



Better Together

Issue No.5, October, 2025



Rally Sunday!

On September 7, we joined together for a joyful morning of outdoor worship, food, and fun! It was a wonderful way to reconnect and launch into a new season of ministry together.



PASTOR'S ARTICLE



Neal Cannon

The Challenge of Oneness

Over the past several months, the BTN has been exploring the theme of “oneness.” One: World, Community, and now Church. In the coming months, we’ll continue with One Life and One Love. Oneness is an increasingly challenging ideal to live up to. Social media and traditional media do not benefit from “oneness.” On the contrary, it’s usually the most divisive views that get the most attention, the most clicks, the most airtime.

The political assassinations of Melissa Hortman and Charlie Kirk expose the dangerous divide between our political parties, and likely will only deepen it.



Dr. King's Wisdom

“The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy... Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Here, Dr. King gives us a glimpse of the solution to solving divisiveness and hate: **LOVE.**

The Church's Response

Loving people who are different from us is:

- **Simple:** Jesus said, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” (Matthew 5:44, NRSVUE)
- **Complex:** Love cannot tolerate hate or evil at its core.
- **Messy:** If we confuse Jesus’s message with a worldly one, we miss the point.

Jesus, who died at the hands of and on behalf of his enemies, is our guiding light. He did not include hate in his message, he died to overcome it.

A Call to Be One Church

To be “one church” today is a critical task. It means:

- Standing up to hatred and evil wherever it is found
- Building relationships across differences, even political ones
- Telling the truth, even when it’s hard
- Living love as both a simple and difficult idea

To be one church, we must follow Jesus’s example of love. We are better together!



SHARED MINISTRY TEAM ARTICLE



Orv Holland

The Shared Ministry Team meets monthly to thoughtfully plan and support the vitality of our collaborative efforts, ensuring they are sustained with care and intention.

SMT Members

*Cindy Hanson
Caity Wright
Cindy Jacobs
August Schauer
Orv Holland
Brent King
Karen Amezcua
Kristi Gay
Muriel Holland
Kim Houle
Andry Jurcich
Tim Riley
Scott Dahlquist
Heidi Thomas
Betsy Paradise
Gary Nix
Laurie Nix*

How to Face Adversity

Adversity in the world is constant and affects everyone in some manner or another. We know this from all the popular news services and in our daily lives, but what can be done about it? We can't let it overwhelm our daily existence, but we cannot totally ignore it either. Adversity exists at many levels; personal, social, environmental as well as global.



Of course, there are negative impacts where adversity can lead to stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges. It can also strain relationships, hinder personal growth, and lead to feelings of hopelessness. But there also are positives to adversity since facing adversity can build

resilience, increase self-awareness, foster empathy, and strengthen relationships. It can also lead to personal growth, a greater appreciation for life, and a clearer sense of purpose. Where do we find guidance? The Bible addresses adversity as a common human experience that can lead to spiritual growth and a deeper reliance on God. It acknowledges that suffering is real, but also emphasizes God's presence, strength, and ultimate purpose in overcoming challenges.

Let your spiritual compass direct you on the right approach to conflicts and adversities that may face you. As we strive to combine our worship communities, I believe we have the power and guidance to overcome the challenges before us. Holy One, guide us to work in ways that reflect your goodness and bring honor to your name. Amen



BETTER MINISTRY TOGETHER

Every Meal Distributions

Woodlake and House of Prayer are partnering in many ways, including service to our neighbors and community. Our teams are kicking off the 2025-26 school year of Every Meal distributions for Sheridan Hills Elementary and Richfield STEM. In these two schools there are over 125 families receiving these "weekend meal kits" that are specific to their dietary needs or requests. Every Meal serves over 12,000 families each week, in 400 schools across Minnesota.

The distribution teams look forward to supporting each other with substitutes and exchange days, sharing team members to meet and learn from each other. For more information on joining a distribution team, contact Kim Houle wifeofadrumnerguy@gmail.com or Laurel Johnson laurelmjohnson11@gmail.com.



Social Justice Forums Sunday Mornings

As part of Woodlake's Mission to "Trust in Jesus, Form Relationships, Create Community," the Service and Justice Commission (SJC) is sponsoring two more Sunday Forums at 11:00 am in the Fireside Room. We believe making connections with one another will help us to combat the divisions and reduce the violence that persists in our communities.

Nov 9: Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative speaker. 'Beacon' is a collaborative of congregations and housing advocates who believe that secure, affordable housing provides the key to safer communities, stronger families, and a healthier economy.

Oct 12: A speaker from the **Jewish Community** will provide an intro to Jewish history and culture. This program covers the common roots of the 3 Abrahamic Faiths, introduction to Torah, and more.

BETTER MINISTRY TOGETHER

Reformation Worship

In the spirit of Reformation, Woodlake and House of Prayer will be joining together for worship, fellowship, and action on **Sunday, October 26**. Liturgical Worship amplified by a Shared Choir, Bells, and Brass at **10:00 am**, ReFuel, a Coffeehouse-style service at **11:30 am**, and between the two worship services our youth will serve festive refreshments and lead us into acts of service. Plan to join us and invite a friend.



Community Free Sale and Resource Fair

On Saturday, November 1, 2025, from 12:00pm–3:00 pm, our collaborative churches in Richfield are sponsoring a free sale and resource fair at House of Prayer. PLEASE DROP OFF YOUR DONATIONS AT HOP in OCTOBER. We're looking for clothing, winter coats, boots, bedding, blankets, sleeping bags, small house hold items to distribute for free to the community. There will also be resources and information available from regional agencies. Complimentary snacks will be provided by a Thrivent “Action Team” grant. For more information and to get connected, contact Christine at cmillerdance@gmail.com.

In collaboration with, and support from the following: House of Prayer Lutheran Church, Oak Grove Lutheran Church, Richfield Lutheran Church, Tapestry, Woodlake Lutheran Church, Arrive Ministries, VEAP, Bridging, CAP-Hennepin Co.

Downsizing, Decluttering & Moving

Join Matins at Woodlake on **October 15** as we welcome a speaker from WellRive, formerly Gentle Transitions. They will present educational tips about decluttering, downsizing, sorting, and settling into a new home. You will gain valuable knowledge and a multitude of resources to help you get through the process “gently.” This is the continuing education for the visitation ministers and is offered in collaboration with Matins.

Please join for one or all of the following:

- Service at 8:30 am in the Chapel
- Coffee & Treats at 9:00 am in the Fireside Room
- Speaker from 9:30-10:30 am in the Fireside Room



Luther Park Summer 2025

RALY RECAP

Kick-off Worship. Giant Pictionary. Capture the Chicken.

What an incredible start to the year! New and families faces joined in our fun!
 Follow along on Instagram and Facebook (found on linktr.ee/raly55423)



Painting "Touchstones"
 at Kickoff Worship



Christian Park Clean Up



Confirmation Orientation



Giant Pictionary, Bananas v. Dolphins

Where's Rachel?

School is back in session, which means fall sports are in full swing! First, I got to go support Niyana and her soccer team at a local match. Keira has been running with Cross Country this year, including training for a half marathon! I got to cheer her on in Burnsville. In the meantime, youth are auditioning for plays and rehearsing for many upcoming concerts.



Rachel Larson
 RALY Director
rlarson@hoplc.org
 612-409-7275

Is there a meet, game, concert, art fair, performance that you want Rachel to see? Send an email to rlarson@hoplc.org and she'll be there, ready to cheer!



OCTOBER CALENDAR

Urban Air 2024

OCT 8

RALY Wednesday

6 – 7:30pm | Woodlake | Grades 6-9

Test your bravery as RALY brings the spookes with Fear Factor! Regular pizza dinner.

OCT 11

Morris Nilsen Trunk or Treat

3 – 6pm | Morris Nilsen Funeral Chapel | All ages

Stop by, say hello, and help pass out candy at our spot near the DJ booth!

OCT 15

RALY Wednesday

6 – 7:30pm | Woodlake | Grades 6-9

Join RALY for Bonfire worship with camp songs and s'mores, followed by gaga ball!

OCT 19

Halloween Dungeons & Dragons

1 – 4pm | Woodlake | Grades 9-12

Adventurers, gather to try and save the town from a haunted ruin! RSVP required.

OCT 19

Confirmation

6 – 8pm | Woodlake | Grades 7-9

Learn about the Creation story & the Fall. Email Pastors Neal & Eric if you cannot attend

OCT 22

RALY Wednesday

6 – 8:30pm | Woodlake | Grades 6-9

Jump, climb, & zipline at Urban Air Adventure Park! RSVP required. Dinner provided.

OCT 26

Ignite

12:30 – 5pm | Waldoch Farms | Grades 9-12

What's fall without a visit to a pumpkin patch? Transportation provided, RSVP to Rachel!

OCT 29

RALY Wednesday

6 – 7:30pm | Woodlake | Grades 6-9

Halloween Party! Wear a costume, decorate a pumpkin, enjoy hot cider with dinner.

Want more
information?



Scan the QR Code
for registrations, year-
long calendar, and
social media, or visit
linktr.ee/raly55423

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Pr. Micah Pearson

Pr. Neal Cannon

Pr. Eric Luedtke

Pr. Korla Masters

Fall Worship Schedule*Beginning September 14th*

10:00am Blended Worship

Fall Worship Schedule*Beginning September 14th*

9:30am Traditional Worship

11:00am ReFuel Worship

**BETTER TOGETHER**

The Better Together Newsletter is published by both House of Prayer and Woodlake staff and volunteers. Any questions can be directed towards Cara Wright at cwright@hoplc.org, or the WLC office office@woodlakechurch.org.

All submissions for next month's newsletter are DUE to either office on the 20th of the month.