



Gloria Dei Guide

December 2018

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Worship

Sundays 8:15 & 10:45 am



Pastor’s Reflection On Sharing the Peace

by Pastor Bradley E. Schmeling

A few weeks ago, a winter cold was starting to settle in. I could feel it working in my head, and I knew boxes of tissues were in my future. It was Sunday, and I was the presiding minister so I elected to switch communion positions so that I could distribute wine. I figured breaking off bread while sniffing wouldn’t exactly speak of God’s feast of healing and love, even though we are careful to sanitize our hands after sharing the peace before distributing the bread.

However, shaking hands during the peace is another way that we may inadvertently share more than the peace of Christ. I decided that I wouldn’t shake hands. I would hold my hands together and make a little bow. It was a little awkward at first, but I could tell as I moved my way toward the back of the church, people had picked up on the new practice. People nodded their heads and

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smiled. Some flashed the peace sign. Some said, "Peace, feel better." A few stood and bowed back, a beautiful ritual of reverence for one another. Some seemed relieved that I wasn't entering their personal space.

It occurred to me that we should all share the peace in a way that feels most comfortable. Of course, the point of the liturgical action is to deepen our human connections with one another before we come to the table. Rather than a break in the liturgical action to say hello, the sharing of the peace is where we reach for one another, for the sake of being reconciled family. We recognize that making community is what we do as the body of Christ.

There are all kinds of way to acknowledge these connections between us. We can bow. We can hold our hands together in a prayer fashion to indicate that the other is in our prayers. We can cross our arms across our chest as a sign that we need to participate in a different way. We can certainly smile and look one another directly in the eye. We can raise our hands in greeting. The point is connecting with one another.

It's also important to note that these moments of physical connection can be very difficult for some

people. Because of history or even by nature, some have great anxiety about shaking hands or touching another person. It's important that we recognize these needs, and we dare not interpret them as a sign of distance or disconnection. For some of us, simply coming into a room full of people is a sign of community that we know we need but is really hard for us. Some of us can't look one another in the eye because it's just too hard. That's totally okay. What's most important is that we're in the room together, and we will all soon come together to experience Christ's presence in bread and wine—the connection that we truly need.

I invite you to notice how the people around initiate this simple practice. Respond in a way that matches their sensibility. Or if you need to take the lead to suggest how you want or don't want to be touched, be bold and live strongly into the moment. There is no judgment in God's house. We are all part of God's beloved community, no matter what.

Some additional perspectives:

Gloria Dei Member Linnea Peterson writes about her [experience](#) of sharing the peace.

Elle Dowd writes about her challenges with the [church coffee hour](#).

New Adult Growing in Faith Opportunity for Fall 2018

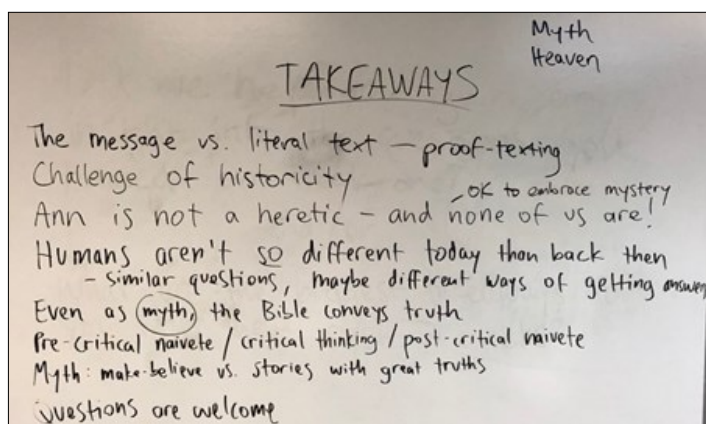
What Does This Mean?

by Pastor Lois Pallmeyer

The first seven weeks of our Wednesday night classes, "What Does This Mean," gave over forty adults the chance to hear from theologians and each other about how to have a relevant and meaningful faith in the modern world.

We discovered that questions have always been a part of an active, vibrant faith, and that there are broad ways of understanding the truth of

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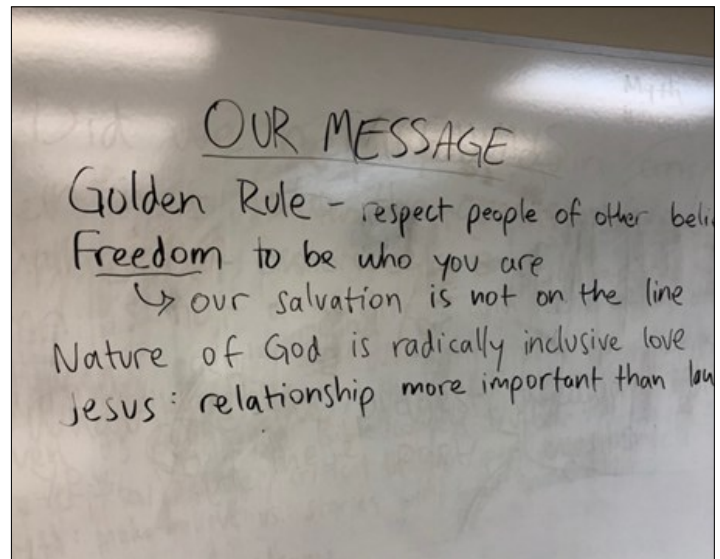
What Does This Mean from page 2

scripture and church doctrine. We wrestled with ideas of myth versus fact, and how both can inform our spirituality. We listened to each other's thoughts and doubts and realized that we weren't the only ones who wondered how everything we learn in church can make sense. Using video tapes of theologians who explored the meaning and use of scripture, each night centered on themes of what it means to read the bible critically and accept its teachings as seriously valid, even when not literally factual. Pastors Bradley, Javen, and Lois guided our lively discussions.

While we had areas of agreement and disagreement in our discussions, we appreciated the reminder that in Christ we are free to be honest and open in our beliefs. The

nature of God is radically inclusive and allows us to wonder and grow, knowing we are saved by God's love for us regardless of our questions or differing ideas.

The next round of our discussions will begin on Wednesday night, January 9. We hope you'll be with us.



“Rooted in Generosity” Update

by Larry Nelson

Thank you to all of you who have made a pledge or given us an estimate of giving for 2019's operating and capital funds. As of this writing, we are almost where we need to be to continue to grow Gloria Dei's mission and presence in Saint Paul and the rest of the world. As I said at the Stewardship Celebration Breakfast, thank you, thank you all for your generosity to Gloria Dei and through us to a world that desperately needs to see and hear the abundant good news of a Gospel centered in grace. We've had a very generous response and we just need to finish as well as we have done so far.

We currently have 289 pledges/giving estimates to the operating fund for \$786,000 and 225 for the capital fund for \$276,000. We need a few additional giving estimates or pledges in each fund to match last year's generous totals, and a

few more to move us into new territory.

If you are one of the few folks who haven't yet turned in that pledge or estimate, there's still time. You can call the church office (651-699-1378) or fill out the online form [here](#).

Each response helps our church council in their job of creating an accurate and responsible budget for the coming year.

Special Note for Those Who Have Never Made a Pledge

What do you hear when you think about “Rooted in Generosity – Sharing our resources and our building”? How does that translate into your unique circumstances as you ponder your commitment to Gloria Dei's mission and its building? What is God calling from you and your

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Meet Kyrstin Schwartz, new Director of Children and Family Faith Formation

by Katie LeClair

Kyrstin Schwartz joins Gloria Dei as Director of Children and Family Faith Formation, beginning December 3. She brings many years of experience in youth and children's ministry in the Lutheran Church. "The search committee enthusiastically recommended Kyrstin for this position. It was clear to us that her experience, depth of faith, and creativity will take our children's ministry to a new level. We're eager to welcome her to the staff," Pastor Bradley said.

We asked her some questions about life and ministry:

1) What kinds of things were you involved in at church as a kid and teen?

I loved volunteering in the nursery, teaching Vacation Bible School and Sunday School, singing in the youth choir, acting in the youth musical, and going to lock-ins and mission trips! It was one of my favorite places to be so really I participated in everything I could!

2) Were there 1 or 2 moments in your life when you really "knew" or "felt" like God was pushing you along or calling you to a specific ministry?

I had always felt called to ministry but got sidetracked in college. The year after I graduated I was going through a difficult time and was trying many things to help me through it but nothing was working. I went to Ash Wednesday and received a key chain with Jesus on it. I didn't think much of it but when I got home to open my door the key chain has flipped and there was a verse on the back "Return to me with all your heart." Joel 2:12. I found the Youth Director the very next week and told him to sign me up to volunteer with whatever he needed. I volunteered on the summer mission trip and a few months later took a full-time position at a church in Forest Lake. Skip to 13 years later and I have been



contemplating finding a new position for awhile when I saw the opening at Gloria Dei. I had just returned to work after maternity leave so I took some time to really think and pray about applying. The next Sunday my 4 year old and I were driving to church and we were near downtown St. Paul when he said "Mom, this drive is too long. Can't you find a church to work at that is closer to our home?" It for sure helped me make the decision to apply and I couldn't be more excited and ready to begin at Gloria Dei!

3) Where did you meet your spouse?

We met at Gustavus in an education class sophomore year. We started dating our senior year. He asked me out on a date on Halloween. I was a bumble bee and he was a number 2 pencil.

4) Name two items on your "bucket list."

Go on an epic family road trip when the kids are older, and sit in the best seats at all the Minnesota sporting events.

5) What does your house look like at Christmas?

Full of colorful lights and special decorations we have inherited from our families. My favorites are my Grandma's needlepoint ornaments and the Christmas carousel.

Welcome, Kyrstin!

Meet Paul Friesen-Carper, our new Assistant Director of Music

by Katie LeClair

Gloria Dei welcomes Paul Friesen-Carper as Assistant Director of Music, beginning in December. This newly-created position helps to expand our music program to include additional style and focus for congregational singing, as well as increased attention to the children's music program. Paul will help lead music on Sunday morning and will take over as the director of Schola, our elementary school age choir.

Here are some fun facts about Paul:

1) What was the first musical instrument you learned to play? Who taught you?

My first instrument was the cello. I first was introduced to it when my father taught a beginning strings class for Wawasee Community Schools (Indiana). I had many other teachers— most notably Patricia White, who studied with Leonard Rose at the Julliard School in New York City.

2) What are some of your memories of church as a kid?

I remember sitting in a pew with my parents and sister as my mother pointed to notes and words so I could learn to sing hymns in four-parts at Goshen College Mennonite Church (Indiana). I remember playing sardines and hiding in the darkest places in the church where the paraments were stored at lock-ins with the confirmation-age kids. Then I remember finally being baptized at Trinity Lutheran Church as all my friends were confirmed.

3) Tell us about one of the most interesting musical ensembles you've been a part of?

For the last two years I've been playing in Silk Cedar, a Chinese-American folk-jazz fusion dulcimer band. The instrumentation is a yangqin (Chinese hammered dulcimer), American hammered dulcimer, jazz piano, world



percussion drum set, and then I play 6-string electric cello, fiddle, banjo, mandolin, and guitar. We play lots of music that includes jazz and bluegrass tinged interpretations of Chinese traditional tunes as well unique takes of jazz standards and American old-time tunes. We've done a couple of American tours and a tour of China. The American hammered dulcimer player, national champion David Mahler, and I have created a duo out of that group that plays American and Celtic fiddle music.

4) Name your top three favorite bands or artists.

- Joni Mitchell
- Paul Simon
- Chris Thile
-

5) Name two items on your "bucket list."

- Play fiddle at a session in a pub in Ireland.
- Sleep under the stars in the Southern Hemisphere.
-

6) What do you like to do on a day off?

I enjoy cooking for friends and finding ways to get off the grid.

Welcome, Paul!

Extending a Welcome to Homeless Neighbors

By Pastor Javen Swanson

In our mission statement, we proclaim: “By God’s grace, we are called to be a caring, healing and welcoming community who proclaim and celebrate the love of Jesus Christ, live as God’s servants and seek justice for all people.” In the month of December — during Advent, the season of waiting and giving — Gloria Dei lives our mission by opening our doors to homeless families in transition to long-term housing, and hosts overnight guests of Project Home, a program of Interfaith Action of Greater Saint Paul.



Project Home engages area faith communities to provide emergency shelter space and volunteer support for Ramsey County families facing homelessness. Each month, two different area faith communities host 20 emergency shelter beds. Gloria Dei is one of the congregations that houses families each year in the month of December. For the families served by Project Home, church fellowship halls, synagogue classrooms, and school cafeterias become “home” for a short period of time in their lives. Before entering emergency shelter, these families all struggled with choosing to pay the rent or put food on the table.

Last December, we sheltered eight different families at Gloria Dei, including nine parents with 17 children who ranged in age from two months to 16 years old. Over 110 members of Gloria Dei volunteered every evening and overnight of the month, preparing a simple meal, providing fellowship, supervising play time in the gym, and most important, extending God’s love to families in need. We are in the process of recruiting volunteers again for this December, and we hope you will help! We welcome volunteers who have been doing this for 20 years and volunteers who are brand new to Gloria Dei! Learn more and sign up [online](#).

Because we host Project Home during the month

of December, we are challenged each year by hosting families here around the season of Christmas, when most of us want to spend time with our loved ones. We are blessed to be able to partner with Mount Zion Synagogue to cover these Christmas shifts. For the past 13 years, Mount Zion member Sue Rosenbaum has been organizing volunteers to prepare a Christmas breakfast for guests staying at Gloria Dei. “There are several of us who always come,” she said, “and we’ve got it down pretty well. I’m already collecting bacon!” (The Christmas breakfast our Jewish friends provide for our Project Home guests is not exactly a kosher meal...). Mount Zion volunteers fill several shifts —daytimes, evenings, and overnights — on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and throughout that entire week — a huge gift to our congregation.

Lorna Pain, a Gloria Dei Project Home weekly coordinator, says Project Home is something her family has done together since her children were small. “The Christmas season is always fun, but you can get so wrapped up in gift giving and the craziness of getting here and there. Volunteering with Project Home almost feels like a purging.” We look forward to hosting Project Home here at Gloria Dei again in December 2018. Perhaps Project Home will become part of your family’s Christmas tradition, too.

Advent 2018

by Pastor Lois Pallmeyer

Advent invites us to mark the weeks as we anticipate Christmas.

Each week we encourage you to briefly respond to a question that highlights what you see or experience. Please send a photo or a sentence or two to anyone on staff, via Facebook or the Gloria Dei website. We will post some of your responses in the display case near the back door. We also invite you to offer a prayer request for a place or situation in which you sense the need for God's light to shine. We will incorporate themes gathered from your prayer requests in our Sunday worship.

Week 1 begins December 2: What gives you hope? [Send](#) us a picture or a short description of something that gives you hope.

Prayer Focus: Where (places or situations) do you sense the need for hope? Send your prayer requests to [Pastor Bradley](#).

Week 2 begins December 9: Where do you see or experience love? Where is love most needed?

Week 3 begins December 16: What fills you with joy? In what places or situations is joy most needed?

Week 4 begins December 23: What helps you find peace? Where is peace most needed in our

world today?

Optional: Write 2-5 sentences to explain your submission.

Optional: Include your career or where you go to school. Kids can answer too!

Other ways to mark the season are described below:

[Link here](#) to learn about our Sunday morning forum series on the ways Advent invites us to experience the spirituality of embodiment.

Devotions and supplies to use at home are available in the walkway near the Gathering Place. We encourage you to pick up supplies that would help you mark the weeks as we move toward Christmas. Some are free, and many are offered for a small price to cover the costs.

Receive [Luther Seminary's daily devotion](#) through your email.

An online resource that's especially good for families with children can be found here: [Storyboarding Advent Devotions](#).

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resources for God's work in this place?

I don't presume to know what "Rooted in Generosity" means for each of you with regard to Gloria Dei's operating and capital budgets, but I guarantee that generosity can create a lightness of step, an open hand versus a clenched fist, a sparkle in your eye, an

unburdening of the weight of the world, and joy in your soul, as you will come to know that your finances have had their part in making Gloria Dei what it is.

Can you step out in a bold experiment to take some of your finances and add them to the generous gifts of others in this place?

Advent & Christmas Worship Schedule

ADVENT WORSHIP

December 2 – First Sunday of Advent

- Holy Communion 8:15 and 10:45 a.m.

December 9 – Second Sunday of Advent

- Holy Communion 8:15 and 10:45 a.m.
- Advent Lessons and Carols 5:00 p.m.
Join us for this beloved Gloria Dei tradition—a calm and meaningful service in the midst of a busy December.

December 16 – Third Sunday of Advent

- Holy Communion 8:15 a.m.
- Children's Christmas Program 10:45 a.m.
An invitation to worship begins with a Children's Prelude at 10:15 a.m. A cookie reception in Fellowship Hall follows the service.

December 23 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

- Holy Communion 8:15 and 10:45 a.m.

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

December 24 – Christmas Eve Worship

- Family Holy Communion with Time with Children – 2:00 and 4:00 p.m.
- Festival Holy Communion with Choir and Brass – 8:00 and 10:30 p.m.

December 25 – Festival Holy Communion

- 10:00 a.m.

December 30 – First Sunday of Christmas

- 8:15 and 10:45 a.m.
- Caroling with Music Director Tim Strand – 9:30 a.m.
Join us in the Gathering Place to sing favorite songs and carols.

Financial Update

Capital Fund Information

Contributions YTD	\$301,166
Monthly mortgage payments	\$18,752
Capital Improvement Cost Year-to-Date	\$88,297
Balance in Capital Accounts October 31	\$354,028
Mortgage Balance October 31	\$2,772,220

Operating Information, Oct. 31

Total Offerings	\$90,568
Ahead(Behind)	(\$3,611)
Total Income	\$108,605
Total Expenses	\$127,001
Net for the Month	(\$18,396)
Total Year-to-Date Offerings	\$991,835
Ahead(Behind)	(\$16,905)
Total YTD Income	\$1,183,007
Total YTD Expenses	\$1,193,161
Net for the Current Year	(\$10,154)

Our Mission

By God's grace, we are called to be a caring, healing and welcoming community who proclaim and celebrate the love of Jesus Christ, live as God's servants and seek justice for all people.

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
700 Snelling Avenue South
St. Paul, MN 55116
651-699-1378