



## **Art Installation Veils the Chancel for Lent 2018 —The Veil**

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Chancel Installation, Lent 2018, Sheer, Organza

It's an old tradition to veil the cross during Lent or for the two weeks before Easter. Covering the cross with a purple veil was intended to focus the church on the saving work of Christ. The current installation in the chancel echoes that Lenten experience but takes us one step further. It invites us to ask what we see and don't see during these days of Lent. What is hidden? What do we need to see or understand in order to deepen our trust in the resurrection and to be more faithful in our response to God's grace.

The veil may also echo the curtain in the temple that was torn in two at Jesus' death on Good Friday, uniting heaven and earth. Or perhaps it represents the grave cloths. The purple in the center of the cruciform hanging may represent those things we carry to the cross so that they can be buried in the soil of God's love, only to give birth to some new life yet to come. Each Sunday in Lent, our sins and burdens will be carried into the chancel and placed in this "cross."

Particularly, the veil covers the painting of Jesus, inviting us to ask ourselves how we portray the living Christ. Increasingly, we have become aware of the challenge of portraying Christ in white skin. How do our images shape us? What do they help us to see, and what do they keep us from seeing? Perhaps in Lent, we listen carefully to voices that see behind the veil in different ways than our own tradition. We all long for the day when the veil is pulled back and we see Christ face to face, no longer knowing him in part, but realizing that all along we have been fully known.



At the Congregational Annual Meeting on February 11, there was a vote on how to split the \$30,000 for outreach that resulted from meeting the Strike the Match challenge last fall. Each of the 100 members present had three votes. They distributed these votes on posters representing the 12 organizations we support with second offering every month plus the Saint Paul Area Synod. The results are as follows:

Lutheran Social Services – Metro Homeless Youth: \$4300  
Weekend Backpack Program: \$4200  
Francis Basket: \$4000

Project Home: \$3400  
ISAIAH: \$2700  
ELCA World Hunger: \$2400  
Interfaith Action Department of Indian Works: \$2200  
ILAG, our partners in Guatemala: \$1600  
Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries & Reconciling Works: \$1600  
Loaves & Fishes: \$1300  
Interfaith Builders: \$900  
Keystone Food Shelf: \$900  
Saint Paul Area Synod: \$500

Each of these organizations will receive a surprise one-time check from Gloria Dei. Thank you to everyone who made new or increased pledges to the operating fund for 2018, allowing these generous gifts to go out to the community!

By Kate Ostrem, Stewardship Committee Chair

## Pastor Bradley Responds to Protester

We had a protestor this past Sunday. He stood on the public sidewalk with a sign that was a slur on GLBTQ people and their allies. My first reaction was, "Yeah! People know what we're about." I'm glad our mission to welcome all people in their fabulous array of orientations, gender identity, and sense of self is clear to the world. I also felt sadness that we are still fighting against a version of Christianity that is judgmental and afraid.

### What do we do if this happens again?

Don't engage, and certainly don't get in an argument. This is exactly what they want. Don't give them the chance. You won't change their mind, anyway. If you need to say anything, say, "Jesus loves you." Be careful in front of children that we don't act as judgmental as the protestor.

Pray for the protestor when you get in your car. Pray with your family. This is a chance to witness to a loving Christianity.

Pray for those affected. For many, seeing hateful messages brings up painful memories, even trauma, of being judged by the church that was supposed to represent a loving God. If you experienced pain, please reach out to the pastors and staff.

Let church leadership know so that further action can be considered. Police may need to be called if the protestor is on church property or is acting in a threatening way. Or an announcement may be made if it's appropriate.

Tell your friends that Gloria Dei welcomes everybody all the time. We're proud of our mission and we want everyone to know about what Jesus is doing here.

## Thoughts from the Water Tower By Deacon Pat Derry

March Rotation for 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Graders:

**A criminal says: “God loves me even though I did wrong.”**

Luke paints us a picture of Jesus’ death. It is gruesome, but not emotionally wrought. Luke’s description contain no nails, no blood, no account of suffering and agony. Jesus hangs, dying on a cross, under an inscription “This is the King of the Jews.” It was surely meant to be ironic, but was in reality more truthful than anyone there imagined!

Jesus hangs between two criminals, one on each side of him. In life as in death, Jesus is in the company of “sinners.” Below him, people stand by watching. Soldiers gamble for his clothing as they mock him, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” Jewish leaders join in the ridicule, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!” And finally one of the criminals joins in, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”

I wonder if this could have been one of Jesus’ last temptations. Did Jesus even for a moment consider calling the realms of angels to his aid? Jesus does not. He silently takes the abuse, and allows himself, the Creator of the Universe, to die.

But before his last breath, one lonely voice speaks kindly to Jesus. It is the criminal on his right side. We know nothing more of him, but that he believes Jesus to be the Messiah, the chosen one. The criminal recalls his own guilt but pleads with Jesus, “Remember me when you come into your kingdom.” Jesus promises more than he is asked. “Today you will be with me in Paradise.”

The criminal has no time to make amends, there is no time to do good deeds. It is the end of life. But Jesus needs nothing more. Jesus loves the man, no matter what he has done. And as the man turns his heart to Jesus, he is promised Paradise! Grace – freely given. Forgiveness – with no conditions. Love, pure and simple. Love for the dying criminal, for the mocking soldiers, for the angry leaders, for the watching people. Jesus loves the world, and with a breaking heart opens the way to Paradise.



For more than 30 years, the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches has coordinated the Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign, the annual grassroots food and fund drive that provides more than half the food distributed by 300 food shelves throughout the state. It is the only annual statewide effort of its kind in Minnesota.

In March, food shelves come together with congregations, businesses, community groups, and others to restock food supplies to help feed our neighbors in need. Minnesota FoodShare also solicits donations from corporate sponsors, congregations, and individuals for its Food Fund, 100% of which is given to food shelves who participate. Last year the campaign raised more than 12 million pounds and dollars for Minnesota’s food shelves.

At Gloria Dei, our Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign benefits our local food shelf, Francis Basket. This year, we are focusing on raising money.

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# 1 + 1

## One Monetary Donation + One Food Item

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Food shelves can stretch cash donations much further than donations of food because of their access to discount products and programs.

This year, consider making a 1+1

Donation: One monetary donation + one food item. One monetary donation: Make a contribution to support Francis Basket during our second offering on the second Sunday of the month, March 11th.

Won't be in church that Sunday? No problem. You can support the second offering electronically anytime during the month of March by going to [www.gloriadeistpaul.org/offering](http://www.gloriadeistpaul.org/offering), or by using the Offering Cards located in the pews. We have a goal of collecting \$4,000 during the month of March.

One food item: Consider donating one item on the list of most-needed items at Francis Basket: [www.tinyurl.com/NeededFoods](http://www.tinyurl.com/NeededFoods). Place your donations in the red barrel near the entrance.

## When can we come visit you?

By Chloe Ahlf

"When can we come visit you?"

The question seems so simple, but yet it had never crossed my mind. For the last handful of trips to visit our companions in Guatemala, the planning team has always told our hosts, "This is when we are coming." How often do you travel to friends and expect to be hosted at your demand, on your schedule, rather than your friends'?

Asking this simple question is accompaniment in action. Accompaniment is how we walk with our mission partners. Whether those partners are here in the Twin Cities, or at Waverly Lutheran in southern Minnesota, or down in the tropics of Guatemala, our relationships are modeled through accompaniment.

Defined by the values of mutuality, inclusivity, vulnerability, empowerment, and sustainability, accompaniment presents the radical idea that our partners know what is best for themselves....and that we support them in the ways that they ask of us.

We learned all of this and more on Saturday, February 10 at the Accompaniment Workshop at St. Michael's Lutheran in Roseville. Paulina Dasse, ELCA manager for relationships in Latin America and the Caribbean, joined us to talk about her own experience with the global church. She presented us with concepts of inter-culturalism versus multi-culturalism, storytelling in a way that is transformative, and trusting each side of the companionship to know what is best for their own ministry.

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Gloria Dei has two companions in our global church. Through the Iglesia Luterana Agustina de Guatemala (ILAG), we have companion partnerships with La Resurrección, a church in the ravines of the El Tuerto neighborhood, and El Mirador Primary School, both in Guatemala City.

We also have companions at the Catholic mission of San Lucas Tolimán, on the shores of Lake Atitlan. The most important thing to know about these companion partnerships is that they are mutual. Our global partners are not a source for a “mission trip” where we do projects and leave, patting ourselves on the back.

Through meals, worship, prayer, play, and laughing together, with our global

companions, we learn more about our own faith. We form an intercultural exchange of ideas, theologies, prayers, hopes, and joys. In accompaniment, relationships are the emphasis – not what material goods that we can offer.

These visits with our companions in Guatemala are a journey of mutual learning, transformation, and reconciliation. Our partnerships give voice to the marginalized, help us to interpret scripture in new ways and understand our own faith through the help of our neighbor.

They challenge our understanding of our own vulnerabilities, and help us to bear witness to the true breadth of God in this world. Interested in learning more about visiting companions, or engaging in the partnership in other ways? Email [Chloe Ahlf](#).



### Lent, 2018: What Do We Have to Lose?

*"Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.."*

--John 12:24-25



This year at Gloria Dei, we're using the image of planting a seed in the ground as a symbol of all that Lent invites us to lose. Planting seeds in the ground is one of the most counter-intuitively hopeful signs of spring we engage in. Taking something which looks dull and lifeless, we bury it into dirt, dust the soil from our hands, and optimistically envision a summertime garden to arise.

Jesus uses the image of planting seeds as he tries to prepare his disciples for his death, inviting them to imagine his burial as a step toward new life for the world. What a strange invitation for them to receive.

Like burying seeds in the ground, the Lenten traditions of confession, prayer, fasting, alms-giving, and acts of love all invite us to give away something of ourselves, to offer time, treasure, control, and self-righteousness. Jesus invites us give away our lives as we follow in discipleship and service.

What do we have to lose this year? What do we need to let go of in order to follow Christ more faithfully and to live a more abundant life? What are our barriers and burdens that we can put down? In a similar way, what can we give ourselves over to? How do we embrace our freedom in Christ and the new life that it promises?

What has been stirring in our soul that it's finally time to unleash? Throughout the season of Lent, we are asking, "What do we have to lose?" and gathering to consider that question together.

#### Wednesdays of Lent

5:00 p.m. Children's choirs

5:30 p.m. Community Soup Suppers \$7.00 for adults; \$5.00 for children

6:00 p.m. Discussion with pastors and leaders – What Do We Have To Lose?

Feb. 21- Pastor Bradley Schmeling

Feb. 28 – Former Pastor John Manz  
*Checking Our R Value: When Comfortability Insulates Us From the Needs of Others*

Mar. 7 – Pastor Lois Pallmeyer  
*Lost and Found*

Mar. 14 – Pastor Javen Swanson  
*The Gift of Imperfection: Letting Go of Shame and Self-Judgment.*

Mar. 21 – Music Director Tim Strand  
*Letting go of dreams and making room for new ones.*

6:00 p.m. Guided Labyrinth Experience

6:30 p.m. Confirmation for grades 7-10

7:00 p.m. Midweek Worship – Using Holden Evening Prayer

*See back page for Holy Week Schedule*

### Capital Fund Information

Contributions Year to Date	\$ 39,150
Monthly mortgage payments	\$ 18,752
Capital Improvement Costs Year-to-Date	\$ 0

### Balance in Capital Accounts

January 31, 2018	\$ 349,669
Mortgage Balance	
January 31, 2018	\$ 2,856,412

### FINANCIAL UPDATE

Operating Information	January 31, 2018	
Total offerings	\$ 182,752	
Ahead (Behind)	\$ 167	
Total Income	\$ 195,267	
Total Expenses	\$ 114,615	
Net for Month	\$ 80,652	
Total YTD Offerings	\$ 182,752	
Ahead (Behind)	\$ 167	
Total YTD Income	\$ 195,267	
Total YTD Expenses	\$ 114,615	
Net for Current Year	\$ 80,652	

Financial Update Submitted by Jeanne Hanson, Administrator

## Save the Date!

The Annual Fundraiser is just around the corner. Join us on Saturday, April 21 at 6:30 p.m. at the Highland National Golf Course Clubhouse for an evening of fun, good food and to raise funds for Gloria Dei and its missions.

Interested in hosting an event or donating an item for our Live Auction? Contact Marshall Saunders at [marshall@saundersrei.com](mailto:marshall@saundersrei.com).

RSVP for the event beginning March 18.



### Holy Week Schedule

Join us for worship throughout the church's most dramatic and moving worship services of the year.

#### **Passion (Palm) Sunday, March 25**

Worship at 8:15 and 10:45: Join us for a Passion procession through the neighborhood. Meet in Gathering Place at 10:15, weather permitting.

#### **Maundy Thursday, March 29**

On Maundy Thursday, the church ritually acts out its core values, announcing the forgiveness of sins, practicing humble service, praying for the "least of these," and sharing a meal around Christ's table.

**1:00 p.m. Traditional Liturgy**

**5:00 p.m. Children's Maundy Thursday Experience**

**7:00 p.m. Community Meal and Worship** ([RSVP](#) here or contact the church office).

#### **Good Friday, March 30**

We gather as a community of friends at the foot of the cross.

**5:00 p.m. Children's Good Friday Experience**

**7:00 p.m. Traditional Liturgy**

#### **Easter Vigil, March 31**

This night is the center of our year, the most dramatic and beautiful celebration of Easter. If you haven't been to a Vigil, come this year. It may become your favorite service.

**5:00 p.m.: Children's Easter Vigil Experience** This half-hour worship service helps teach our children about the excitement of this special night.

**7:00 p.m.: Traditional Vigil** – We kindle a new fire, read ancient scriptures, remember our baptism, and celebrate Holy Communion.

#### **Easter Day, April 1**

**Festival Eucharist -- 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m.**

Festival worship with brass, choirs, and all the glory of Easter. The 9:30 a.m. service often welcomes the most visitors. If members are able to come at 8:00 a.m. or 11:00 a.m., it will leave room for our many guests. Also, we encourage those who are able to park on the street, leaving the parking lot for those who most need it.

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Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

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700 Snelling Avenue South

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St. Paul, MN 55116

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**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.**