

The Messenger

'Light of the World'



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Richfield, MN 55423
(612) 866-8449
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www.woodlakechurch.org

Worship Schedule Sunday Mornings

Traditional Worship 9:00am
Sanctuary

Modern Worship 10:30am
Fellowship Hall

Wednesday Mornings Matins Worship 8:30am

Service in the Chapel
Fellowship in the Fireside Room

February Worship Schedule on pg. 4

Church Office Hours

Tues., Weds., & Thurs.,
9am - 12pm. 1pm - 3pm

Articles for March issue of
The Messenger are due to
office@woodlakechurch.org
by February 15th. The
theme for March is 'Real
Presence'.

Pastor's Article

In February, we continue the worship theme "The Light of the World". We will carry on with exploring how Jesus is our bright light and reason for hope in a hurting world.

One of my favorite Bible verses is John 1:5, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." I love this verse because it offers hope and a way forward when the world seems so hard, troubled, and incredibly unfair.

I also love John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" as it reminds me that God is present in the world in so many more ways than I could ever imagine.

Or what about John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." I love how this verse summarizes who God is and why God became human—to love, forgive, and save us.

And we can't forget about John 3:14, "The Word became flesh and lived among us." Only a God who wants to be close to us, who accepts us as part of God's family, and who will go to great lengths to show us how much we are loved; chooses to live with us and become like us.

I'll be honest, I have a lot of favorite Bible verses. What is your favorite Bible verse? This month, I encourage you to share your favorite Bible verse with me. Tell me on Sunday or send me an email, text or voicemail with your favorite Bible verse and share why it's meaningful to you and how it has shined a light in your life.

Can't wait to see you in worship either online or in person!

In Christ,
Pr. Micah Pearson

Worship

Combined Choir Invitation & Schedule for the Lenten Season

As part of our special offerings during the upcoming season of Lent, all are invited to sing with the Combined Woodlake & HOP Choir. From 6:30 to 7:00 pm, we will lead the Lenten Holden Evening Prayer services in the Fellowship Hall at Woodlake, followed by rehearsals from 7:00 to 8:30 pm in the Woodlake Choir Loft or Choir Room. We will together prepare beautiful choral music for our Lenten services, strengthening the community we share through the meaningful experience of singing together. WELCOME TO ALL!

Our Combined Woodlake & HOP Handbell Choir will have an adjusted rehearsal schedule during Lent, meeting from 5:00 to 5:45 pm. If you have any questions, please contact Roselyn Hanson Weber, Director of Liturgical Worship at HOP/Interim Worship & Music Director at Woodlake, at rhansonweber@hoplc.org.

-Dr. Roselyn Hanson Weber (Music and Worship Director)

*The people who walked in darkness
Have seen a great light;
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of
death,
Upon them a light has shined.
—Isaiah 9:2*

The book of Isaiah was written some eight centuries before the birth of Jesus, a time of internal strife and foreign threats for the Hebrew people. While the prophet is critical of much that is, he also looks forward to a time when a new leader will emerge and make everything right. One of the first acts of

Jesus's public ministry is to return to his hometown of Nazareth and read a portion of Isaiah during the Sabbath services (Luke 4:14-30), declaring that he has come to fulfill this prophecy. While the initial reception of his message was met with great hostility, he persisted in his ministry, gathering many who came to believe that he was the Savior, as the author of John writes in 1:5, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

As we travel together on our journey of faith, let us read the stories of Jesus's life, ministry, death, and resurrection, and find inspiration and mutual support to become our own version of a light to the world.

-Scott J. Dahlquist
(Music and Worship Commissioner)

Congregational Life Commissioner

Are you Interested in forming community? Do you have a passion for welcome and hospitality. If so, you might be interested in the Congregational Life Commissioner position at Woodlake.

The primary role of this position is to support ongoing fellowship groups and encourage new ones at Woodlake. There are many community groups already gathering at Woodlake and many more opportunities to create new community/fellowship opportunities. If you are interested or would like to find out more, please contact Pastor Micah Pearson mpearson@woodlakechurch.org.

Building Report

January Building Report

Youth Wing Items

- The last of the furniture has been delivered and set up. The ping-pong table and couch will be used by RALY, staff, and others for fun and team bonding.
- Gary Nix and a recommended plumber continue to work on various plumbing issues.

Lighting

- Premier Lighting examined various lighting fixtures. They recommended replacing bulbs in the main kitchen with LEDs. They also inspected lighting issues down the hallway along the right side of the sanctuary.

Summer Preparations

- Contracts with Schwaders Lawn Care have been reviewed and renewed for the summer season.

Cleaning Adjustments

- Citywide, our professional cleaning company, will now handle some of the carpet cleaning throughout the building.

Building Temperature Control

- Scott Dahlquist and John Call are monitoring temperatures in different areas of the building.

Narthex Plants

- Shirley Stroud has stepped up to maintain the watering routine for the plants in the Narthex that are not rented.

Updated Security Cameras

Darren Berquist assisted with the installation of new security cameras. These cameras will help monitor the Narthex and the office. The old temporary security cameras will be removed.



AED + CPR Training

The AED Woodlake uses has been checked to make sure it is up to date and a training was scheduled for all staff, Woodlake leaders and any adults interested in learning the up to date protocol and procedures for using the AED and administering CPR. Thank you to the Richfield Fire Department for coming in, and to Karen Nilsen and Carol Olson for organizing.



Oliver Hallway Lights

The new lighting fixtures have been replaced to new lights that really illuminate the space.

Upcoming Events and WLC Ministry

January Worship Schedule

all services at Woodlake unless noted otherwise

February 2	9:00am Sanctuary Worship 10:30am Modern Worship
February 9	9:00am Sanctuary Worship 10:30am Modern Worship
February 16	9:00am Sanctuary Worship 10:30am Modern Worship
February 23	9:00am Sanctuary Worship 10:30am Modern Worship

Prayer Group

Wednesday, February 5th @9:30am - Fireside

The Woodlake prayer group will get together Wednesday, February 5th at 9:30am. The group has a list of people, places, and world events from the congregation along with communities who are in need of prayer. Confidentiality is highly honored. All are welcome to join.

A Totally Swankified Sing-A-Long

Friday, February 7th @6:30pm - Fellowship

Calling all Woodlake Ozians, you're cordially invited to join RAFT Young Adults and RALY Youth for a night of singing and dancing through life at this totally wicked viewing party. This event is open for ALL (all singing capabilities too). Costumes are welcome! Hats, crowns, brooms and all. We will provide popcorn and lemonade, please bring a sweet to share! WE WILL START RIGHT AT 6:30pm. Hope to see you there!

Snow Tubing Event

Sunday, February 16th @2-4pm Elm Creek Park Reserve

Woodlake will take on the slopes with our annual snow tubing event. We will meet at the chalet at 1:45pm. No cost for participants, but you will need to pre-register. You will need to provide your own transportation. Please sign up at the welcome desk or contact wschmieg@msn.com

Matins Wednesday Worship

Every Wednesday, 8:30am - Fireside

Matins services are held in the Chapel every Wednesday morning at 8:30am. It is followed by fellowship, singing, community service, Bible studies, speakers, prayer and of course coffee and treats.

Week 1: Prayer Group

Week 2: Bible Study

Week 3: Cleaning

Week 4: Speaker

Week 5: Community Service and Lunch

Faith and Fiction Book Club

'THE SECRET DIARY OF HENDRIK GROEN, 83? YEARS OLD' by Groen Hendrik

Tuesday, February 27th @7:00pm - Heritage Room

In The Secret Diary of Hendrik Groen, 83-year-old Hendrik refuses to fade quietly into old age. Fed up with the monotony of life in a nursing home, he starts writing an exposé about the daily antics, forming the Old-But-Not-Dead Club with his friend Evert to shake things up. With wit, humor, and an adventurous spirit, Hendrik and his friends challenge the rules, find joy in unexpected places, and prove that life doesn't stop just because you've gotten older. This heartwarming and funny novel will charm readers of all ages.

Grief Coalition Winter Series

Thursdays, January 2nd - February 20th, 2025, @4:30pm to 6:00pm - Peace Lutheran

February 6

"Moving Forward with Hope"

February 13

"Understanding Grief"

February 20

"Staying in Your Story"

What is a Funeral Anyway?

*Saturday, February 22, @10am-2pm -
Fireside room at Woodlake*

A funeral is many things all at once and there can be a lot of pressure to make all the right choices for our own or our loved ones' funeral services. How do we choose the best hymns? the right scripture readings? the best readers and leaders for the service? BREATHE! And know that while there actually aren't perfect funeral plans, some of these choices get easier if we spend some time thinking about what a funeral is and what we do through it. Join folks from House of Prayer and Woodlake later this month for a half-day retreat that explores these questions. We'll sing together, share a meal, and dig into what makes for a funeral that is faithful to the gospel and to the person who has died. Please register so that we can be the best possible stewards of our finances, our time, and the food we order:
<https://tinyurl.com/ndd6jpkj>.

-Pr. Korla Masters

GATHER Twin Cities an ELCA Young Adult Ministry

Saturday, February 16th 7:00pm

Worship and Meal will take place as Gather's monthly gathering for February. More details to come, please contact Kristie Olson kclo239.2@gmail.com for more information or check out their facebook or instagram page @twincitiesgather



*Pictured: A dozen
young adults
traveled to Luther
Crest Bible Camp
in Alexandria, MN
for GATHER's
first winter retreat*

Service & Justice Commission

ELCA Truth and Healing Movement

In April 2023 the ELCA started the Truth and Healing Movement with their mission being "to provide opportunities to learn the true history and current realities of Indigenous people. It is these truths, truths that have been ignored by most for hundreds of years, that will bring healing for both Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people". To support this movement the Service & Justice Commission is doing three activities.



First, within the new Woodlake welcome in the Sunday bulletins we have included a land acknowledgement statement: "Woodlake stands on the ancestral land of the Dakota people. We honor Indigenous histories and cultures and acknowledge the need to engage in reconciliation with our Indigenous neighbors".

Second, we planned a Minute for Mission at the Sanctuary service on January 19 and three adult forums after the 9 am service in the Fireside Room to learn about the history and current realities of Indigenous people.

- ~~January 26: Native American History~~
- February 23: Native American Land
- March 23: Native American Powwows

Third, we plan to add an Indigenous nonprofit that we can contribute money and give service to. The organization will be announced at a later date.

We hope you will be able to support and participate in these activities for the ELCA Truth and Healing Movement.

-The Service & Justice Commission

Feed My Starving Children Collaborative Event

Saturday, March 1st, @2:30-4:30 pm
FMSC Eagan

Join us for a fun, intergenerational opportunity to work together as one. It will be a meaningful afternoon of helping others and making new connections with our ministry partners.

This is a collaborative event and we will meet at House of Prayer at 1:45 pm to carpool to the FMSC facility in Eagan. Volunteers ages 5 and older are welcome. Any volunteers 8 years old or younger will need to be accompanied by an adult partner. Please look for a sign-up sheet at each church. For any questions, you can contact Heidi Thomas at heidit1109@live.com or 612-865-1230.

If you can't join us that day but would like to help, consider donating to help cover the cost of food and materials needed for this important work. You can donate directly to Feed My Starving Children at [FMSC.org](https://www.fmsc.org).

Join Our AV Team !

We're excited to make displaying words and images on our Sanctuary screens a regular part of worship, but we need your help to make it happen!

If you're comfortable using a computer, consider volunteering to run the slideshow during services. You'll partner with our AV technicians, and no prior experience is needed—we'll provide training.

This is a great way to support our congregation and contribute to an enhanced worship experience. Interested? Contact Scott Dahlquist sjaadahlquist@comcast.net

Woodlake Heritage Endowment Fund

Applications are now being accepted for scholarships from the Woodlake Lutheran Heritage Endowment Fund for the 2024-2025 academic year. These funds are available to those associated with the church - members, children or grandchildren. Applications are in the church office and should be submitted by February 15th 2025. If you have any question, please contact Bill Bullock at 612-869-6394.

HoP/WLC Walking

Too icy and cold to walk outside? Meet a friend and come walk the halls at HOP anytime between 10:00am-4:00pm Monday-Thursday. Follow the "HOP WALKERS" signs to direct you on the walking path down the education hallway and around the Narthex. One lap equals 300 steps (approximately) - 3.5 laps about a half-mile and 7 laps about 1 mile. Feel free to make a cup of coffee with the Keurig coffee maker/pods in the staff kitchen and chat in the Narthex after your walk. All are welcome! Please spread the word! If you have questions about the HOP WALKERS, please contact the HOP Church Office at 612-866-8471.

MPLS Area Synod Youth Choir

The MPLS Area Synod Youth choir will continue to meet monthly through June. This choir is for children and youth ages 5-18 with the purpose of fostering connection, faith, and compassion through music. The choir will gather to learn songs, build community, and perform at the Synod Assemble (May 2-3) and another special event. Rehearsals will rotate between three host sites which will be churches located in S. Mpls, N. Mpls and Western Suburbs. If you are interested, please email MASYouthChoir@mpls-synod.org.



Richfield Area Lutheran Youth

*Come as you are, build community,
and have fun!*

RALY Wednesdays, Grades 6-9

Happens weekly and is packed with faith, fun and youth fellowship — we invite all to come and dine in community followed by a variety of team building activities. We will primarily be at House of Prayer except the last Wednesday of the month at Woodlake.

Second Sundays, Grades 9-12

Gathers every second Sunday of the month in collaboration with other local churches. Come and hang out with friends, play games, and build community with each other!

Reach out to RALY Director, Rachel Larson with any questions: rlarson@hoplc.org or 612-409-7275



*Scan the QR Code
for all RALY
information
(registrations,
calendar, and
social media), or*

go to linktr.ee/raly55423

RALY CALENDAR – Available
online: <https://shorturl.at/5MHq7>

RALY Wednesday, February 5th
6-7:30pm, House of Prayer

Join Pr. Neal, Pr. Eric, and Rachel to explore your big faith questions.

Second Sunday, February 9th
6-7:30pm, Diamond Lake

Join us for dinner, games, and reflection preparing for Lent!

RALY Wednesday, February 12th
6-7:30pm, House of Prayer

Time for RALY to give back by building furniture for our neighbors through Bridging MN.

Sunday, February 16th

***- Snow Tubing, 2-4pm, Elm Creek
Park Reserve***

Join Woodlake and House of Prayer for our annual snow tubing event! Details in the announcement.

- Confirmation, 6-8pm, Woodlake

Confirmation will meet in the Blue Room of Woodlake's Youth Wing!

RALY Wednesday, February 19th

After a game and dinner, paint canvas with friends to take home!

RALY Wednesday, February 26th
6-7:30pm, Woodlake

Tie your shoelaces and join RALY for Giant Pictionary at Woodlake!

RALY RECAP

January started off with the chance to make some exciting trick shots and games with ping pong balls, water bottles, pool noodles, and dodgeballs. Shout out to the Gossip Girls, The Winners, and Corgi Butts! Another night we relaxed with the movie *The Polar Express*, reflecting on how “Seeing is believing... but sometimes the more real things in the world are the things we can’t see.” Oh! And there was a little event, The JUSTMove Lock-in: One Body over MLK weekend! 110+ youth came to Woodlake and explored what it means to be part of the larger body of Christ, a caring community united even with different experiences from our neighbors. Thank you to all who donated their time and/or supplies!

Check out the RALY Facebook page for more photos!

<https://shorturl.at/btqPv>

Where’s Rachel?

I went to the Extravaganza at the end of January! The Extravaganza is for children, youth, and young adult leaders to provide renewal, education, and connections for ministry. I was able to attend workshops like Level Up Your Game – Using Games to Build Relationships, Catechism D.A.R.E. (Disability Access Resource Experience or Exploration), and Teaching Leadership Skills to Youth and Young Adults.



Boys and Girls Club

We're thrilled to partner again with the Boys and Girls Club at Richfield Middle School, hosting 10-16 students every Thursday from 3:45- 5:00 PM at Woodlake! This ministry is only possible through volunteers signing up for a month to lead an activity of their choice—like baking, card making, games, etc. You'll handle supplies and RALY Dir Rachel and Pr. Neal Cannon will help with set up. Woodlake will reimburse costs and provide snacks.

Excited to join? Fill out this flyer, rip off and turn into the Woodlake Office or email Pr. Neal Cannon at ncannon@woodlakechurch.org with your name, preferred activity, and month. A background check required for all volunteers.

Name(s) :

Contact (email & cellphone):

Preferred Activities: art/craft STEM/Science cards/games reading/writing
(circle all that apply)

sports/physical activity cooking/baking trade/life skills

Other (write in): _____

Month(s) available (circle all that apply): Feb March April May

High School Summer Trip

July 25-August 3, finished grades 8-12

RALY is joining Diamond Lake for our high school trip this summer for a road trip down to partner with Spark'Dwell in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Spark'Dwell is a program where, "Participants engage in a week of relationship- building, education, story-telling and service alongside formerly or currently homeless individuals."

More information can be found on their website and will be announced later.



SPARK'DWELL

WE'RE IN THE BUSINESS OF BEING KINGDOM PEOPLE

“Kingdom people seek first the Kingdom of God and its justice; church people often put church work above concerns of justice, mercy, and truth. Church people think about how to get people into the church; Kingdom people think about how to get the church into the world. Church people worry that the world might change the church; Kingdom people work to see the church change the world.”

IT IS OUR BELIEF THAT SERVICE WITHOUT EDUCATION IS EMPTY.

WE ARE COMMITTED TO SHARING CHRIST'S LOVE AS PEOPLE NOT ONLY ENGAGED IN SERVING OUR NEIGHBORS, BUT ALSO AS BEING FIERCE ADVOCATES FOR JUSTICE.

Because justice issues related to homelessness, hunger, poverty, racism, education disparity, and more are complex situations that require complex conversations and answers, SPARK and The Dwelling team up (Spark'Dwell) to offer opportunities for young people and adults to spend a week during the summer or fall/spring break participating in Spirit and Service Learning Experiences.

Hosted (housed) at a local partner church, participants engage in a week of relationship-building, education, story-telling and service alongside formerly or currently homeless individuals. In doing so, participants will better understand the complexity of the systems and institutions perpetuating injustice and inequity, how the church is responding as Matthew 25 people, and ways that they can continue to advocate for justice in their own communities.

The JUSTMove! Lock-in: One Body was a huge success!

Over MLK weekend, 110+ youth from over 20 churches from the Twin Cities and beyond gathered together at Woodlake Lutheran Church. We had an awesome night, full of learning how we can use our bodies to love and care for the world and for ourselves.

- Joe Davis (poet) and Dave Scherer (Christian rapper) led empowering faith and social justice exploration activities, reflecting on our inherent worth and the stories we all have which we cannot see just by looking at others.

- We connected with friends from last year, made new friends playing games like ultimate rock paper scissors and Real Life Among Us, did karaoke, games, crafts, danced our hearts out with the silent disco, and engaged in thoughtful prayer during Thomas (worship station style) worship.

- This year we incorporated a high school leadership team, and they led us in activities, games, worship and the service project where we made 200 unhoused care kits.
- Joy's Catering LLC, a Black Woman owned business specializing in East African cuisine catered dinner, and Tapestry Richfield provided us with arepas for a midnight snack.



"It was so beautiful to see young people leading other young people. The high schoolers were discovering their voice as they led games with the middle schoolers and I could see a glimpse of the 'young people seeing visions' spoken of in revelation. This is what youth ministry is all about!"

-Dave Scherer

(AGAPE* guest artist)

"I will always remember our worship and the activity of group vulnerability. It really helped me introspect and start thinking and talking about hardships and stuff I haven't really started unpacking." -

Youth participant

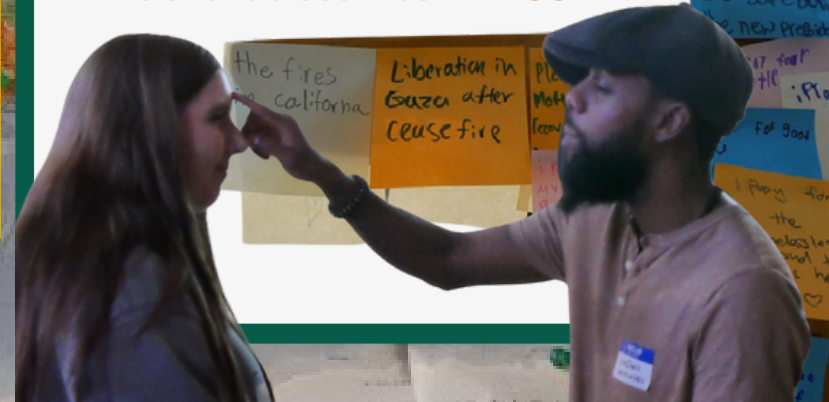


Other Highlights/Takeaways

"Hanging out with old and new friends!"

"I am not alone and I am a beloved child of God!"

"The silent disco was AWESOME."



camping & retreat center

LUTHER PARK

danbury, wisconsin

We are once again going to Luther Park in Danbury, WI - historically RALY attends Week 1, but youth can pick any week that works for them. There are lots of camp experiences your child(ren) and youth can experience. There are also whole family opportunities as camp is for everyone! Check out a couple below:

Summer Celebration: July 19 (All ages, 10am-4pm for camp activities, worship, & fun!)

Grand Camp

Sunday, August 3 - Wednesday, August for grandparents and their grandchild(ren), with some staff led activities.

More information can be found on Luther Park's website.
<http://www.lutherpark.com/summer-camp-2025.html>

Summer Stretch



July 6-11; Grades 6-8

Summer Stretch is an afternoon program focused on fun and fellowship! This was a blast two years ago and I am excited to bring it back. Possible activities include Urban Air, bowling, or swimming. There will be opportunities for High School leaders to join!

The Numbers

The Numbers for December 2024

Envelope Offering	\$58,612
Electronic Giving	\$8,491
IRA's	\$9,789
Holidays	\$3,445
Rental income	\$26,011
Other	\$2,485
Total Receipts	\$108,833
Properties Expense	\$8,212
Personnel Expense	\$30,234
Other Expenses (after offsets)	(\$6,416)
Total Expenses	\$44,862
Monthly Net Receipts over expenses	\$63,971

Worship Attendance in December

	Woodlake Worship	Modern Worship	Online
Dec 1	93	28	81
Dec15	129	Pageant	126
Dec 22	85	24	62
Dec 24	230	One Service	72
Dec 29	107	Hymn Sing	80

"Becoming a gathering place for all of God's Children"

Pastor Neal Cannon Pastor Micah Pearson



WOODLAKE
LUTHERAN CHURCH