



Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church

The Current Word

2015 #2

A Deeper Faithfulness

This year is shaped by the knowledge that we are **Called to Deeper Faithfulness** – in all the decisions that cross our path, all the opportunities for hospitality, occasions for worship and commitment to Sabbath, your Session is asking, *Does this call us to deeper faithfulness?* How can we live more in trust instead of fear? How can we participate in God's love here and now? How can we all (and each) follow where God is leading us into deeper faithfulness?

Here are some of the ways we are living into deeper faithfulness right now:

Living in Deeper Faithfulness by sharing our space

Through the past months we have discerned that our calling of hospitality means, in part, sharing our space with others more widely. We've shared this mission with all those who are currently in our space those who express interest in our new Room Use Agreement this way: *One of our core values is hospitality. In a culture of increasing isolation and wariness, we seek to live guided by the awareness that we are all recipients of, and participants in, God's love and kindness. This mission of hospitality extends to use of our building: It is deeply important to us that our building be a shared space of welcome and mutual respect, where we are all hosts and guests of one another. Groups using the building are not responsible for overseeing or checking on any other groups or individuals, but please extend warmth and welcome to one another. By sharing our space, you also share in our mission of hospitality, so we request that your group join us in seeking to embody this spirit of hospitality.*

So far this year, we've welcomed **Fuego Pentecostes** to our space, and they've filled the basement with song and joy on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays. We've opened up "Storytellers' Lodge (thanks to Terry Roos for sharing the name!), a space for spiritual direction" to be used by directors connected to both Sacred Ground and Christos. Spiritual directors schedule one on one appointments in the space via an online reservation system on our website, and we've begun to see a couple appointments a month and look forward to more. This Spring, the Cromulet Shakespeare Company rehearsed nightly in our space to prepare for their summer performances in the parks. A seminary professor on sabbatical will begin using office space in August, and a class from Sacred Ground will begin meeting weekly in September.

All the groups are responsible to pitch in and keep the space welcoming for others, and for the most part, we are doing a pretty good job of that. During Lent we had some major cleaning, purging, painting and sprucing up of the space, and in May, the kids' Sunday school class held a garage sale (read, 'donut and cookie sale') to help decorate their new Sunday school classroom.

In the process we met lots of neighbors and had a wonderful day outside. It's a gift to have the space so filled with life so very often and see it as a gift to the community.

Living in Deeper Faithfulness by being connected to God's ministry elsewhere

One of the ways we've been living into deeper faithfulness is by our commitment to tithe 10% of our income to other expressions of God's ministry in the world. We do this seeking to lift up and share in what God is doing all around us, recognizing we are connected in the Kingdom of God. We've received some lovely messages of thanks and marveled at the sense of expansiveness this practice is bringing – we truly are participating in God's ministry far beyond ourselves.

Here are those to whom we've given so far this year:

January's approximately \$700 was given to the **Presbytery's Disabilities Task Force**, where Lisa Larges serves as chair, to help fund a conference they put on in April on how to better include children with disabilities in church's worship and life together. It was a great event, attended by folks from many congregations and denominations. What a blessing to share in this ministry!

February's tithe went to two Urban Ventures ministries: **Ready? Set! Work...** where our friend Stan Hill from Central Fellowship works, and John Turnipseed's (also from Central) program, **The Center for Fathering**. Ready? Set! Work... is a job placement program that gives motivated individuals access to vocational skills training and a network of felon-friendly employers. They help participants find sustainable employment at a livable wage. The Center for Fathering empowers men and women to be effective and loving parents through engaging large group and small group classes. We're so grateful for the love and community we have with Central Fellowship, and blessed to share in such important expressions of God's work in the world.



Our *March* tithe of \$848 went to **The Center for Social Healing**. The Center for Social Healing, part of the Wilder Foundation, is an intentional, therapeutic community designed to respond to the many barriers and unmet cultural and service needs of Southeast Asian communities. It blends traditional and western methods of healing and emphasizes active participating, meaningful activity and culturally appropriate practices so that each participant feels needed, wanted and expected. Members take part in social activities and cultural celebrations and meals, healing practices such as gardening, exercise and meditation, education on health-related topics, support groups and other assistance adjusting to a new culture. We are blessed to be part of what God is doing connecting lives in this ministry of hospitality!

For *April* we gave \$1,494 to **Bay Lake Camp**, a place we've come to love. Bay Lake is currently for sale, as First Lutheran in St. Paul, who owns it, has struggled to make it financially viable. In the meantime, participation and use of the camp is thriving and growing, summer worship involves hundreds of lake country folks boating in each weekend, and they recently opened up their "Island Folk School." Bay Lake says, *We celebrate urban camping and retreating with all its rich diversity in a unique island wilderness which emphasizes care of the earth, building relationships, and meaningful work.* We are blessed to share in God's ministry through Bay Lake Camp!

Our *May* recipient is **South Minneapolis Meals on Wheels**. LNPC has been driving for Meals on Wheels for almost 50 years! This summer our run with them comes to an end, and we will celebrate with a special potluck and party on July 19, during which time we will also present our May tithe to the organization. What a blessing for generations of our little faith community to be involved in the lives of the neighborhood in this important and meaningful way.

In *June* we will share with the **Pastoral Care Department at St. Joseph's Home for Children**, Amy Teske and Umo Udo, to help support the ministry of prayer and spiritual nurture with the kids there. We recently worshipped alongside the kids at St. Joe's and were profoundly moved by God's presence and their openness and honesty in struggle and joy. We were led in singing by several students, and shared rich conversation. Sometimes our shared time there is challenging, sometimes it feels rewarding, but always we are reminded that when we live with and for each other we meet Jesus, and we meet Jesus whenever we are with these kids. (We look forward to hosting them in Movie Camp in August as well!) The July tithe will enable the Spiritual Care team to continue meeting needs of kids that have to do with their mind and soul – opportunities for creativity and conversation, prayer and play, helping to create a safe space to grieve and celebrate and know themselves to be held in God's love and care. Thank God that in small and wonderful ways we get to be part of what God is doing in the kids' lives at St. Joe's!

Here are some other ways we are living in deeper faithfulness this Summer and Fall:

- Choir camp in August will kick off our LNPC Junior Choir, which begins in the Fall. We are so excited to have the kids contribute their gifts and leadership in this new way.
- Youth Group begins this Fall – we now have 5th and 6th graders – stay tuned for ways YOU can be part of their faith journey through upcoming events and activities. We look forward to this new chapter in their lives and in the life of our congregation.

*** if you have a mission | ministry | 'force for good in the world' who you would like the Session to consider as a tithe recipient, please write up a request and rationale and leave it in the Clerk's box in the office!**

Worldwide Welcome - Picnic Style!

For a week in June, almost 2,000 (mostly) women from around the country and world assembled in downtown Minneapolis for worship and workshops at the triennial Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women around the theme *"One Body, One Spirit."*

At every Presbyterian Women's Gathering a couple dozen international mission partners fly in from other countries to participate in the event.

The conference organizers wanted to find a small, warm and friendly Minneapolis congregation that could share a picnic with these special international guests, and give them a taste of Minnesota welcome, and they found LNPC!

On Saturday, June 20, Kara-and-kids, Dee, Eva, and Sue served about 15 women who hailed from locations as diverse as India, Kenya, Nigeria, Czech Republic, Brazil, and Curacao. We enjoyed salads made by many others from the congregation. (It turns out that salads are not an internationally familiar meal, so there were lots of requests for recipes!) We enjoyed a refreshing, joy-filled time of wonderful fellowship with our sisters from around the globe, as we relaxed in the warm, quiet breeze of the Greenway between Nicollet Mall and Loring Park. The dandelion fountain was a really popular photo-op!



Celebrating – a Lake Nokomis partnership:



TRUST churches is a group of 19 South Minneapolis churches that do several things better together than each church could do individually.

Several of the programs help seniors stay in their homes. Meals on Wheels provide hot meals are to those over 60.

Volunteers are needed to deliver meals. The Chore program provides household chore and maintenance services to those over 60. It matches paid and volunteer workers with those needing assistance such as housecleaning, snow removal, and yardwork. The Parish Nurse program uses medically trained volunteers who combine their faith and medical background to persons in need of caring, especially those without family members nearby. The Parish Nurse connects folks with needed services. Trusty Salers Estate Sales volunteers help seniors or their families hold estate sales to close out the family home due to a move or a death. The South Minneapolis Grief Coalition For Grief Support schedules 10 week grief support groups.

There are other programs. COAM (Cooperative Adult Ministry) provides grocery transportation, Life Enrichment courses for lifelong learning, and say tours throughout the year. The Gathering offers a group respite program for people with memory loss.

There is also The Trust Youth program with opportunities for service, social events and mission trips for youth from 6th grade through high school as part of a group from 10 different congregations. Trust Builders gathers people from the congregations to build and improve homes with Urban Homeworks. Volunteers worked 272 days in 2014.

A new program with Trust called Be The Spark, a group interested in lessening their church carbon footprint and learning more about environmental concerns. Some trust churches already have committees responding to the climate crisis.

Trust has several fundraising activities during the year: a spring plant sale, fall auction, Caratus concert, and the Walk for Parish Nursing. You can support Trust by participating in fundraising activities.

If you are interested in receiving services or volunteering or participating in any of these programs, please talk to Diane Hansen or Kara Root for more information.

Thanks

Responses to Tithes and Giving:

*Thanks so much for your recent gift to **Wilder's Center for Social Healing!** Your gift makes possible a community setting for Southeast Asian refugees who have experienced displacement and trauma. We are able to welcome them and meet their needs in a culturally responsive setting where they find hope, discover their resilience, and experience well-being. We are deeply grateful for our thoughtfulness and generosity. Blessings to you, and to all. – Paula Kringgle p.s. we would love to have you come and visit.*

From **Our Saviour's Housing**: Friends at Lake Nokomis Presbyterian - .. Your gift has created opportunities for many individuals, and truly make a meaningful and lasting difference in [residents'] lives.... I'd love to come and talk with you about the important work that happens because of your gift! Thank you. Sandy Aslakson, director

Dear Faithful Supporters, Thank you so much for your check.. for the **Simpson food pantry**... now we can order more food from Second Harvest Heartland to give [kids out of school] more food during the summer. Cheryl Gross, Food Pantry Director

*From the Treasury: **A HUGE THANK-YOU TO MARTY!!***

This is a time of transition. Marty began his tenure as Treasurer on Lee Sorenson's departure – beginning the learning curve three years ago. His commitment has been inspiring, his wisdom gratifying, and his dedication to Lake Nokomis through this intense gift of time and talent a true gift. But he needs to move on to other passions, and Session, with gratitude and thanks, has approved his request to be released from this role. His last day on the job is June 30.

With the changing currents of our congregational strengths and of the world at large, Session has determined that we will work to fill this as a paid position, anticipating 2-3 hours/week, to a candidate from outside the congregation. The personnel team has posted a position description on the LNPC website, and circulated it through the presbytery (and has had one possible candidate decide the time was not right, and another just inquire). It is available in the office, as well. If you know of someone with skills in bookkeeping and communication, please contact Personnel: Sue Goodspeed, Amy Leafblad, Linda Leicht, or Terry Gilbertstadt.

Until a strong candidate is found – hopefully this summer – Sue Goodspeed will be serving as 'Interim Treasurer.'

From Ben! Hello, LNPC Sessionistas! [and, we're assuming, the whole congregation! ed.] I hope this update email finds you well. It's time for another one of these every-month-and-a-half update emails from life at Austin Seminary, and there's lots of good news.

Good news #1: I am a graduate of the Ministers Facing Money program at APTS! I'm grateful that you all pushed me to get some financial counseling. MFM has not only included Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University, but has also helped me work through my spirituality of money (inching from shame to grace), has put me in the place where I'm figuring out how to budget (!), and has given me the head-space and heart-space to make money a servant of hope. **But there's more:** In 2 weeks I'll be representing our MFM cohort to a meeting of the faculty to talk about making this grant-funded project a permanent addition to APTS. I'd covet your prayers for that meeting.

Good news #2: The end of the semester is here, and I'm on track to finish well. This semester has been thought-provoking and genuinely fun. As I finish up my exegesis and New Testament papers, finally do my baptism practicum (we got a little behind...), and reacquaint myself with the theologians Paul Capetz has introduced us to, I'm full of gratitude. I'm also looking forward to a break before I come back for our six week "Greek Camp" in June...

Good news #3: I'm coming to visit! After Greek Camp, Hiald and I are flying into the Twin Cities for ReconcilingWork's big conference, "Until All Are Free." From there we're hopping the Megabus to Chicago so that he can run (and I can help with) LVC Orientation. Then I'm back in the Twin Cities until Ani's wedding at the end of August, while Hiald wraps up life in DC before moving to Austin to start at APTS in the fall! I'm looking forward to seeing you all again.

All in all, I'm grateful for this journey, and for all of you accompanying me. Tomorrow, May 8, will be five years since I wandered into Lake Nokomis Presbyterian for the first time on a Saturday evening in 2010. Looking towards the fall (more practical ministry courses, continuing to work with AYAVA volunteers, adjusting to a no-longer-long-distance relationship), I'm thankful that I'm in your prayers.

Have a great meeting tonight! Lots of love!



Charleston/Lake Nokomis/Fear/Love | The answer is still love and justice

After the heartbreaking shooting of nine people in a bible study in Charleston, the world was filled with noise. Grief, horror, anger, frustration and calls for action, as human beings grapple with what to do or say to try to keep evil at bay and scramble with so many words to try to fix what feels so broken.

We live in a world defined most by the Way of Fear - a narrative that says, among other things, that we can name some people better or more trustworthy or more dangerous or less deserving than others. And as long as we are not “those people” doing the naming or being named, we can pretend this isn’t happening. We can notice only when it rears its evil head in our faces, and then we feel so overwhelmed and paralyzed. We don’t know what to do or say, so we click a link, or give some money, or say a prayer, or throw up our hands in hopelessness and despair and act as though fear is winning.

But we do not belong to fear; we belong to God. We belong to love – claimed by God, we are part of the Kingdom of God that the Holy Spirit is bringing into the world in and through, and despite and alongside, OUR very lives.

What we say and do can be part of the healing, but it can also be part of the sickness.

I want to be part of the healing. I want whatever parts of the sickness are infecting me to be exposed and removed. I want love to guide me, not fear or apathy or jealousy or judgment, or despair. I want the love of Jesus to guide my hands and voice and heart, and I want to join in the ways God is bringing that love into the world and redeeming us.

These words spoke to me this week:

The answer is still love. Love mingling with justice. Even now, as our hearts are broken over Charleston, as we see the lack of willingness to look at this virus that is deeply embedded in the soul of America, the answer is still love and justice.

Even now, as we see refusal to acknowledge the problem with systematic violence in American society, the answer is still love and justice. Even now, as America is unquestionably an empire, the answer is still love and justice.

Love, provided we don't think of love as some private emotion between two people. Love, provided we see love as the unleashing of God onto humanity. Love, provided we see that love means bowing down before the full presence of God in each and every single one of us.

Love, provided that we see love as justice when it enters the public space. Love, provided that we see love not as a sentiment, but the very being of God mingling among us.

The answer is still love and justice.

We're gonna stick with love, because hate is too heavy a burden to bear, because the alternative is to lose the very divine gift that makes us human. Even now. Especially now. The answer is still love.

May love pour down from God, spilling over every heart. May all the rough places be made smooth, the valleys exalted and the mountains made low. May love mingle with justice, redeeming all. May love and justice redeem the sin-sick soul of America, and of the whole world community, and our own sick hearts.

(Omid Safi, Forgiveness, Justice and Charleston, in On Being)

For LNPC, hospitality - my true self welcoming your true self - is a core value, and one into which God keeps calling us deeper. We've seen over and over how that often means letting go of fear or hesitation, and being vulnerable in what we don't know so that we can meet each other honestly. It means being willing to face the barriers within and between us that keep us from being fully present with each other and open to God. It means risking being known and knowing others, in all the ways that it will inevitably change us.

This month your session in praying about and planning for how to have some conversations around racism, and ways we participate in the way of fear that dehumanizes and devalues some among us without perhaps even knowing it. We want to be honest about the things within us and around us that keep us all from living free and whole in God's love, alongside each other in the Way of God.

For me this is about being called, always, to deeper faithfulness - deeper hospitality - more openness to meeting God and each other, willingness to share each others' place, and commitment to living in God's Big Picture, the Kingdom of God reality that is breaking in even now. We will let you know what the next steps are soon.



Did you know...

Vivienne Whitfield has been in the States for ten whole years!! And we get to be her church! There is never a stranger when Viv is around, and smiles and laughter accompany her. And where would Christmas 2013 have been without her Mary, with Paul/Joseph and dear Caroline/Jesus – and Jesus' older brother Marcus, of course. We are so grateful, Viv, that you have made a home with us. We'll toast you with a chocolate cupcake.



LNPC has released our **Meals on Wheels** drivers after participating in the program for over 40 years. We've been led by many over the years – Don Cregan was the coordinator in the 80's and 90's – and as long as most remember (since Don's leaving) Alan Isaacson has been lining up drivers from an ever-shrinking pool. Thank you, Alan, for your commitment and persistence! We will celebrate the partnership with MOW on Sunday, July 19 – if you've driven, or been served, be sure to be here! Potluck and guests...

Presbytery has been meeting right along this year – in January, March, and May so far. Big news for our congregation is that **Sue Hensel** was elected to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry at the May meeting of presbytery! We pray blessings on her journey with those who are walking the road toward ministry as Teaching Elders (pastors).

Are you HANDY? **Gary Johnson** is gathering the troupes to help tackle small and big jobs around the building - one time help is great, ongoing availability is great too! (There is a window fixing job brewing...many hands make light work...)



JOINT OUTDOOR WORSHIP & PICNIC WITH EDGCUMBE

Saturday, August 8, 5:00 PM at Edgcumbe Presbyterian Church's gorgeous back property – you won't want to miss! Carpools will be organized...

Love, that will not let me go...

The Presbyterian Directory for Worship (part of what's called the Book of Order that shapes Presbyterian life) says

this as an introduction to funerals and memorial services:

"The resurrection is a central doctrine of the Christian faith and shapes Christians' attitudes and responses to the event of death. Death brings loss, sorrow, and grief to all. In the face of death Christians affirm with tears and joy the hope of the gospel. Christians do not bear bereavement in isolation but are sustained by the power of the Spirit and the community of faith. The Church offers a ministry of love and hope to all who grieve."

This fall, in various ways at Lake Nokomis, we're going to spend some time talking together about that ministry of love and hope, and how we can best honor and care for one another when the time comes for any of us to transition from this life to life triumphant.

That same section of the Directory for Worship goes on to say:

"Because it is difficult under emotional stress to plan wisely, the session should encourage members to discuss and plan in advance the arrangements which will be necessary at the time of death, including decisions about the Christian options of burial, cremation, or donation for medical purposes. These plans should provide for arrangements which are simple, which bear witness to resurrection hope, and in which the Christian community is central."

The worship Committee is inviting all who feel so led to join us for a time of setting down our own plans for how we would wish that our own funeral or memorial services would bear witness to that resurrection hope. Are their hymns that you wish to have sung. Are their passages of Scripture that you wish to be read? What matters to you? What doesn't?

One of the best gifts we can leave to those who will mourn us are our own clear preferences for funeral and other memorial arrangements.

We'll be sharing more details about time and place, but we'd like to extend the invitation now to join us to gently and directly talk together about that transition that lies before each one of us, and that hope that is ours in Jesus.



Where do your interests lie? There's always a place to share your gifts. It may just be in a role at Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church!

Clerk of Session:

The hub to congregational communication, the Clerk: attends Session meetings, takes notes and distributes them to the office and Session, meets annually with other Clerks of the presbytery to review one another's minutes; is the 'official' contact between the congregation, presbytery, and others; speaks on behalf of the congregation at installations and baptisms.

Onsite time requirements are Session meetings and the annual Minutes Review (talk to Andrea!). All else is flexible.

Treasurer/bookkeeper:

In moving away from a model in which the Treasurer does everything from record weekly receipts to file income statements with the IRS, LNPC is currently looking for a bookkeeper. This person will keep financial records (but not sign checks) on behalf of the congregation, communicating with Session and the Administration Team.

If you have these skills to share, or know of someone who does, please get in touch with the Personnel Team (see below and in the "Marty" Section).

“Forgiving and being reconciled to our enemies or our loved ones are not about pretending that things are other than they are. It is not about patting one another on the back and turning a blind eye to the wrong. True reconciliation exposes the awfulness, the abuse, the hurt, the truth. It could even sometimes make things worse. It is a risky undertaking but in the end it is worthwhile, because in the end only an honest confrontation with reality can bring real healing. Superficial reconciliation can bring only superficial healing.”

Bishop Desmond Tutu

Kara Root – Pastor and Moderator of Session

2015 Session:

Class of 2015:

Amy Leafblad leaf2be@yahoo.com

Sue Goodspeed | Personnel ssgoodspeed@comcast.net

Class of 2016:

Sue Hensel susanhensel@yahoo.com

Class of 2017:

Andy Cochrane Andy.Cochrane@MapleGroveHospital.org

Andrea Domaskin andrea.domaskin@gmail.com

Diane Hansen dianecope2002@yahoo.com

Presbytery Commissioners (3):

Marty Christensen, Norm Petrik, and the LNPC Session

Clerk of Session: *are you interested?*

Temporary Treasurer: Sue Goodspeed

Staff:

Jan Johnson Office Administrator

Jeanne Rylander Director of Music Ministries

Carolyn Cochrane Children’s Ministries Coordinator

Kathy Johnson Custodian

Newsletter Sue Goodspeed

RE-VISION STATEMENT
(as approved following the reVision
process, October 2007)

LNPC seeks to

- become a beacon of hope and a place of sanctuary
- reach out to the needs of neighbors, sharing our selves and our resources.

Session: Session has responsibility for administration/building, worship, education, life of the community and personnel. If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, interests or anything you’d like to share, please talk with a Session member!

Board of Deacons: The Deacons function as a unit, sharing responsibility for visitation and ministries of presence with those in transition. Members are: Barb Wilson, Carolyn Cochrane Viv Whitfield, and Dick Gross.

Upcoming and Inside:

- o Reflections: *Living in Fear or Love?*
- o A deeper faithfulness
- o Our Man in Austin
- o Transitions

www.lakenokomispc.org

<http://www.kara-root.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.facebook.com/LakeNokomisChurch>

"True hospitality is welcoming the stranger on her own terms. This kind of hospitality can only be offered by those who've found the center of their lives in their own hearts."

– *Henri Nouwen*

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TO: