



Gloria Dei Guide

August 2018

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It's Been a Crazy Year! or How Are We Doing Financially?

by Jeanne Hanson

This has been an odd year. Because of tax law changes, more people prepaid their pledges than in any recent year. At the end of 2017, we had received \$51,336 in prepaid pledges. In past years, that number has varied from \$8,000 to \$12,000. What a difference! That makes predicting the flow of offering income for the rest of the year much more of a guessing game, and makes it harder to judge whether we are on track for income for the year. It's a real roller coaster ride!

So what do we know at this point? Our offering income is about \$18,000 below our best guess forecast, but still about \$60,000 more than at the end of May last year. Our expenses at this point are also lower than we had anticipated at this point in the year. We have an excellent balance in our Operating account going into the summer months.

However, we do expect our total expenses for the year will rise to meet the amount we budgeted. Many of the lower expenses are a result of timing. They're coming a little later in the year than we had anticipated. That means we will need continued faithful giv-

Worship

Sundays 8:15 & 10 am



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ing in order to meet our goals at the end of the year.

Summer is often a time of relaxation, vacations and weekends away from home. Because of that, churches usually see income decline in the summer. We see that at Gloria Dei, too, even though many people use electronic giving. As a summer reminder, whether you're using the *Simply Giving* program or not, please join us in worship as your schedule permits. We miss you

when you are not here!

In mid-July, you received a statement showing your contributions for the first six months of the year. This lets you know where you are in terms of your personal giving and commitment. Let's all work together to bring this roller coaster ride to a safe stop at the end of the year.

Please contact Jeanne Hanson at jeanne@gloriadeistpaul.org if you would like to discuss more about this. Our financial records are always open to congregation members, and summaries are given monthly in the *Guide* newsletter.

Happy News from Waverly Lutheran, our Partner Church!

by Deacon Pat Derry

A joyous announcement to Gloria Dei's Harvest Homecoming alumni families! Waverly Lutheran is celebrating the addition of three new members, the newborn children of Daniel and Kendra Helvig. Dan and Kendra have taken over the responsibilities of instructing our second graders in stewardship – the stewardship of the land. They drive the 2 ½ hours to Gloria Dei (each way) to teach the Sowing Seeds classes to our second graders, up to three times a year. You will certainly remember Dan as the young farmer who explains everything you want to know about farm machinery, and who speaks affectionately to our visiting families about how meaningful it is to be the fifth Helvig generation on his land and in the church.

Dan's ancestors organized and built Waverly Lutheran Church in Truman, Minn., and Dan helps us to understand how his faith and land are so intricately intertwined.

When Dan and Kendra planned to start a family, they had no idea they would be starting a BIG new family. Their doctor informed them there was one healthy heartbeat, a moment later there were two healthy heartbeats, and finally a third healthy heartbeat was found! The triplets were born April 20, weighing 4 ½ pounds each. Named Jack Norman, Eliza Jane and Grayson Daniel, Jack and Grayson are identical twins!

They are now 3 months old, all weigh over 12 pounds each, and are even sleeping through the night!

If you would like to send a card to the Helvig family, contact Pat Derry at kidsministry@gloriadeistpaul.org for address information.

We rejoice with Dan and Kendra, grandparents Jon and Karen Helvig, and the entire Waverly congregation!



Interview with Joanne Kendall, Caring for Creation

by Jacque Bieber

Question 1. How did you learn about Caring for Creation? What went through your mind when you decided to become a member of this ministry?

When my husband John and I decided to join Gloria Dei twenty years ago, the opportunities it offered members to be involved in ministries that reached beyond the walls of the church said to both of us. "Yes, this church is for us!" Then, as now, this congregation makes me continually aware that members minister together whether assisting in programming for children, youth or adult education-- chose the latter then-- or working with others to support needs in the broader community.

My next involvement, with Mental Health Ministry, did both. Now, my focus on the Caring for Creation ministry begins with addressing needs for responsible use of God-given resources on church property, and moves to raise awareness of those needs beyond the walls of this church.

2. What other experiences or thoughts have you had about caring for creation beyond this organized Caring for Creation group at Gloria Dei?

Anticipation about, then the birth of my first great-grandchild last February was THE deciding factor for my becoming directly involved in environmental issues. It was definitely time for me to do more than make quiet personal choices such as the food I buy and the kind of car I drive. Being part of a visible, active group would address environmental stewardship in thoughtful, responsible ways, and would make a bigger difference than the small impacts I had been trying to make during much of my adult life. That difference needed to extend beyond my lifetime!

3. How have you cared for creation over the years?

After living in South Dakota for almost three years in the mid-1960s, we two Minnesotans had the opportunity to return to our home state and

purchased rural acreage outside St. Peter. We lived there on an old farmstead for the next 25 years...two city kids, our family expanding to three children, a flock of 25 sheep that began with a single ewe, three horses, five dogs, more ducks and geese than we could count, and many generations of barn cats we inherited with our purchase.

Those wonder-filled years moved me (and our family) from being a reasonably good steward of nature's gifts to understanding the whys of that stewardship and learning from rural neighbors, friends and a growing body of informational resources how to do better in caring for God's creation. Tending our animals, raising vegetables in a 40 x 40 foot garden, eating and preserving the resulting crops, mowing three acres of lawn, encouraging growth in several perennial flower gardens planted by previous owners (the first in the 1890s), nurturing a long wind-row of old pines and making perpetual changes to an old farmhouse all put us in a category we were too busy to recognize --Caregivers for Creation!

4. How did you first become aware of global warming and how did you react to it?

From the beginning of our marriage, we two Kendalls lived and worked in academic communities. There had already been voices in many educational disciplines identifying and sounding "pay attention" warnings related about climate change. All we had to do was listen to those voices, learn from a growing body of research and begin to do what we could to live in ways that would address the signs and signals that the climate was, indeed, changing.

Our most notable response was to invest in a fledgling solar company being developed by physics colleagues at Gustavus Adolphus College, then to purchase and install solar panels on the south-facing roof of the old farmhouse. The solar product had significant limitations. Our naive hopes

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NEW ADULT FAITH FORMATION OPPORTUNITY FOR FALL, 2018

What Does This Mean?

by Lois Pallmeyer

Relevant Faith for 21st Century Christians explores themes of Christian life, taking both faith and modern day questions seriously. The seven-week fall 2018 series will be held Wednesdays 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. beginning September 26.

On Sundays, you may hear the pastors invite to Christ's table those who have great faith, and those who wish they had more. Most of us regularly find ourselves in the latter group; we'd like to have a strong sense of God's presence in the world, a firm conviction of living our lives as if God's word and will mattered to us, but we have a whole lot of questions. At times we may wonder if any of this faith-stuff is for real. Do we really believe the things we say in the creed? How can we call the Bible the "Word of God," when we notice so many inconsistencies, so many unscientific revelations? But if we don't accept these things, then can we honestly say we are Christians? What does this mean?

Join the pastors as we explore themes of Christian life, exploring the ancient teachings of the church even while taking our questions seriously. Whether you were raised in the faith, or are curious about taking the first step, you are welcome to be part of the discussion.

- **September 26 — An Invitation to Journey.** Faith is not a destination; it's the path through which we discover, question, wonder, delight, wrestle and grow. Can you be open to a process, rather than a set of beliefs?
- **October 3 — Taking the Bible Seriously but Not Literally.** What do we mean by calling scripture, "Word of God, Word of Life"? If we know that there are discrepancies, contradictions and non-historical descriptions of events in the Bible, how can we possibly claim it is authoritative?
- **October 10 — Thinking Theologically.** If God is so good and so powerful, how come there are so many disasters and atrocities?
- **October 17 — Stories of Creation.** Scripture describes the beginnings of the universe very differently than science does. For centuries, the church ignored the advances of science and even condemned faithful researchers who tried to explain their discoveries. But scripture itself is complex and nuanced in teaching us about God's role in creation, and invites us to consider scientific truths from a faithful point of view.
- **October 24 — Lives of Jesus.** Wouldn't it make more sense to read just one really clear and compelling biography of Jesus? Why do we need four different accounts, and what are we supposed to make of the differences and inconsistencies? Who is the Jesus of Scripture and what do the four gospel accounts reveal? Are there other accounts we should consider?
- No meeting on October 31
- **November 7 — A Passion for Christ.** The New Testament is full of letters Christians wrote about concerns in communities wholly unique and different from our own. What relevance could 1st century dispatches have for 21st century people of faith? Did Paul actually write most or any of this, and how has his legacy shaped theology for us today?
- **November 14 — Out into the World: Challenges Facing Progressive Christians.** Some of the things we hear at church are so different from what the culture presumes Christians believe that we find it hard to share our faith with anyone. How do we use the metaphors that nurture and deepen our spiritual life in conversation with people who have come to expect dogmatic and rigid doctrinal teachings from the church?

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that the solar heat produced would address all the energy needs and construction limitations of a house built before 1900 were unrealistic. None of those involved had looked ahead at the need to monitor the system's effectiveness and the solar company survived only ten years.

5. How did knowing about climate change affect your spirit?

The very Lutheran view that all believers are called to ministry wherever and however they move through life was always the foundation for my increasing awareness and changing views related to the environment. Like many others who respond to the beauty, the intricacies, the yet-unknown aspects of creation, a commitment to love and protect it, all has always been a part of my life. My answers to the questions in this interview attest to my own increasing awareness, all of them leading to my wanting to know more, wanting to do more, and finally to saying yes to the invitation to join the Caring for Creation ministry at Gloria Dei.

6. How has being a part of Caring for Creation affected you?

At the first organizational meeting, I remember being impressed with many new names and faces among those who attended. I also remember

feeling out of my league as people introduced themselves and cited their professional experiences and specific interests in the proposed ministry. But no one there had hair whiter than mine, one of several markers reminding me that I could bring the experiences of a longer life to the group.

Several meetings later I volunteered to work with a three-member publicity subcommittee, even arranging to attend all winter meetings by speaker phone since I no longer drive after dark. Our first task was to draft a description of the mission and purposes of this new committee. Working from an outline of their vision prepared by new chair Teresa Borczik and several other members, we established statements of mission and purpose, then summarized work already begun with existing committees such as an energy audit, an informational meeting about solar installations at GDLC and in private homes.

As we wrote, the summary made clear that I had joined a group that will work to make Gloria Dei more responsive and responsible in Caring for Creation and whose vision extends beyond its walls, into the broader community! Answering the questions for this interview tells me I am becoming more articulate about being involved, now as an active member of this vital ministry, Caring for Creation.

Plant seeds, Pull Weeds, Harvest

Three little square raised garden beds are accomplishing a lot for the ministry of Jesus this summer! About 15 volunteers are covering twenty weeks of gardening tasks: daily watering, weeding and harvesting on Sundays. Volunteers report that they are taking over 8 one-gallon bags each week to Francis Basket, where neighbors in need are thankful for fresh produce. The core team of members overseeing the ministry also revised the instructions to make it even easier for others to volunteer. Those instructions are now laminated by the garden. We are keeping a photo album of weekly growth, on the church Flickr page. Click here to view: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmmhZkBF>



ELCA Youth Gathering in 2021

by Katie LeClair, Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries

Three years from now, get ready for a swarm of 30,000 Lutheran teens who will visit and bless the Twin Cities. We will get to be a part of it.

The ELCA Youth Gathering this year was in Houston, Texas. The Gathering is held every three years for teens and those who love them in our denomination, usually for 3-4 days. When the Gathering comes in 2021, GDLC youth will be able to fully participate in all the activities, including staying in hotels. Adults of all abilities will be invited to help host the event in many different ways. Stay tuned!

Until then, here are some reflections from a colleague of mine Rachel James, Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries, First Lutheran, Columbia Heights, who went to her first Gathering this year.

From a first time Gathering attendee: "Wow this has been an AWESOME week! Our team, youth and adults have been so moved and so touched by God. Here's what I loved:

- First, the Getting Ready pre-materials were a great curriculum for our youth group. We used it all year and they loved it.
- The communication and details planning that went into this event blows my mind. I watched all the webinars and read the blog/website carefully. I felt like I had a handle on the Gather-

ing even though everyone on our team was a newbie.

- All the logistics here went smoothly for us. We had a great Community Life person at our hotel who not only checked us in, but gave me advice and tips. Our Gathering provided transportation to get us where we needed to go each day. Our kids were always safe and happy most of the time.
- We *loved* every Mass Gathering. The speakers went deep and were amazing. The music rocked. Getting in and out was a sweaty, beautiful mess. Our service day was incredible, mainly because of the engagement of our local partner. Yes we were mostly outside doing yard work and picking up trash, but the learning they provided and the connection to people's lives and stories was powerful.
- Houston was fun! We explored some neighborhoods, downtown and of course visited Waffle House late at night for the whole H-town experience. I wish we would have given ourselves an extra day to go to the ocean or NASA, but we had some fun adventures.
- The vocational discernment and processing times we had each day were very meaningful.

Not looking forward to our 24-hour straight bus ride home, but I am looking ahead to next cycle of the Youth Gathering!"



Iglesia Luterana Agustina de Guatemala Accepted into the Lutheran World Federation!

We celebrate with our companions in the Iglesia Luterana Agustina de Guatemala (ILAG), who have been accepted into the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The ILAG joins 147 other member churches throughout 99 countries as part of the LWF. Gloria Dei has had a partnership with ILAG for more than a decade. With our Lutheran companions at the ILAG and our Catholic ones in San Lucas Tolimán, we uphold the values of mutuality, inclusivity, vulnerability, empowerment and sustainability.

Once a year, a delegation from Gloria Dei travels to Guatemala to visit our companions. Learn more about Gloria Dei's global partnerships at www.gloriadeistpaul.org/outreach/global/.

The Iglesia Luterana Agustina de Guatemala is

made up of 3000 members in 17 congregations, located in El Quiché, Cobán, Alta Verapaz, Petén and Guatemala City. The church includes eight ordained pastors, two catechists, an evangelist, a preacher, a minister for Eucharist, as well as 16 health promoters and various volunteers. Since 2005, the Saint Paul Area Synod has been walking alongside the ILAG.

Learn more about our partnership at www.spas-elca.org/guatemala



Electrifying!

We forget how dependent we are on electricity until we lose it. Staff, members and visitors were reminded of this the last week of June when the lights went off in all of parts of Gloria Dei which was built in the 1950s and 1960s. Halls and stairwells were dark. Extension cords passed out of some offices to connect computers.

This all happened when three electrical panels from the 1950s and 1960s were replaced, as part of the capital improvements done this year. Steve Teipel, chair of the Facilities Committee said, "I wish I'd taken a picture after they had removed the old panels. There were wires sticking out everywhere." From Monday through early Friday morning, electricians removed the old panels and replaced them with new panels. By Friday afternoon, Tim Strand was testing the organ and practicing for Sunday morning.

The replacement stemmed from the Facilities Assessment done by the architectural firm HGA in 2012. The recommendation was to "replace



the 400 amp electrical service and panel boards serving the 1950 and 1960 additions." Because of other needs, this replacement was not done as part of the larger project several years ago that included work on drainage, the Colonial Room, the choir room, and the parking lot. It has been on the list of smaller projects to be done as capital funds were available, and was a part of this year's capital budget. The three panels replaced are located in the boiler room. As time goes on, other panels throughout the building will be tested and replaced as needed.

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Third Chapter's Sacred Poetry Session

by Ann Niedringhaus

The sunny Gathering Space was fully occupied on the afternoon of Thursday, July 12 by 15 participants considering SACRED POETRY. Poet Ann Floreen Niedringhaus presented three groups of questions along with packets of sample poems, poetry and writing books, and visual images. The sections for each period of meditation and/or writing were: SOURCES AND ROOTS; MYSTERY/CERTAINTY; and FRUIT AND SEED FOR THE FUTURE.

Spread out on tables, sprawling in chairs, wandering farther afield to sanctuary pews or patio heat, participants meditated, read, filled in answers to leading questions and wrote their own "sacred poems". Then, recalled by a quiet bell, they reconvened three times and shared their insights or read aloud their writing.

The 2-1/2 hour session, according to participants, passed quickly. It closed as it opened — with prayer, after a reminder to watch for upcoming Third Chapter offerings: a late July Movie Morning, a Fall Retreat, "Who Am I Now?" and a Saturday panel on retirement.

Used as sample poems in workshop, here are two cinquains (syllabic poems of 5 lines) by Joan Johnson of St. Paul from *An Alphabet of Aging* (Red Bird Chapbooks, 2016). Used with the poet's permission.

HARVEST

The deep
furrowed field of
my seed-sowing years yields
such abundance, I kneel to say
thank you.

REGENERATION

New life
starts in the dark.
I'm grateful for spaces
that hold the unknown, for that's where
I grow.

Financial Update

Capital Fund Information

Contributions YTD	\$152,552
Monthly mortgage payments	\$18,752
Capital Improvement Cost Year-to-Date	\$12,963
Balance in Capital Accounts March 31	\$355,484
Mortgage Balance March 31	\$2,809,950

Operating Information, June 30

Total Offerings	\$93,861
Ahead(Behind)	\$5,381
Total Income	\$113,287
Total Expenses	\$118,008
Net for the Month	(\$4,720)
Total Year-to-Date Offerings	\$642,704
Ahead(Behind)	(\$12,265)
Total YTD Income	\$760,670
Total YTD Expenses	\$692,445
Net for the Current Year	\$68,225

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.

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