



# Gloria Dei Guide

June/July 2018

## Gloria Dei’s Garden Gives Back to Community

by Katie LeClair

One visiting the south entrance of Gloria Dei may wonder if the glistening water drops on some of the newly planted vegetables are signs of hope — miracles of mercy? We now enter our fifth year of volunteers gardening for support of Francis Basket, the Highland neighborhood food shelf. On Saturday, May 26 several volunteer members of Gloria Dei gathered to map out donated plants, break up the ground, weed, and plant for the 2018 harvest. This year, the garden was renamed the “Giving Garden.”

Marsha Sullivan-Jameton, a member of the planting crew, visited with the staff at Francis Basket, a [ministry of Neighborhood House](#), to determine what specific vegetable wishes are needed. Top priorities were greens (collard, Swiss chard, and kale) and hot peppers. Also requested were tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, parsley, and cilantro. Gloria Dei members responded generously to these requests and provided plants and materials for the garden.

Cheryl Freske has been harvesting and delivering food to Francis Basket for the past 3 years. “The Francis Basket staff is so delighted and appreciative when fresh produce is delivered in addition to non-perishable food every week,” she tells me.

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## Summer Worship

Sundays 8 & 10 am



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Garden from page 1

Cheryl was among the crew who planted the Giving Garden. She noted that during the summer months the need is even greater for families with school children. Families need food for all meals in the summer — students receive breakfast and lunch during the school year.

*"The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just on the body, but the soul." — Alfred Austin*

With the increased need in our community, volunteers rose to the challenge with their time and gardening talents. This year, over 25 church members signed up to donate vegetables, and to weed, water, and harvest from May through October. Members select an entire week to visit the garden at least once a day.

Cathay Hoven, who joined GDLC a year ago, said, "I volunteer with the garden as it is something positive I can do for all." Her love of gardening began when she was a child where she learned skills from her grandparents. "We have always gardened. I remember eating my grandparents' ground cherries right off the ground."

Like all seasoned gardeners, Cathay had advice for new gardeners. "Take it easy on yourself! Enjoy the process. Product is swell; process is good health."

Giving Garden volunteer, Jane Dresser said she volunteers because "it is an easy task — and supports an important ministry. It's a no-brainer."

Jane loves watering the garden, and her favorite things to grow are tomatoes and flowers — "bleeding hearts, lily-of-valley, peonies, bearded iris — and I love lilacs!"

Member Paula Hutchinson brought the idea to church staff to begin a tradition of blessing the garden through a short prayer time called "The Blessing of the Worms." On Sunday, May 27, the congregation gathered around the raised beds to commission the growing, the harvest, and the work of each volunteer and all creatures who will visit the garden. Those in attendance enjoyed delicious, colorful gummy worms as they circled the pastors with prayer for the ministry of the Giving Garden.

Jane Dresser said, "I understand we gather hundreds of pounds of food each summer for Francis Basket — happily done. And I think we are a visible demonstration of 'walking the walk', and that those who help themselves to a ripe something or another learn how food is really supposed to taste."

There are still a few weeks of weeding, watering, and harvesting opportunities. To sign up to volunteer, visit: [tinyurl.com/GivingGarden2018](https://tinyurl.com/GivingGarden2018). In addition to the Giving Garden, donations of fresh produce from your home garden harvest may be dropped off on Sundays at GDLC. Email Katie LeClair ([youth@gloriadeistpaul.org](mailto:youth@gloriadeistpaul.org)) for specific directions on where donations should go. Each Monday, volunteers from GDLC take produce and non-perishable goods to Francis Basket.

Future dreams and plans for the garden are floating about in the prayers of church members. In the coming years, the wood beds could be painted with designs and words of hope and justice. Members have also discussed painting rocks that could surround the garden beds with sayings of encouragement as people view the garden on their neighborhood walks. The construction of more garden beds is also a hoped-for possibility, as more members see the benefits of serving our neighbors.

May this year's efforts in gardening ministry be a blessing to our neighborhood. Amen!



## Summer Spirituality

by Nancy L. Agneberg

*"May you breathe in the beauty of summer with its power of transformation."*

I have a confession to make — I am not a summer person. I don't like the heat and humidity and what it does to my thick, curly hair. I don't like mosquitos. I often feel distracted in the summer, drawn away from my garret desk. Nope, I am not a summer person. I am a winter person. I love to hibernate, to enclose myself in a cave where it is dark and snuggly, to wrap myself in sweaters and eat soups and stews. And I am far more productive in the winter.

The gifts of winter spirituality are easy for me. The quiet, days of cold and snow and ice invite me to go deeper inside my inner cave, to explore what it is I most need to know about myself and the movement of God in my life. The summer season, however, is a challenge for me. How can I access the spiritual gifts of this time when there is so much to do, so many places to go and people to see, and it all needs to be crammed into a few weeks bookended by holidays and filled with celebrations?

*"May you seek and find spaces of repose during these summer months."*

I ask myself how can I meet God during this season of so many pleasures. How does summer speak of God to me? How does God speak to you in the summer, and how can you grow in your awareness of the presence of God, whether you are hiking to a Minnesota waterfall, reading a book on a beach, or weeding in the garden? As you pack for a family vacation, how will you remember to make room for the God who yearns for a place in your life wherever you are?

Summer spirituality invites us into spaciousness. We open the windows of our home, but we can also open the windows of our heart, releasing what is stale and breathless and circulating what is fresh and fragrant. With the shift into summer, we have the opportunity to examine routines no longer working for the person we are now and to see with greater clarity how we are growing or need to grow. Is it time to create more simplicity in your

life? To pack lightly, not just for a longed-for vacation, but to lighten any burdens of care or tasks no longer necessary. Simplicity is an invitation to discern what is essential. Summer has the potential to stretch us. We stretch our bodies in yoga class or after a day of biking or canoeing, but summer can also broaden our perspectives and our awareness of the world.

*"May your eyes see the wonders of God's colors. May these colors delight you and entice you into contemplation and joy."*

Use all your senses to explore the delights of summer, a dazzling abundance of treats. Corn on the cob with melted basil butter. The touch of water lapping our feet as we walk a beach. The smell of roses in a lush garden. The sound of fireworks on the 4th of July and the sight of the moon lingering in the night sky. Savor it all, for the senses lead us across thresholds to the holy. Linger in sacred space, the places where spirit seems most intense. Perhaps you feel that in the family cabin or in a national park or on your own front porch. When you ask a loved one, "What was your favorite?" after a busy day of exploring new sights or spending time with family or friends, you offer a blessing and create sacred space.

Rejoice in celebrations and summer silliness. Celebrate the special, but also look for the extraordinary in the ordinary. Rediscover the child within. What did you most love to do when you were a child, and how can that child lead you now?

The heavy, hot days of summer can draw us to stillness. When I am still and not moving, I am open to being moved. Listening to yourself and to the voice of God clears the space for new ideas, new connections, new deeper awareness. Attending summer worship services reinforces and supports what summer teaches, and reminds us that it is in community where we remember we are all one and we are all loved.

*"May the God of summer give us joy. May the God of summer give us inner light."*

May this be the summer when we each fully embrace summer spirituality, and may we greet each other along the way.

Quotations are from "A Summer Prayer" by Joyce Rupp.



# Gloria Dei Guide

THOUGHTS FROM THE WATER TOWER

## God loves us, no matter what!

by Deacon Pat Derry

This is kids' language for "God's grace" and has been the theme of the past program year in the Water Tower. 2017 was the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation and was celebrated by children learning about Luther and the major tenets of the Lutheran faith.

Lessons embraced both Old Testament and New Testament scripture, Christmas, the 1500s, and contemporary times.

Grades 1 through 4 experienced grace through storytelling, baking, games, drama, film, music, art, photography, science, history, and movement.

Repetition and learning through all the senses help growing minds and bodies absorb God's gift of grace. It is the prayer of every teacher and guide that the children's faith is strengthened, that they love Jesus more, and deepen their trust in God who loves them, no matter what!



Second Grade: Luther claims Scripture is source of truth but Roman Church proclaims his writings heresy



First Grade: Luther is "kidnapped" and brought to Wartburg Castle



Martin and Katie Luther take part in Children's Christmas Program



Fourth Grade: Martin and Katie are married and people grieve at the death of Luther





Second graders learn about Corrie ten Boom's secret hiding place



Several fourth graders show their Jonah kitchen



First graders learn about Mother Teresa in the movie room



Fourth graders learn about Father Greg in San Lucas Toliman, Guatemala



## Gloria Dei Hosts Sanctuary Support Dinner for Haitian Family

by Kurt Claussen

On Friday, May 11, Gloria Dei hosted a Haitian dinner and cultural program. The evening was co-hosted by staff members from Falcon Ridge Middle School in Apple Valley and raised funds for Haitian refugees Djenane SaintJuste, her middle-school-aged son Hassen, and her mother, Florencia “Fofo” Pierre. Djenane is an English Language Learner (ELL) teacher at Falcon Ridge Middle School (FRMS). She teaches her students in four languages — French, Creole, Spanish, and English. Additionally, she is the artistic director of Afoutayi Dance, Music and Arts Company, a group that promotes Haitian heritage through cultural expression, including music, art, dance, and storytelling.

Djenane and her family, along with nearly 59,000 other Haitians, have lived under special protected immigrant status in the U.S. since a 2010 earthquake devastated their island country. In November 2017, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced that the special status for Haitian immigrants will end in July 2019. If Djenane and her family do not have permanent legal status by July 2019, they could be deported.

When administrators in the Apple Valley-Eagan-Rosemount school district learned of the potential loss of their colleague, they decided to assist Djenane in filing for a more permanent residence status.

Unfortunately, the district is unable to offer the

same assistance for the other members of her family. Hassen and Fofo need assistance to pay for the application and legal fees that would allow them to earn a more permanent resident status. These applications are more complicated than Djenane’s case, according to the family’s attorney Naomi Perman, an immigration and nationality law expert, who also attended the dinner.

Recognizing this need, a group of teachers and staff at FRMS stepped in to organize a fundraising effort. In April, they approached Gloria Dei about holding a fundraising dinner for Djenane’s family at Gloria Dei. The Gloria Dei Sanctuary Support Team agreed to help.

On May 11 in the Fellowship Hall at Gloria Dei, Afoutayi presented an extremely entertaining program with singing, dancing, and stories. Audience participation for all ages, with dancing, singing, and drumming, was an important part of the festivities. Following the program, participants were invited to dine on a sensational authentic Haitian meal, all prepared under the watchful eye of Fofo and several assistants from Gloria Dei and Falcon Ridge. It was an amazing evening of community building, cultural education, and entertainment.

So far, the effort has raised over \$2,700 toward a goal of \$3,000 — the estimated cost of the residency application for Fofo and Hassen.



## Welcome to our new Parish Nurse

We welcome Jill Stewart as our new parish nurse. A lifelong member of Gloria Dei, Jill is retiring this spring as a school nurse at Northeast Metro 916. Jill began her ministry with us on June 1. We asked Jill a few questions as a way to introduce her to the congregation.

### What intrigues you about the Parish Nurse position?

I like that Parish Nursing is about nursing people's spiritual needs across the lifespan. It expands caring for people to how they can use faith practices to heal and grow.

### What is your professional background?

I started working as a Registered Nurse at St. Paul-Ramsey Medical Center (now Regions). I worked in the neurology unit and enjoyed working in a teaching hospital with a real spirit of service to the community. I learned a lot from the other students, doctors, nurses, and clients. When the hospital started providing home health care, I moved into Public Health work. I met people from all sorts of backgrounds and began

to understand the true impact socioeconomic differences can have on health outcomes. I moved on to School Nursing. It was a great fit and I stayed with the same district for 30 years. Now I am retiring from School Nursing and am excited to practice in a field that will draw from everything I have done in the past.

### How do you think your background and life experiences will help you in this new ministry?

I think Nursing has been great for meeting people from all kinds of backgrounds and cultures. I have learned a lot about life over the years from all of the people I have worked with, and I know this church community, too.

### What is one thing (hobby, experience, whatever) you would like to share that few people know about you?

I love to read and travel. I am laughably inept at most sports, but I enjoy hiking, riding my bike, kayaking, and walking with my dog Abby.

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## Synod Assembly: Reflections on Restless and Resolute

*by Deacon Pat Derry*

The 2018 Saint Paul Synod Assembly presented fresh new voices in the church. At a time when many ELCA churches are struggling with low young adult participation in the congregation and many claim themselves as "None" when asked of religious affiliation, these young voices were inspirational, visional, and hopeful! It was a gift simply to hear them, and especially to hear them at a church assembly!

These insights were not born of inexperienced youthful naiveté, but rather from places of struggle and challenge. Young people are not distanced from difficulty. Some are born to it, like our own Louie McGee, who at 5 years, was diagnosed with Stargardt disease, a form of macular degeneration. Louie and his sister, Carmel-

la received a well-deserved standing ovation after they presented "Louie's Vision," a nonprofit organization Louie created for visually impaired youth to experience the fullness of life and to reach their own full potential.

Some young people voluntarily place themselves in difficulty, like Samantha Ea who participated in the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program. This took her to a teaching position in a Lutheran school in Palestine, where she experienced first-hand the difficulty of living under oppression.

Others do not run from difficulty but seek to change it, like Kendrick Hall, who is passionate

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*Synod Assembly from page 7*

about issues such as affordable housing, the school-to-prison pipeline and immigration. Kendrick, a Luther Seminary student, currently works for Lutheran Advocacy – Minnesota, and hopes to reduce poverty and struggle as he enters communities that are filled with pain.

We also watched a video greeting from Pastor Msigwa of the Iringa Diocese in Tanzania. Pastor Msigwa said that 60 percent of the Iringa Diocese members are young people! Last year, four Saint Paul Area Synod young adults accompanied fourteen of their young adult peers in the Iringa Diocese to a youth camp. One participant, Tina Erickson, spoke of the transformation in her life when she witnessed her Tanzanian counterparts praising God with radiant joy, and speaking of their faith in the context of every part of life. Their excitement was contagious, and Tina was filled with hope. Tina, and all the other young people who shared their stories, spoke of their restlessness in the face of the world's countless challenges, but also spoke of being resolute that change will come when we all work together as God's people. Tina shared what all these young people hold as a real possibility, that "God's church might be a more joyful and hopeful place by leaning into the wisdom and witness of young adults near and far."

God knows we need more joy and hope!  
Thanks be to God for these voices!

## Financial Update

| Capital Fund Information                 |                  |
|--|------------------|
| Contributions YTD                        | \$106,040        |
| Monthly mortgage payments                | \$18,752         |
| Capital Improvement Cost<br>Year-to-Date | \$0              |
| Balance in Capital Accounts<br>March 31  | \$359,683        |
| Mortgage Balance<br>March 31             | \$2,828,627      |
| Operating Information, March 31          |                  |
| Total Offerings                          | \$96,842         |
| Ahead(Behind)                            | (\$6,722)        |
| Total Income                             | \$121,126        |
| Total Expenses                           | \$114,308        |
| Net for the Month                        | \$6,818          |
| <b>Total Year-to-Date Offerings</b>      | <b>\$468,232</b> |
| Ahead(Behind)                            | (\$13,508)       |
| Total YTD Income                         | \$513,182        |
| Total YTD Expenses                       | \$454,506        |
| Net for the Current Year                 | \$76,676         |

## 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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## The Back Rows

*by Alex Stegeman*

A reflection on the "alternative church service" run by children in the back rows on Sunday. They sit on the ground and talk to each other, coloring or playing with stuffed animals. Alex wrote this haiku to share:

The pew: an Altar.

Children commune — handing out

Animal crackers.