faith. I liked your "Guiding Convictions" that were displayed on the church lounge wall, and I hope to help my Session develop some of their own as we tackle many of the same issues that you have faced.

I wish you well in the coming year, and look forward to the next time I can visit. (Maybe another aspect of prayer next time though!)

Brett Johnstone
Minister of Somervell Presbyterian Church Auckland

REPORT FROM OUR ARTIST IN THE BASEMENT



These past few months, I focused a lot on gratitude for what I've been given during difficult times, including the community of LNPC.

Being able to rent space here has made all the difference in my life because--although my studio stores a bunch of my "stuff"--that space made it possible for me to make a living as an interior designer last year. It also gave me room to explore, learn, and make art in a way I never imagined in the past.

I truly believe this opportunity was Divine, both with clients and LNPC; there was definitely a theme of wonderful, unexpected connections.

Although I can be elusive, never doubt my gratitude for the space you've shared and the trust you've given me. You may not see me very often, but this space, the church, and the people make me feel connected more than you may realize.

God bless.

Mark Carlson

REPORT FROM MOVIE CAMP 2017: HOME

This year's Movie Camp experience was an adventure, with a new cast member and a few unexpected plot twists. Pastor Kara and the members of LNPC helped us navigate the course, and it is probably the BEST results we have experienced in the 7 years of partnership.

Our newest cast member, Daniel McLaughlin, stepped in to replace the Seals (Rev. Dean, Kirsten, and Jacob) as producer, director, editor, and filmmaker. Daniel serves as Production Manager for the Theatre Department at the University of Northwestern in St. Paul.

Movie Camp had a rocky start. Our initial group of clients were uncooperative, and did not take direction well. After 30 minutes of displaying poor attitudes and behaviors, our staff decided to have the clients return to St. Joe's.

While walking back to St. Joe's, we called the emergency shelter unit manager and asked her if any of the clients who were currently staying in emergency shelter would like to participate in Movie Camp. She went to ask them, and ALL 9 said YES. We asked if they could be ready in 20 minutes, and by the time we returned to St. Joe's they were all ready and waiting for us to walk over to LNPC – they didn't complain and were excited to participate – even when it began to rain!

Eager to learn and to display their unique gifts and abilities, the group of young people ages 12 to 17 years old jumped in. They enjoyed learning about theater warm-ups, participated in script writing and plot development, devoured the homemade lunches (particularly the spaghetti sauce), and were on their most cooperative behavior when making props and developing costumes.

The parable storyline developed by the clients was about a greedy landlord who had plans to tear down a poor, urban church in hopes of building new condos. When he burst in to a church service to make the announcement to the congregation that the church needed to raise \$500,000 or face closure, the congregation was aghast.

The church members rallied to raise nearly \$500,000 but fall just short of their goal. The landlord and his assistant show up for the final benefit concert, and after the concert he informs the pastor that he will close the building in the morning. On the way in to the building the following morning, one of the homeless persons whom the church has helped confronts the landlord, "These church members have provided me food and shelter—this is my home! I have nowhere else to go." And poses this question to the landlord, "Do you have a home?"

The landlord has a change of heart when he realizes the impact the church has had on the homeless person, and others in the neighborhood, including his own administrative secretary, who grew up in the neighborhood. He provides money for church repairs and for neighborhood revitalization, and joins the work of the church! Through his change of heart he finds a HOME.

Special thanks to our director, editor, filmmaker, and producer: Daniel McLaughlinAnd, to the members of Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church for feeding us, hosting us and providing us a “safe place to land”, and for providing funds for Movie Camp.

Thank you, all for your support and encouragement!

Chaplain Amy Teske



REPORT FROM STORYTELLER'S LODGE

Dan Johnson, Spiritual Director



I'm Dan Johnson and have used the Storyteller's Lodge to offer spiritual direction during 2017. I noticed God particularly in the changes this year. Some of those changes were in my own life and some in the lives of the people I met. Where God's grace seemed especially poignant was in transforming the challenges of ending one thing into the space needed to welcome the next thing.

I was very grateful to have the stability and consistency of the Storyteller's Lodge during this time. The people who came to share their stories had known space and even a favorite chair to sit in. That may not seem like much at first, but these little things are avenues for grace.

God met us there in that room, in the midst of the heart-felt stories, in that unique way of prayer known as spiritual direction.

Thank you for your openness as a church and supporting the Lodge.

Dan

MUSIC MINISTRIES REPORT

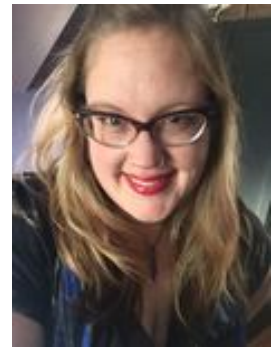
This year we ended a chapter in our life together, saying goodbye to Jeanne Rylander. We held a special service of music and a farewell party in July blessing her and sending her on. We are so grateful for her presence, leadership and gifts that shaped us for over 8 years.

Over the summer several conversations were held about music in worship. We acknowledged we are in a time of change – which always come with both grieving and celebrating hand in hand, facing the unknown with excitement and anxiety mixed in together. At the end of this report are the notes from those fruitful conversations.

In October we welcomed Erin DeBoer-Moran to serve as our new Music Director. She brought her twenty years of church music experience, her love of shaping worship experiences, (and her delightful family) to bless us. Some highlights since her arrival include singing our Advent liturgy throughout the season, honoring Barb Wilson's 42 years singing in the Lake Nokomis Choir, and Jane Onken's Advent prelude on the organ.

Erin shares:

As the newest staff member at LNPC, it's been an exciting 3 months getting to know the congregation, your musical needs and desires, and musical resources and talent in the congregation (from choir, to hand bells, to instrumentalists, to soloists, to kids singing... and more!). This will be a continual learning process as we're always changing and growing, and there's still so much to learn about each other.



We tried out some new music since October, and will continue to learn those new songs to grow them into our repertoire, while also incorporating favorite hymns and familiar songs. 2017 ended with a beautiful Christmas Eve service, incorporating musical special guests My Anchor Holds and cellist Adrianna O'Brien.

We look forward to all the ways music will deepen our worship and life together in 2018!

SUMMER MUSIC CONVERSATION NOTES

CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

What is important to us:

- Community – it's a shared experience with others.
- We feel close to God when music is quiet and peaceful instrumental, or when it's simple and repetitive, not having to focus on the words when we're singing.
- We appreciate beauty – whether solo, instrumental, etc. We like being able to listen to beautiful music.
- Participation – we like when people join in with energy.

- Knowing what we're doing, feeling competent (knowing the song, the words, etc.) is important.
- Singing with/near strong singers makes it more fun and feels good.
- Inclusion of kids is very important – willing to adapt to involve our kids well.
- Building familiarity, we'd like to learn a collection of songs that we can know well.
- Words that are meaningful, make us think, and it matters to us that the music has good theology.
- Sometimes music that feels other than us, grander, or you can feel in your body, like big organ, or drums.
- Quality music.
- A leader who guides us

Some things we might be telling ourselves that aren't helping us:

- We are not good at singing (eg, gospel)
- Maybe I am the only one who feels this way... (eg, likes this song, wishes we could sing that, etc.)

CHOIR REFLECTIONS

What is important to us:

- Connection with the music, gospel and old hymns. Good words.
- Music that triggers memory and meaning
- Sometimes organ gives chills
- Christmas Eve: the beauty of Stan's voice, extra music, good music, the time of day-dark
- A universal sense of connection to others through music ("We don't have ownership over that music" – singing hymns with others far away in another language)
- Participating with others
- Music that fills you
- Music that makes you settle into yourself, meditative, contemplative – love Taize, rounds and parts
- Feeling part of one sound with others – the physicality of that
- Anybody can join in – not just for experts
- Harmony, surrounded by sound

Some things we might be telling ourselves that aren't helping us:

We're not enough, We're too small.

What we have loved about Choir:

- friends
- both the continuity and the freshness of new people
- doing things well together – when quality sound and quality music combine
- honoring God. (And not feeling embarrassed)
- singing
- support of others while singing
- a director who combines encouragement and support with learning
- stretching and finding out we can do things we and others might not think we can

- working hard and feeling good about what we do
- singing in a group

What has been challenging about Choir:

- small size
- Need more basses
- Non-musical/logistical practice or structure lacking
- Never feel ready – want more time with the piece to get past knowing the notes to working the music
- Nervous we can't give a director what s/he wants
- Schedules – when all are not there, which is common
- It's hard to hear the choir from the congregation

What is Choir for?

- To lead, help the congregation know the hymns and lead them in singing
*This conversation transitioned into: **What is music for in worship?***
 - o *It's prayer, exhortation to worship and marvel at the glory of God, it's blessing/benediction*
 - o *Music focuses the service itself – singing is all participating*
 - o *Music connects people emotionally (choir and congregation connect emotionally when choir sings)*
 - o *It's important and fun*
 - o *It adds depth and color*

SESSION REFLECTIONS

- We are feeling our way together into this next musical chapter.
- We want someone who can “improv” with us, experiment and learn together what will work for us now.
- Someone who will embrace who we are – very eclectic tastes and needs.
- Someone laid back but also skilled – who can roll with our quirks and bring out our best.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Children are ministers among and alongside us. We all help each other watch for God, and join in God's love in action. This year the kids taught us each Sunday, drawing from our scripture for the day and what they learned in Sunday school. They wrote and led the offering prayers in worship, and continue serving as our usher teams.

For Sunday school, Pastor Kara taught the grades K-4 class and Andy R. taught the youth grades 5-8, exploring scripture and using art, games and other activities to unpack its meaning, and praying for each other. We ended the Sunday school year with a combined class with adults, making a large cross for our cross exhibit displayed in ArtSpace over the summer.

This summer kids were part of our "Summer of Praying and Playing" as we tried out different ways to pray, including walking prayer, praying with clay, praying with beads, and praying with music.

In the Fall we welcomed our Interns Katie Holmberg, who took over the youth leader role, and Shannon Ferrard-Bernardin, who became our children's ministry leader. Advent saw the youth playing bells, and children leading us in the Advent liturgy and helping us collect presents for Toys for Tots. The year ended with the youth throwing a wonderful Christmas party for the congregation.

We continued to have nannies from College Nannies and Tutors available on Sundays for our growing baby and toddler population, and enjoyed watching our smallest ones grow into more participation in worship. Baby Andrew was baptized in December, and we welcomed baby Ian, who made his congregational debut at the Christmas party and topped it off by appearing as Baby Jesus alongside the rest of his family on Christmas Eve.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Kara Root



PERSONNEL TEAM REPORT

The current personnel committee consists of Terry Gilberstadt, Linda Leicht, Amy Leafblad, and Sue Goodspeed.

The ministry of the Personnel Committee is to be an advocate for staff and, when helpful, a conduit for conversation between staff and congregation. This has been an active and, for the most part, joyful year for Personnel, with a variety of transitions and new initiatives.

After a pretty busy 2016, 2017 brought its own responsibilities. In 2017, the Personnel Team:

- Personnel members finally implemented the staff reviews for which we began the process in February (or so)
- We sorrowfully received the resignation of Jeanne Rylander as our Director of Music Ministries
- We collaborated on the revision of the position description for Director of Music Ministries
- We met with Erin DeBoer-Moran – the committee and many members of the congregation – to share visions of ways that music might be integrated in worship
- In August, we recommended the hiring of Erin as our new Director of Music Ministries.

What will 2018 hold? Well, there is Sabbatical...

Thanks to God and God's people for wisdom, support, resilience, and generosity throughout 2017.

Sue Goodspeed, Chair



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN REPORT

The Presbyterian Women meet on the third Wednesday of the month for a little social time and a bible study led by Kara. In December we have a Christmas luncheon to which everybody in the congregation is invited. In May we have a spring luncheon to which all can come also. We do not meet in the summer.

This year, for the fourth year, we have continued using a book about our foremothers. There is an amazing number of women mentioned in the Bible. There is very little known about many other than their name, but some were very important despite the male dominated times. Any woman in the church is always welcome to come. Our attendance has dropped off due mostly to the fact that we are aging and are not able to be as active as we would wish.

Also due to the above we did not have a bazaar again this year. It is our dearest wish that more women will find the time and desire to join us. It would be good to be able to be more active as an organization.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbora Wilson



ADMINISTRATION REPORT

Members

Pastor Kara, Dick Gross, Gary Johnson

2017 has been a challenging year for building use. The number of groups in the Church increased to 35 groups / organizations. On average, there is a group using the building every day. Iglesias Fuego Pentecostes do a wonderful job of keeping the basement clean.

Linnea and Jose have helped with groups using Nokomis hall by Opening and closing the building at late hours.

LNPC changed rubbish haulers to the city of Minneapolis. They offer recycling and composting as well as trash pickup. Minneapolis is fussy about using the right can for each item. Picture signs showing what goes where should help.

We had one unexpected bill for boiler repair. Pressure relief valves were leaking and needed replacing. This spring the roof may need some patching again.

A schedule of rooms for deep cleaning has been added to the operation manual. Cleaning would include waxing floors-furniture/organize drawers/ dusting/etc.

Spring and fall cleanup days helped the entryway look inviting for everyone.

Thank you to all the stewards of LNPC who see an opportunity and take care of it.

Respectfully submitted

Gary Johnson



“PENTECOST PRACTICE RUN” TITHE REPORT

As session reflected on Pentecost, and the moment when the mission went from centralized in the person of Jesus, to being embodied by all these people who make up the Body of Christ, we decided to do something different with our tithe money for a month. **What must it have been like to suddenly have the mission in your hands? To pray to the Spirit for guidance and trust the Spirit to use you to bless someone else? To learn to let God work through you?**

We talk all the time here about noticing God, seeking to join in what God is doing, and coming alongside others in suffering and joy, and that is what we are called to do. To give and receive the ministry of God. But that can feel abstract. We wanted to make it concrete. So May's tithe (which was double the size of April's!) was put into 17 envelopes with \$100 each inside them. The tithe was not to be given to an organization, but was meant for personal connections with people.

We trust that in Jesus Christ, we all belong to God and we all belong to each other. This was a chance to live that out in a creative way. **Seventeen people left worship Sunday with an envelope in their pocket, and the job of praying and asking the Holy Spirit to show us for whom it might be meant.**

HERE'S WHAT THIS MEANT:

- **This is God's money.** It is not the Church's money, and it is not the money of those who would be sharing it. It belongs to God. *On Sunday we prayed over the money – setting it aside, like we do the bread and the cup at communion, asking God to make it something holy, something that God will use to bless people, a tool of the Holy Spirit in the hands of witnesses and ministers, (that's us).*
- **We are God's ministers.** Ministry is sharing each other's suffering, and holding each other's joy. We asked, How might God be calling you to use this money to do that with someone? An unexpected blessing? A way to say, "I see you. I am here"? An expression of gratitude for the blessing they are? We said, Whether you give it to someone you know well or to a stranger - you are watching for God's leading and seeking to joining in God's ministry.
- **This is practice listening to God.** They were to pray about it, to ask God to whom to give it, and how. **Don't rush**, we said. The Spirit often meets us in the silence, in waiting, in in-between, liminal spaces and times. Give yourself some space to listen and discern, we told them. Ask for confirmation from God. (Unless you were absolutely certain the moment the envelope was placed in your hands because you're already being called to be with and for someone in a specific way and God's Spirit has been hovering over that for a while...)!

- **This is the practice run, a symbolic act.**

Those among us with the burden of God's money in our pockets had a specific assignment, something concrete to do. It was training wheels. The harder thing is to watch and respond in the world with the gifts God has already entrusted to us that we can't see or don't recognize as gifts: Our hands and voice, our words and touch, our presence, our own needs, hopes, fears, doubts, weaknesses, and joys. God wants to use each of us and all of us to draw others into Christ's love. Our whole lives belong to God, and neither this small amount of money, nor our great efforts, are what does anything good in the world. God's Spirit is what brings hope and healing, through us. So we all get to be watching for how God is calling us to share God's love with others, and we also got to be praying specifically for those who would be representing us in this adventure of giving.

- **It might be uncomfortable.** That's ok. (It's a normal, appropriate reaction. We are pretty weird about money in our culture, not to mention the unspoken rules about the wall we uphold between the superficial and the real!) Notice the discomfort, we said. Stay there a bit, even. Trust that God will meet you there. We said, If this feels lonely or overwhelming, pull someone else in to do it with you, pray together, talk together, wonder together what God is leading you to do. We are not alone - we belong to God and we belong to each other. This was practice living that out in many different ways.

- **We shared about it on June 18.** We are witnesses: We encounter Christ and we share about it. By standing up and sharing, or writing a note that Kara or Lisa read in worship, each tithe giver came come back and told us what it was like. Was it awkward? Uncomfortable? Thrilling? Joyful? How did they choose to whom to give it? What happened afterwards? How did they encounter Christ through this experience? Below are their reports!

OUR TITHE GIVERS WERE:

Pat Niznick, Elaine Redman, Lisa Johnson, Barb Wilson, Diane Hansen, Steve Martin (Chris Martin's dad), Alice Gogh, Owen Root, Sue Goodspeed, Svea Leafblad, Tiny visitor, Soren Leafblad, Eva Webb, Joyce Tesarek, Amy Leafblad, Norm Petrik, Brittany Dexter:



AND, HERE ARE THEIR REPORTS:

SUE GOODSPEED

Anticipating the distribution, I sat in worship thinking 'please, not me.' Of course, that was answered with, 'oh, yea?'

I didn't have any initial thoughts, except that I wanted to give the bill where it would stand out - not be just another drop in some anonymous bucket - and I could share personally.

I've been able to help serve meals at Our Savior's, with Lindsay's leadership, for a number of years. We always serve on Tuesdays, and Marlene is always there - as a volunteer showing care and friendship to residents. Her love for those 'on the outs' is genuine and generous. She contributes prizes for the Bingo games she calls, in which just about everyone participates after dinner. She also gives her time and care to homeless folk who stop by St. Olaf Catholic downtown.

A week or so after receiving the charge to share from LNPC's tithe, we were serving at Our Savior's. I decided that Marlene's ministry was one I wanted to support; she was one I wanted to thank. I wrote a note, enclosed the funds, and gave it to her as we chatted over 'Taco Tuesday' dinner. She excused herself for a bit, and returned, having opened the card, and tearily thanked us for seeing her work, and supporting her in her caring.

I was really nervous entering this responsibility, but felt calm as soon as I realized I was to share with Marlene. God worked through nerves and doubt to bless a person who needed to be blessed by us.

Thanks be to God.

Sue

STEVE MARTIN – (Chris Martin's Dad, visiting from England)

Dear Rev. Kara,

Amanda and I very much enjoyed our visit to LNPC two weeks ago and appreciated the welcome and fellowship. It was a surprise to be selected as a Pentecost Tither. We discussed it with Jen and Chris expecting that they might have a suggestion but they were not guided to any clear idea. So, we returned to the UK just over a week ago and continued to pray about it. It made me a bit anxious and uncertain if/whether we would hear any guidance.

I've not been sleeping well (jet lag and heat) and a couple of nights ago, in the middle of the night, it came into my mind that we should give the tithe money to Peter and Rosemary Waghorn. They are an older couple who live in Monmouth whom we have known since 2004. They don't go to our church but are a couple who 'walk the walk'. They had a small property that used to be used as an emergency stopover although that has ended. However, they continue to welcome and put up people who are homeless, newly released from prison or in other difficult circumstances. They share God's love in word and in deed, often at great cost to themselves. They may provide food, transport and sometimes pay the costs of those they help. I hope the tithe will be an encouragement but also practical help.

I hope to be able to visit and give them the money tomorrow and if I can, I will email again, before your service, to let you know how it was received.

The idea of the 'Pentecost Practice Run' is an inspiration and I have discussed it with the Team Vicar at our church - St Thomas' the Martyr Anglican (Episcopal) Church in Monmouth, which is in south Wales.

thank you for your prayers. I hope your service goes well tomorrow.

Best wishes,
Steve Martin

Dear Kara,

I was a little nervous before visiting Rosemary and Peter and prayer about it. In the event, it all went well. They were pleased to hear about LNPC and the 'Pentecost Tithers' and they were delighted to receive the gift. As it happens (coincidence?) they are seeing someone tomorrow who is going through some very difficult times and the gift may be able to help in that situation.

I have attached a picture taken this morning. They attend Monmouth Baptist Church but have a variety of involvements in the town for example – Rosemary is a trustee of an important youthwork project.



They will write to you in due course. In the meantime, thank you for letting me be a part of this initiative and thank you from Peter and Rosemary for the gift.

Best wishes,
Steve Martin

Dear Kara,

Steve and Amanda Martin, our friends in Monmouth, passed on to us the gift they received from your Church when they visited you in June. For many years we looked after homeless folk in this area and we are still in touch with a few of them. One is staying with us at present and needs financial help to return to his family in Slovenia so we have passed the money on to him (£80). It turned out that his air fare was £79.99 which made him smile and thank the Lord! Thank you so much for making this money available.

We feel that it is definitely a "God incident".

Please pass on our thanks to your Church.

Yours in Christ,

Peter and Rosemary Waghorn

NORM PETRIK

I gave mine to a man named Keith. We visited about an hour over coffee. He lives downtown, I learned of him through the Twin Cities Men's Center Director, he is 30% Service Connected for military service, has some court problems because he has had trouble making child support payments, for his 2 children. He has traumatic head injury and has a hard time paying rent on his downtown apt. I gave him a copy of Men Talk the Men's Center newsletter. It was an enjoyable visit and seemed like a good choice to help him. Norm Petrik

I gave it to a man at the Twin Cities Men's Center who was very needy. He was very appreciative.

Norm

OWEN ROOT

I bought toys for children. I wrapped them and put a picture on the outside so parents could see what was in each gift. Two weeks before Christmas, I delivered them to the hospital. The volunteer coordinator told me they usually try to discharge as many people as they can before Christmas, but that this week most beds were full.

I got a Thank you note saying how much it meant to families. Parents "shopped" for their kids, and gave them gifts in their hospital rooms on Christmas. I was glad to be part of it.

Owen

LISA JOHNSON

This was an interesting experience. I gave my tithe to my son Ben. I had someone else in mind and not him... or God would put someone else in my path... but when I prayed about it, I always found I was redirected to thinking about Ben and how alone he feels sometimes in Cincinnati....and so it is with God. I gave it to him...with the LNPC card and note and a personal note about blessings. I told him about our tithe practices in past couple years and how this came about... we don't worry about \$ so much anymore...more about direction from God. He is going through a not-so-friendly divorce in addition to the challenges of his medical problems. He feels isolated and alone a lot. I told him that folks at church still ask about him and some other friends at a wedding....and caring people all around him in his life...though they may be far away. Like a little foundation of love from God that is there all the time in the background for him. I told him about Eva praying for our service men and women weekly that they get the help they need. He knows he is blessed to be as well as he is. He said he was so touched that he will keep to look at when he needs that connection reminder....or for a cab for a medical crisis to get to VA if he doesn't have access to a car.

Lisa

PAT NIZNICK

I gave my money to Lisa Larges as I felt Lisa had done a great many things for our church and many of these things were done without pay, I felt she could use the extra money and it was given to someone I knew. It was a strange experience to be given money to give to someone else. I'm sure anyone would have loved to receive this money. I didn't know Lisa very well at this time, and didn't know that she was going on a trip with her family in the very near future. As I stated in church that day, there are many people sitting in wheelchairs off Crosstown and 62. But if I gave the money to them I figured I would never see them again or know where or what the money was used for. With Lisa, I knew it would go to good use, and that made me feel good. It was after Lisa's trip that she came to me in church, took my hand, and thanked me so much for the money. While on her trip she was able to use the extra money for meals and nice places to eat that otherwise she would not have been able to afford. Lisa has called me several times and I think we have grown much closer and for this I am happy.
Pat

SVEA LEAFBLAD

Svea bought an electric pencil sharpener for her teacher because the class one had broken and they weren't getting a new one. Svea was super excited when she thought of this idea and experienced joy in being able to meet that need for her class. She also bought stuffed animals for Gillette Children's hospital which was the place Sig was in for her accident.
(Amy)

SOREN LEAFBLAD

Soren sent the money to our friends who work for Youthfront in Kansas City. They used it to help kids from their lower income neighborhood get to camp and have some snack money their as well! At first Soren had a hard time thinking of what to do with his money but it was rewarding to get a letter back from our friends about how they would use it and how excited the kids that benefitted would be! Very cool connection.
(Amy)

AMY LEAFBLAD

I had thought about giving it to my teacher friend which is what I reported that Sunday. I was saving it to give it to her in person because I was going to see her the next week but the get together got cancelled. I put the 100 dollars in my wallet with the thought that maybe something else will come up and I wanted to be open to it. A few weeks later at Central Sunday School they gave people 100 dollar bills and I helped explain how and why and what we had done at LNPC. One of the members after church took me aside and asked if I thought it would be a wrong use of his 100 dollars to use it to pay some bills because money was really running low and he could really use it. It was hard to say to him but I said, "Yes I think this money is really supposed to go to someone else; that's part of the

deal." I thought for a second about the 100 dollars in my wallet, should I take mine out and just give it to him? But I didn't. On the way home I was feeling a little guilty. I should have just given mine to him right then. I told myself I would give it to him next week.

The next week I came into church and found a card in the office and wrote him a note and gave him the card and money. He came up to me a few minutes later with tears in his eyes. He said he was so incredibly thankful, and that God was testing him. He had given his money away on the way home from church to someone because he had wanted to keep it so bad and didn't trust himself. And now he felt taken care of by God.

It felt wonderful to be used by God in this way and to see God was involved in his process and the money went right where it was supposed to!

Amy

BARB WILSON

Giving away money is not as easy as one might think. When I received the \$100 I couldn't think of anyone that would be in need of this gift. After much thought and prayer, one day I remembered a conversation I had had with Jeanne Rylander when she was telling me about the inner city school where she teaches and a class she would like to take that she thought might inspire kids who had no previous experience with music. However, she didn't think she could afford to take the class. So I gave the money to Jeanne and she took the class and is now teaching her students how to play the harmonica to great success. She feels that music is a great tool to inspire everyone of all ages and I agree whole heartedly!

Barb

JOYCE TSAREK

I thought long and hard about who should receive this gift. It needed to be someone who would be more moved by being chosen and affirmed, than getting unexpected cash. My choice was Anthony.

Anthony is a most giving and loving person. He has devoted his life to helping people with stresses, phobias and addictions through his career as a therapist, including hypnotherapy. He often talks about the joy he feels when one of his patients has a breakthrough. He had difficult challenges in his past and found help and recovery through his relationship with God and the church, which experiences he also shares freely with clients and friends. Although it is a struggle financially, he will continue in this work for the satisfaction he feels helping people who are in trouble and need some encouragement and guidance.

Being my choice as a person I respect and honor brought tears to his eyes. I wasn't sure how this program would work, but I am grateful I was chosen and got to experience firsthand what an impact this had on Anthony, and how good I felt sharing this with him.

Joyce

DIANE HANSEN

I gave my \$100 to Robyn to give to Efra Farrah. Efra works with Robyn at Anthony middle school as a Health Assistant. Efra moved to the US from Somalia when she was five years old. She has been working at Anthony for five years. After the election she decided to move to Kenya to raise her seven year old son in a country where she feels more welcome. She is fearful of Donald Trump and what he might do to people from other countries if she stays here so she will leave here in July. I choose Efra because I was looking for someone to help and I learned of her plan to move to Kenya and that she could use a little financial help. I was glad to help, and she was very grateful.

Diane

UPDATE - Efra has moved to Kenya. Robyn and the kids and I hope to visit her in two years.

EVA WEBB

Interfaith Outreach was started about 40 years ago by LaDonna Hoy – my daughter-in-law’s mom, and she has been the director. I gave to IOCP because I know how good and honest it is – no one is getting rich from it. I have given to it for years. I was proud of LNPC for tithing, and glad that the next months’s gift from LNPC went to IOCP!

By the way – my grandson Mac got involved with Urban Ventures – he volunteered and loved it, so now he is going to Texas to get a teaching degree! (He graduated from Iowa State in 2017 and will be teaching and learning more).

Anyhow, I was happy and proud of my choice, because so many people will be fed and led to a better life.

Eva

MAISY ROOT

On Pentecost we passed out the money. I was NOT one of the people chosen. Afterwards, my mom went to visit Marty in hospice, and told him about what we were doing for Pentecost. Then, he wanted to be part of it. And he gave \$100 to me to use on a need in the world. There was this homeless man that every day when we drove to church, he was there. Right away I thought of him. I prayed for a few days, but nothing came to me, but I just kept thinking about him. It felt right giving it to him. For four years, I gave him granola bars, or hand warmers out the car window. But this time, we got out of the car and crossed the street and walked up to him. My mom and I introduced ourselves. He said he name was David. We gave him the envelope with \$100 in it. I told him about Marty. He had just died two days earlier. He said, “I’m so sorry about your friend.” He hugged me. We went back into the car and went to church. I felt satisfied and glad I could give him something. Now I pray for him, especially on really cold days.

Maisy

2017 TITHES

Since the end of 2015, LNPC has tithed 10% of our income to other expressions of God's ministry in the world. Tithing allows us to see the ripples of impact radiate out – connecting us to what God is doing in our city, country and in the world, which reminds us that this is God's ministry, and we get to share in it. Tithing is one strategy to deepen our trust. We do it *because* it is not easy. We do it *because* it is counter-intuitive. There may be other strategies to deepen our trust in the future. It's our job to keep on paying attention to what God is doing, and being willing to continue adapting and joining in God's ministry bravely and faithfully with all we've been given.

This year our tithes went to:

- **January – *Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota***: providing immigration legal assistance to low-income immigrants and refugees in Minnesota.
- **February – *The Council on American-Islamic Relations***: building coalitions that promote justice and encourage dialogue and mutual understanding.
- **March – *Central Church Fellowship***: SEE BELOW*
- **April – *International Institute of Minnesota***: welcomes refugees to the Twin Cities and assists in the transition process to their new community.
- **May – LNPC Pentecost Practice Run**. See above!
- **June – *Interfaith Outreach Community***: an organization near and dear to Eva's heart, which meets emergency and ongoing needs of the community.
- **July – *Nokomis Healthy Seniors***: a neighborhood organization dedicated to advancing senior health and independent living.
- **August – *Iglesia Presbteriana Unida Añasco (First Presbyterian church of Anasco, Puerto Rico)***: coordinating hurricane relief and community rebuilding efforts in the mountain villages of central Puerto Rico.
- **September – *Marnita's Table***: seeking to close gaps across difference through making **intentional social interaction** the new pattern for society.
- **October – *Iglesia Fuego Pentecostes***: the congregation that worships in our space three days a week, for their ministry and mission.

- **November – TRUST:** connecting South Minneapolis churches for community ministry with parish nursing and many other great programs.
- **December – Exodus Lending:** helping people break free from the cycle of payday loans.

Month	Designee	Tithe Amount	Congregational Giving	Misc. Receipts	Total Tithed Giving
Jan-17	Immigrant Law Center of MN	954.77	7,958.00	1,589.68	9,547.68
Feb-17	Council on American-Islamic Relations	1,060.48	6,727.00	3,877.81	10,604.81
Mar-17	Central Church	1,454.90	12,421.46	2,127.58	14,549.04
Apr-17	International Institute of MN	981.22	8,025.18	1,786.98	9,812.16
May-17	LNPC congregation - in \$100 pieces	1,700.00	15,022.40	2,593.54	17,615.94
Jun-17	Interfaith Outreach	1,238.06	10,487.00	1,893.61	12,380.61
Jul-17	Nokomis Healthy Seniors	1,580.66	13,963.00	1,843.63	15,806.63
Aug-17	Iglesia Presbiteriana Anasco	992.43	7,996.40	1,927.90	9,924.30
Sep-17	Marnita's Table	1,547.27	13,204.00	2,268.72	15,472.72
Oct-17	Iglesia Fuego Pentecostes	1,059.16	8,541.72	2,049.90	10,591.62
Nov-17	TRUST	1,918.31	17,587.96	1,595.09	19,183.05
Dec-17	Exodus Lending	1,562.75	12,632.50	2,995.00	15,627.50
TOTAL 2017		16,050.02			161,116.06

*Central Church Fellowship used their tithe to do the same thing we did at our Pentecost Practice Run: they divided the money and gave each person \$100 to go out and share in God's ministry.

Following is their report:

CENTRAL CHURCH FELLOWSHIP - TITHING THE TITHE 2017

Where the seeds were sown:

- A Personal Friend in need
- A Homeless Stranger
- Provided Food for a funeral repast for a family that could not afford to
- Financial assistant to a fellow parishioner
- Financial assistance for Kathy Erickson's trip to Kenya
- Financial assistance to Stan & Joan Hill following Stan's employment layoff
- Financial assistance to Vincent & Willie's sister in WI
- Donation to a local Community Center
- Financial assistance to a young family facing eviction

The personal experiences and impact of the experience:

Art - Made me personalize the offering and see & experience a tangible outcome & outcomes.

Kathy - Increased my awareness that once a gift leaves my hands it's up to God and the person to use it. I can't go back and question the wisdom of the giving.

John Burch - It felt good to have the resource to assist the Hill family during their financial struggles following Stan's sudden layoff.

Larry - It was a lesson in Trusting God. Trusting God's ability to make good of the offering beyond my anxieties and/or judgments about the recipient.

Charlotte - It increased my giving because it increased my concept about general giving and the traditional tithe.

Barb Clifton - It felt good to have the resource to assist a church member facing eviction and inspired me to add an additional \$200.

Mr. & Mrs. Greener - We experienced the need of spending time in prayer in order to receive God's guidance for where we would give the money.

Mr. & Mrs. Wooten - It felt good and satisfying to personally know the person and to know they received 100% of the intended offering verses only 10% - 20% if it had been filtered through a non-profit organization.

Dave - Giving to a homeless man collecting recyclables in a cart on Lake Street felt very nice. I was able to give up close and personal and I'd driven away, I happened to look back and I caught a glimpse of his reaction once he realized what I'd given him. It was a good feeling.

TREASURER'S SUMMARY AND FISCAL YEAR REPORT

"Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received." 1 Peter 4

... serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received... We're doing that! We have shared hospitality in joyful and difficult situations, with new parents and Marty, with interns and Dee. We have shared our gifts generously. And our commitment to 'off the top' giving has provided \$4,133 to Simpson Food Pantry and \$16,069 to other ministries outside ourselves through our monthly tithe. The amount of our tithe has increased *each year* since its inception in the fall of 2014, reflecting increases in our general (non-endowment) income.

The process of Treasurership seems to be smooth. Our bookkeeper handles all entries and tax responsibilities. All invoices and payroll have been met on time. Inquiries were made into having payroll sent via ACH to our staff, but this would have necessitated enrolling in a payroll system way above our needs (and willingness to pay). We continue to tweak our online and automatic giving options. Recently, online options were increased from the two-part 'General Giving' or 'LL Congregational Care' funds to include 'Building Fund' and 'other.' At this point, 'Building' means the set-aside Building Maintenance pool. 'Other' is available for things like retreat contributions.

Highlights:

- \$6,000 was withdrawn from the Endowment Fund during the year. This is the least we have withdrawn since 2006 – and its designation can be completely erased if Marty's estate gift is allocated to 'General Fund,' as was his intent (it was deposited to Endowment). We have a balance of \$55,246.28 a/o 1/20/18 – *not* including the \$15,000 congregational portion of the Lilly Sabbatical Grant that has been parked here.
- \$10,000 for general use was again gifted by Westminster Presbyterian - Minneapolis. They also used space for their Vacation Bible School for a second year – because they just have so much fun!
- We set up the Lisa Larges Congregational Care Fund in 2016, to help us step into our new relationship with Pastor Lisa, expecting to use funds to undergird her compensation. Of the \$8,300 donated for this Fund, only \$3,260 was used during 2017, meaning that of the \$12,272 she received in salary, we covered *over \$9,000* from our general giving!

A note for the year: the **2018 per capita** has been established: \$7.73 for General Assembly (national church), \$5.40 Synod of Lake and Praries (regional church), and \$21.37 for the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area (almost-local church) = **\$34.50**. We make a commitment, as

a congregation, pay this for each member on our rolls. The General Fund covers whatever is not specifically contributed by members, so please attempt to contribute for each member in your family. Per Capita is the share each of us has in the functioning of our denomination – from staff to education to advocacy and our bi-annual Assemblies. Thank you to those who have already made their contribution for 2018.

The role of Treasurer is not meant to rest in one place for too long. It is time to share. If you have **any** interest, questions, or are ready to commit (*Oh Frabjous Day!*), please talk with me!

To each member and friend: for prayer, for contributions of ‘time, talents, & resources,’ for courage, thank you.

Sue Goodspeed, Treasurer

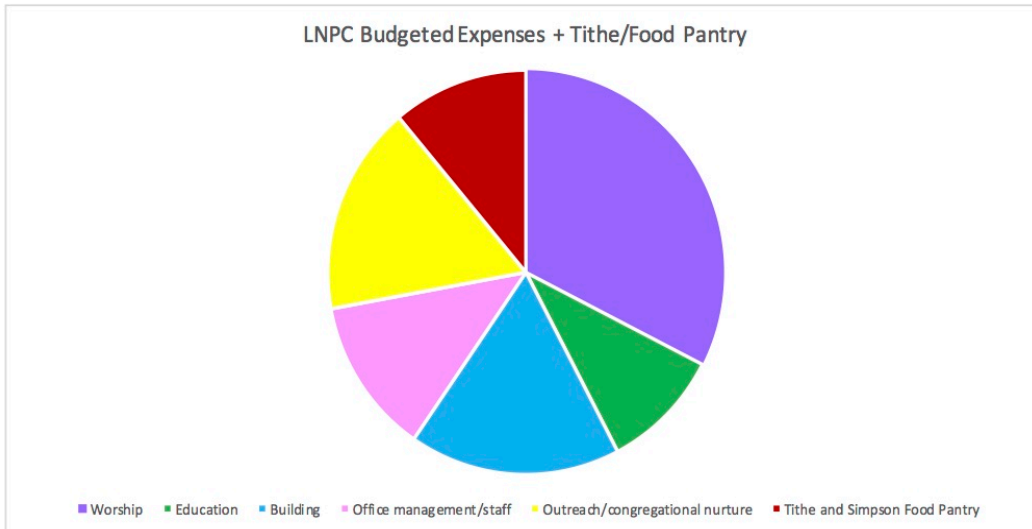


	Actual 2017	Budget 2018
PerCapita	3,105	3,174
Office Expenses	4,615	5,000
Tech Replacement		500
Building Maintenance	3,452	5,500
Janitorial	3,774	4,500
Taxes, etc	600	600
Insurance	5,489	5,500
Utilities	16,409	15,400
Staff:		
Pastor	71,036	71,945
Assoc pastor	12,272	13,217
Music	11,815	12,350
Office Mgr/Bookkeeper	14,400	14,400
Payroll taxes	1,875	2,100
Nanny	1,530	1,500
Workers Comp	751	800
Committees:		
Administration		
Personnel	-	100
Education	970	900
Congr Cmty/Outreach	1,201	2,000
Worship	3,216	3,000

Pastoral allocation:		
Worship: 50%		
Outreach/congregational nurture: 30%		
Education: 20%		
Worship	\$	59,431
Education	\$	17,932
Building	\$	31,500
Office management/staff	\$	22,900
Outreach/congregational nurture	\$	30,723
Tithe and Simpson Food Pantry	\$	20,249

tithe	16,069	16,249
building maintenance	0	5,000
food pantry (historic)	4,133	4,000

TOTAL 187,735 \$ 182,735



YEAR-OVER-YEAR REPORT AND 2018 BUDGET

Categories		Budget 2016	Actual 2016	Budget 2017	Actual 2017	Approved 2018
INCOME (Not Designated)						
	Pledged/Weekly Giving		112,085		123,667	112,032
	Open Plate		2,250		1,572	22,202 *
	Building Use		21,815		25,650	25,000
	FRNNG	4,200	4,150		5,600	4,200
	Fuego Pentecostes	12,000	11,150		12,000	12,000
	Central Church	3,000	1,750		2,800	3,000
	Current Users: Yoga/Carlson/etc.		1,750		1,955	
	Nokomis Hall (misc)		2,500		2,995	
	StoryTellers' Lodge/Sacred Ground		515		300	
	Grants:					
	Westminster - General	10,000	11,000		10,000	10,000
	Lilly Sabbatical Grant					15,000
	LL Congregational Care Fund		11,034		3,260	
	Miscellaneous* incl retreats, per capita, rebates		7,891		13,604	
TOTAL RECEIPTS *	Non-designated, including Marty's estate; w/o Endowment distribution		166,075		177,753	167,486
	* additional sources needed to balance budget, assuming tithe					+16,748 tithe
EXPENSES						
	Congregational Tithe		13,545		16,069	
	PerCapita (PCUSA)	3,014	3,024	3,105	3,105	3,174
	Office Expenses	5,000	5,350	5,000	4,615	5,000
	Copier		2,379		2,253	
	Postage		411		394	
	Other		2,560		1,968	
	Tech Replacement Fund	500		500		500
	Building Maintenance	5,415	0	5,500	3,452	5,500
	Furnace	2,715		2,800	3,340	
	Lawn and Snow	200		200	0	
	Building supplies	500		500	112	
	Other/emergency	2,000		2,000	0	

Categories		Budget 2016	Actual 2016	Budget 2017	Actual 2017	Proposed 2018
	Janitorial	3,850	5,013	3,850	3,774	4,500
	Contracted Service	3,600	4,800	3,600	3,000	4,000
	Supplies	250	213	250	774	500
	Property taxes/assessments	600		600	600	600
	Insurance/Umbrella	3,825	5,364	3,825	5,486	5,500
	Utilities	18,216	15,546	15,400	16,409	15,400
	Electric	2,400	2,828	2,400	3,411	2,800
	Gas/Heat	11,376	6,884	8,560	7,872	7,260
	Telephone/internet	1,140	1,248	1,140	1,121	1,140
	Water/stormwater	2,100	2,866	2,100	2,552	3,000
	Trash	1,200	1,250	1,200	990	1,200
	Other		470		464	
	Staff/Salaries	101,636	105,972	116,085	113,679	116,312
	Pastoral Ministry	71,691	75,163	84,663	71,036	85,162
	Head of Staff	71,691	73,118	71,691	71,036	71,945
	Salary+Housing		51,030	51,030	51,030	51,030
	Pension/Medical		18,115	17,861	18,083	18,115
	Reimbursed		1,111	800	1,039	800
	Continuing Ed/Book		2,862	2,000	884	2,000
30%	Assoc Pastor	0	2,045	12,972	12,272	13,217
	Salary+Housing		2,045	12,272	12,272	12,517
20%	Reimbursed				0	200
	Continuing Ed/Book			700	0	500
	Music Ministries	11,795	12,353	12,622	11,815	12,350
	Director		11,445	12,272	10,159	12,000
	Continuing Ed		908	350	1,657	350
	Office Manager/Bookkeeper	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400
	LNPC Employee tax obligation	1,650	2,100	2,100	1,875	2,100
	Nanny	1,500	1,128	1,500	1,530	1,500
	Workers' Comp	600	828	800	751	800
	Committees					
	Administration	0	0	0	0	0
	Personnel	100	0	100	0	100
	Education/Nurture	900	695	900	970	900
	Children	200	695	200	770	200
	Confirmation	200		200		200
	Adult	500		0	200	0

Categories		Budget 2016	Actual 2016	Budget 2017	Actual 2017	Proposed 2018
	Candidate Under Care			500		500
	Community/Outreach	2,000	3,005	2,000	1,201	2,000
	Team Expenses	2,000	2,920	0	564	1,900
	Congregational Care + outreach			1,900	171	
	Our Saviours meals		85		267	100
	Other				199	
	TRUST		0	100	0	
	Worship	2,000	2,803	3,000	3,216	3,000
	Sanctuary Supplies	800	469	1,200	1,139	800
	Music/Musicians	1,000	857	600	1,534	1,200
	Pulpit Supply	200	361	200	237	200
	Choral Scholar		784	1,000	260	800
	Other		332		46	
TOTAL EXPENSES:		152,056	146,772	159,865	156,507	162,486

