

Gloria Dei Guide

September 2018

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Worship

Sundays 8:15 & 10:45 am



Rooted in Generosity

by Pastor Lois Pallmeyer

The rain garden on the north side of our property has been absolutely bursting with monarch butterflies for the past few weeks. Two Sundays ago, they stopped me in my tracks as I was leaving church, and reminded me of how we are rooted in such amazing generosity when we come to worship.

Generations of faithful members of this congregation have lovingly given to build this church and to provide for its leaders and ministries. In the past few years, new gifts have allowed us to repair the building's foundation and roof, and to rebuild the parking lot and grounds. A special grant from the Ramsey County Soil and Water Conservation District in 2016 allowed us to create these rain gardens with natural attractions for pollinators and butterflies. Along the way, faithful servants have given their time, their talent, and their faithful service to care for and maintain the goodness of our work together.

The result of all of this generosity is a lovely facility surrounded by a gracious and beautiful landscape, inviting me and the monarchs to enjoy God's goodness. Of course all of this ultimately is

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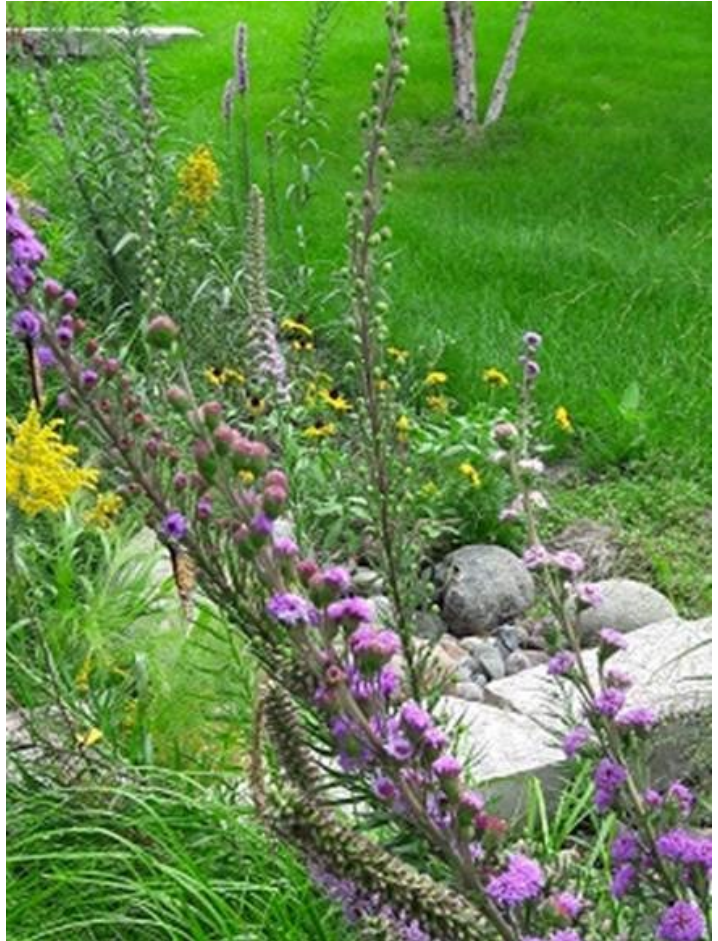


Rooted from page 1

a gift of God's amazing grace, which roots not just the Liatrice and the Cardinal Flowers, but all of God's people in generosity. What a gift!



Rooted in Generosity is the theme of this year's Stewardship Campaign. It is one of the guiding principles adopted by Gloria Dei as we renew our commitment to being "Rooted in Christ through worship with meaning and relevance."



NEW ADULT GROWING IN FAITH OPPORTUNITY FOR FALL 2018

What Does This Mean?

by Pastor Lois Pallmeyer

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 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?

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What Does This Mean from page 2

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. This is a 7-week series, fall 2018, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday evenings beginning September 26.

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? We are not the first generation to wrestle with what it means to trust in God's power and love, in light of the realities of life. People of faith discover new ways of imagining the Divine.

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 issues and 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 than what the culture presumes Christians believe, 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?

What's Behind the Closed Door?

By Mary Jo Hallberg

You walk past the closed door every time you enter Gloria Dei via the parking lot. Ever wonder what's behind that closed door?

Pastor Ann Bergstrom did and spoke of the closed door in a recent sermon:

You see, with God, there is always something quietly, often invisibly, going on.

There's a closet door at our church that has always been shut when I've walked by. I've never really known what was behind that

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THOUGHTS FROM THE WATER TOWER

Water Tower? GAPP? What happened to Sunday School?

by Deacon Pat Derry

For many years all children's faith programming was called Sunday School. Sunday School included children from 3 years through 6th grade, and most often resembled a traditional school classroom setting. Faithful and devoted teachers worked hard to make Sunday School a warm and welcoming place where children learned Bible stories and where their faith was nurtured. I hope many of you have wonderful memories of Sunday School. It has always been a very important piece of passing on our faith through generations in church!

Since the emergence of the psychology of child development, Sunday School publishers such as Augsburg Fortress, have worked hard to incorporate the learnings of such study into

their curriculum. As a result, lessons are created to be age-appropriate and geared with active learning in mind. Lessons are also written for teachers with little time to prepare. The trends of our culture do not support hours of preparation that previous Sunday School teachers invested in each lesson.

At Gloria Dei Sunday School continues with devoted teachers and children eager to learn Bible stories, but within three different settings. Gloria Dei's Sunday School is made for preschoolers, ages 3 – 5, who learn in a traditional classroom, with lots of play for the youngest and active, and varied learning for Kindergarteners. This suits the age well, since younger children thrive in stable, constant settings.



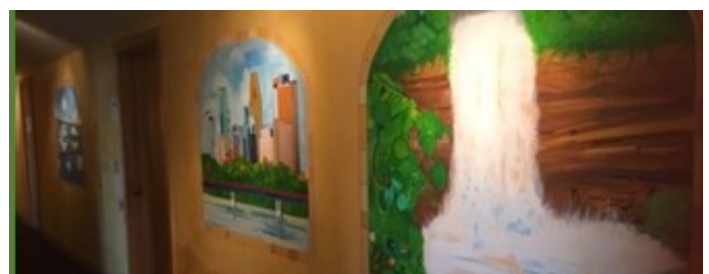
Elementary children, grades 1 through 4, learn in the Water Tower. The Water Tower describes the location as well as the curriculum of learning. Gloria Dei's highest floor of classrooms, the third floor, has been redesigned to resemble the top of our neighbor, the Highland Water Tower. It is an environment created especially for elementary children – different and exciting. It is their own place! The Water Tower has four workshop rooms, which are used for different activities. One room is set apart for movies, another for art or drama, another for science and maps and history, and yet another for storytelling.

Teachers constantly change while adults who accompany the children remain the same. These Guides are friends and mentors and who often remain with the children for all four years! These people are important in the lives of our children!

Teachers are those who love to teach and teach one lesson for four weeks, each Sunday to a different grade. They teach within an area they care

about, whether it be art or drama or science. They use their talents to share lessons that they work hard on and that they hope will touch the kids in their workshops! Children meet in a different workshop each week, for a lesson taught through a different medium each week. This model of Sunday School is called Workshop Rotation.

Finally, our 5th and 6th graders attend a "Sunday School" called GAPP, which stands for Grace And Promise People. The GAPP room is Room 109, and changes throughout the year to reflect the youth and the lessons that take place there. This room is set up in a large group, small group model. The preteens sit at round tables which promote discussion, because there is a lot of talking in GAPP. A team of three teachers keep Sunday mornings moving quickly, while individual small group table leaders keep discussions moving. Active lessons are interspersed with service projects and guest speakers. It is a great place for preteens to grow and learn and change, in all ways, including their faith life!



Rally Sunday 2018

by Pastor Lois Pallmeyer



Gather with us on Sunday, September 9, as we kick off a new year of programming, Sunday School, and ministries together.

We'll worship together at 8:15 and 10:45 (note fall worship schedule), and meet for Sunday School, GAPP, or forum at 9:30 a.m.*

After the second service, we'll move out for a celebration on the front lawn, including lunch, games, live music, and chances to connect with others. We invite you to bring something to share for our salad bar or dessert table. (Bring a prepared salad, or any ingredient that you'd add to a salad, or a dessert that others can enjoy with you. Please, NO PEANUTS to help those with allergies feel welcome.) Sub-sandwiches will be available for a donation. And we're serving Root Beer Floats! We hope it's a Zero Waste Picnic, and appreciate the Care for Creation team's provision of all compostable or reusable dishes and napkins.

Learn about some of Gloria Dei's outreach ministries at the interactive displays on our front lawn.

You'll have a chance to help pack grocery backpacks we provide to students at Highland Elementary School during the school year. Others will pack school supplies for neighbors, create Welcome Baskets for families moving from transitional to permanent housing, or help us make fleece blankets for kids who have struggled with floods. You'll have a chance to root a daffodil bulb to bring beauty to our gardens.

There will be a Bouncy House for the kids and chances to meet new friends. You don't want to miss it!



Letter to Donors of the Recent Gloria Dei Mission Trip To Alaska

by Katie LeClair, Director of Youth & Family Faith Formation

We had an amazing and blessed trip to Alaska. Over a year of planning and praying went into this adventure where we learned, served, and grew in our faith.

Our work week was on two projects: finishing a cabin that was begun by Next Step groups earlier in the summer at The Vine, and doing various projects (fireproofing, ditch digging, insulation) at Youth With a Mission. We learned construction skills along-side college-aged team leaders who were patient with us and took the time to make sure we knew what we were doing with safety and confidence.

Each morning began with a light breakfast and private quiet time with a devotional journal. We did

group stretches before leaving for our work sites with our bag lunches. Most mornings we would stop at a fresh water spring to fill up our water coolers. We worked from 9-3:30 each day, with a one-hour break for lunch and Bible devotions led by our teens. Then off to showers at the Tennis Center and back to the housing site for dinner and evening worship with a final church discussion time before lights out at 11 PM. The days were long, accompanied by Alaskan summer daylight lasting until almost midnight and rising again after 4 AM.

One of our construction managers, a Native American from Fairbanks gifted our team with a 3-hour

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Closed door from page 3

door. But two weeks ago I walked through that door as a volunteer into a re-purposed closet to pack food for Gloria Dei's Weekend Backpack Program destined for the Highland Park Elementary School.

I joined three other retired people: a schoolteacher, an oncologist, and a hospice physician. And the four of us packed bags of food for an hour.

2 puddings. 2 juice things. 2 granola bars. Hummus. Crackers and cheese. And a small can of macaroni and beef.

101 times. 101 bags.

The Gloria Dei Weekend Backpack Program begins its fourth year of serving Highland Park Elementary students this fall. Please consider participating in this important outreach.

- Donate during the second offering in September or on the GD website



- Volunteer to pack bags with a group or your family
- Volunteer to set up on Sunday for Sunday School when children pack
- Deliver and Distribute bags at HPE on Friday mornings (occasional Thursdays and Wednesdays)
- Stock shelves when food is delivered (first Monday of the month)

For more information, visit <http://www.gloriadeistpaul.org/outreach/hunger/>.

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Riverboat experience to learn more about the Athabaskan people, a gift of over \$1,300 that was a highlight of our trip, and a total surprise. Those who worked at The Vine were given gifts of home-made necklaces, jam and t-shirts, something we were told rarely happens with this ministry director. We really impressed those we served with!

We had three days of different adventures apart from the serving week, hiking the Savage River at Denali National park, and climbing the Mt. Healy Overlook. One group of five got to go on a dog-sledding trek where they spent 3 hours with a young couple who competes in the Iditarod. We also went to "North Pole," Alaska, where Santa greeted us and we saw real reindeer. We stayed one night at a gorgeous campground called Camp LiWa and visited a few of the museums in Fairbanks to learn about climate change and the life of the Native Americans there. Oh yeah, the Savage River hikers even saw a MOOSE in the woods on our drive back!

As we were the only church group at the site for their final week of service, we got a lot of individual attention from the nine Next Step workers. They cooked for us, led us in contemporary worship (even incorporated several hymns to make us feel at home), and listened to our stories. We had some in-depth discussions comparing different Christian traditions and different liturgies from around the USA.

Hear more of our stories on Sunday, 9/9 at the 9:30 AM forum. You can also view hundreds of our trip pictures and videos here: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmp7zLMV>.

We were not just a team of 12 adults and 13 teens. We were an additional 70+ donors from friends and families who paid our way and prayed for us. We hope you will stay tuned for information on mission trips in 2019. Each of us were changed in unique ways. Thank you, again!

Financial Update

Capital Fund Information

Contributions YTD	\$180,951
Monthly mortgage payments	\$18,752
Capital Improvement Cost Year-to-Date	\$12,963
Balance in Capital Accounts March 31	\$365,059
Mortgage Balance March 31	\$2,800,564

Operating Information, July 31

Total Offerings	\$93,965
Ahead(Behind)	(\$614)
Total Income	\$108,412
Total Expenses	\$146,612
Net for the Month	(\$35,200)
Total Year-to-Date Offerings	\$736,669
Ahead(Behind)	(\$12,880)
Total YTD Income	\$869,082
Total YTD Expenses	\$836,016
Net for the Current Year	\$33,066

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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