



NORTHLAKE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

NORTHLIGHTS

SEPTEMBER 2017

OUR MISSION

To share with all people the presence of God
and the love of Christ.

Our Vision

To foster a caring congregational community that challenges its members to recognize and utilize their gifts and abilities so that it is a magnet, drawing a variety of people to Christ by providing diversity in worship, education, service and fellowship.



We are an ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) congregation, where people of faith celebrate, learn and connect with one another and others around the world through service and weekly worship. **All are welcome!**



Christian Stewardship

Rick Huling, Stewardship Committee

I'd like to share with you some of my thoughts about stewardship, and what motivates me in giving time and financial resources to God's work here at Northlake. I look at the long-term, big picture - stewardship as a way of life, that for us as Christians is biblically based. I suggest that if we follow the biblical principle of stewardship, our lives will be directed in such a way that we can meet adversities when necessary and we can enrich our lives by being able to do those things that God has called us to do.

And what's really great about this is that it's not complex, hard to understand or get our arms around - although it's difficult to do. The fundamental principle of biblical stewardship - the fundamental principle of all Christianity, actually, is this: we own nothing; everything belongs to God. Everything we think we own is on loan. We are not in charge.

Oh, we think we are and we are constantly acting like we are in charge, trying to be God-like. Trying to be God-like - another word for that is sin. No, we don't bring anything to the table: it's all God's. This principle carries some heavy implications. First, since God owns it all, he holds the rights that come with ownership. Since we only have what we have been allowed to have, then we operate primarily in the realm of responsibilities. Yes, God has rights and we have responsibilities. God has entrusted us with certain resources, gifts and abilities. These things rightfully belong to him. Our responsibility is to live by that trust by managing these things well, according to his design and desire.

Another implication is that since God owns everything and expects us to manage things according to his plan and purpose, every decision is a spiritual decision. Whether it's buying a new car or going to the movies, how we use our time and money matter a great deal to God. God demands to be in the loop on every investment, purchase and decision.

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Romans 12:4-5 ⁴For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, ⁵so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.



We have all heard it. The many gifts of us all... how people who are different are enriched when they come together, how the different parts of the body function together with one purpose. We've all heard it. But how often do we incorporate it into our lives? Into our church? Into our ministries?

Our Redevelopment Team is proposing a new mission statement for our church. Why would they do this? We already had one.

It's not enough to *have* a mission statement. We must *use* that mission statement. It must accurately reflect who we are, and who we want to be. It must describe the journey on which we are embarking, a journey that has a vision... a mission... **God's** mission for us.

Sound easy? When you begin a walk or a hike, can you see the entire path? Can you see your destination? We may see as much as half a mile or more if there are no hills, but here in the Pacific Northwest, it's probably more like 50-100 feet. I'm convinced God has a preference for hilly country because when we spend time discerning God's call for us, the journey upon which we will walk, it is as though we are walking uphill. Our sightline is limited. The call we discern will only get us to the crest of the hill, at which time we must discern again.

This means being in constant conversation with each other. We must check in often, remind each other of the path we discerned, and shepherd one another back when we find ourselves wandering into the woods. This is a mission statement's purpose, to ensure we are all headed in the same direction. For when we arrive, we want to arrive together, as one body of Christ.

How does this look in everyday activity and language? Let me give an example.

Our Council voted to open our church as an overnight home for people who do not have homes of their own in October. Every night, people will come to receive a meal, sleep in a dry and safe space, and then get up to grab a quick breakfast and be on their way no later than 6:30am. Now, I ask... how do we make sure this ministerial project fits within our newly proposed mission to build relationships with God, each other, our community, and all of creation? How can you, individually, as a member of a committee, and as a member of this church, help build these relationships through this congregation-wide ministry?

The Worship and Music team recently decided there will be candles available in the sanctuary during the month of October. You will be invited to light a candle in prayer for someone you may have met who has made Northlake their overnight home. How amazing would it be if, every Sunday, every resident had at least one candle lit for them!

This is how one committee, one piece of our body, is using a church-wide ministry to walk the path of our mission. I challenge other committees to consider how they will walk this part of the path. For it is when we build these relationships together that we truly come together as one church, one body, one Christ. I look forward to seeing where this part of our path leads!

Community Block Party

Vicky Newland

Our first Community Block Party was a huge success. We estimate that we had over 100 attendees and they all seemed to have a good time. We had a Giraffe Bouncy House, games, balloon animals, face painting, finding treasure in the straw and a pirate! The kids really enjoyed themselves. I was able to talk to a group of kids who were leaving the party, as we were cleaning up, and they were very excited. I asked them what we did that they liked and they said that they enjoyed everything. They mentioned the Giraffe Bouncy house, the balloon animals, face painting, searching for treasure in the straw and the games. I asked if they also enjoyed the pirate and they responded with a very enthusiastic "yah. She was great!" As far as next year they thought that we should do it all exactly the same way. Now that's an endorsement!



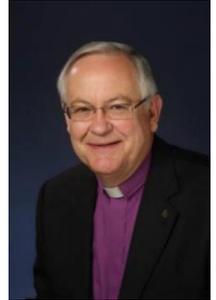
We really want to thank you for all your support. We couldn't do anything without you! And we are also grateful for your joining us in administering the fun and partaking of it. I noticed a lot of our members enjoying the food and the fun!

I've attached pictures, so if you weren't there you can still enjoy the fun!



Being Willing to Try and Fail ... and Try Again

By the Rev. B. Kirby Unti, NWWA Synod Bishop
From *The Spirit*, September 2017



We are living in a time when change takes place so quickly that even the best laid plans can fail. One of my classic experiences of this reality took place when we did a \$1 million expansion at the church I was serving. The expansion included a new nursery - complete with sink and running water, separate play areas for infants and toddlers, as well as a crib and nursing rooms.

We were filled with pride and delight the day we opened the new nursery hoping it would send a clear message to families with young children that they were valued by the faith community. The truth was we were attracting young families and our Sunday school was bursting at the seams.

So, what went wrong? Two new trends were gaining traction. The first was an invention. The all-in-one baby carrier. You know, the bucket-like object that parents carry their babies in? The kind that also serves as a car seat and stroller seat. This allows a parent to remove their child from the car and carry them right into the church. Before long the worship space was filled with small children rocking in their bucket seats while the nursery was barely in use.

The second trend that was unfolding was a growing comfort about nursing in public. Combine the two trends and the need for our state of the art nursery was greatly lessened. Should we have seen it coming? Could we have seen it coming? Perhaps, if we were really tuned in.

What we were tuned into was all the information about how important a state of the art nursery was to young families. The problem was by the time we completed our nursery based on the best current information the world around us had changed.

The truth is this is happening all over the world. Talk to Kodak about film, Blockbusters about video, Swiss watch makers, brick and mortar stores, and Ma & Pa Grocery Stores. All once successful enterprises, they have gone the way of the dinosaurs.

The Living Local Movement that our synod is engaged in takes adapting to change seriously. We believe that God is always up to something new. What we are trying to do by dwelling in God's word is to develop the eyes and ears to see how God is working in our day and time. "Behold I am doing something new. Do you not see it?"

Because we are never 100% sure what God is up to we must probe new ideas, new expressions of what it means to be church, new ways to share the gospel. It isn't that gospel that changes. What changes is how we engage it.

Back to the nursery, the lesson we were learning was in order to engage young families we needed to make worship "kid friendly." Welcoming the occasional cry of a baby is to embrace life. Young families often want a more hands-on experience in worship where they are able to worship God through mediums like music, art and dance. Children find joy in being involved in all aspects of the church. Soft toys and coloring pages representing images of the Bible Story can be a big hit.

And that "state of the art" nursery? What did we do with it? It continued to be modified and used by those for whom it was still of value. Today it is being remodeled one more time to respond to the growing needs of a population of children with special needs. It will once again be sacred space set aside to respond with love and support to the cry of God's children.

I want to encourage all our congregations to be more willing to TRY, FAIL and TRY AGAIN



Summer Days

by Katie Reardon
Youth and Family Coordinator



This summer I tested a pilot program, the Summer Internship Program, with youth from the community. Four young men participated in a seven week program designed to develop leadership skills by participating in community service projects and community development programs.

This internship is available to 6th-12th graders and by invitation only. Youth were selected to participate because they have shown positive behavior, strong character and other leadership skills in programs throughout the academic year.

The interns were Adam, Noah, Isaac and Hunter. During the summer they were responsible for organizing a weekly Kids Club at Spencer 68 apartments, volunteering with the YMCA food program at City Hall and providing supporting roles in the Northlake Lutheran Church Block Party and with Northlake Grove Community picnic as well.

I'm already looking forward to next summers group! This program was a big success and has given new possibilities for a group to help behind the scenes during the upcoming fall!



A Letter from Rev. B. Kirby Unti

Friends,

I am sitting on the shore of Lake Chelan enjoying some vacation time with Kim and our four girls. I continue to wake up each morning wondering what turbulent news is going to greet me. The challenge is I could be writing a daily Pastoral Letter in response to these times.

It should go without saying that we in the church must come out four square against all forms of hate, bigotry, racism, and nationalism regardless of who is being targeted. The truth is we are all children of God. This is deeply embedded in our Christian bones.

These times are making it abundantly clear that we have a long way to go in both understanding our participation in the evil that we are experiencing and what our responses might look like.

Fellow Bishop Julian Gordy from the Southeastern Synod has spent his entire pastoral ministry trying to pull the bandaid off of racism and to expose the work of confession and reconciliation that we all need to be involved in.

Listen to his words in a recent post to his fellow bishops:

"Racism is and has always been present everywhere in this country. In the past, it was covered up in some places more than it was in the South, and it certainly wasn't as ugly or as blatant as it was here in the days of segregation. White supremacy is the original sin of America. It explains our history. It explains our treatment of the native populations of this continent and of the waves of immigrants who have come here as well as it explains slavery and Jim Crow. Thinking that we all need to "go down South" to address racism may show an inattentiveness to how white supremacy and privilege are affecting us and our own communities.

The Southern Poverty Law Center has identified and is currently following white supremacist and other hate groups. They exist in every state except Hawaii and Alaska. And while such groups have proliferated in the South in the past 15 years, there are far more of them in California than in Tennessee and Mississippi combined, more in New York than in Georgia, more in Michigan than in Alabama. (Here's the SPLC's interactive map: <https://www.splcenter.org/hate-map>.)

My point is not to deny the reality and the ugliness of what has happened and is still happening in the South, but to say, as Stokley Carmichael said to Will Campbell, the problem is closer to home than you think (my paraphrase). "

Yes, it is alive and well right here in Northwest Washington.

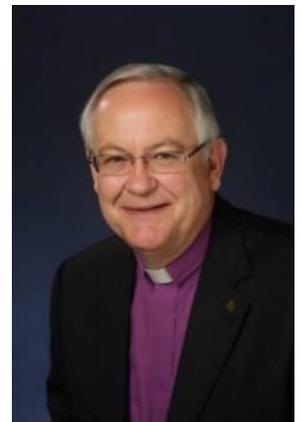
It is why your Synod Council and Roster have participated in Anti - Racism Training. It is why Sunitha Mortha was chosen as our Churchwide speaker for Synod Assembly a year ago. It the reason behind the Synod's support of **Kids and Race** and **Neighbors in Faith**. All these efforts are designed to open the eyes and ears of God's people that we might genuinely love all of our neighbors.

Personally, I believe the most important thing that every person in the pew can do is to meet your neighbors who are currently strangers. Design a block party, have them over for a snack and drinks, or just knock on their door and introduce yourself. Kim and I have had a welcome sign in our yard and this summer it has created many conversations.

Friends, this may be a hot political issue but more importantly to me it is a hot values issue for those of us who know Jesus as Lord and rabbi.

May our hearts and actions reflect the one who died to reconcile the world.

Kirby Unti



An Evening with Rick Steves

Sunday, October. 8 at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church
(10021 NE 124th St, Kirkland - west of Hwy 405, 124th St. exit)

Lutheran Peace Fellowship (LFP) invites you to meet a remarkable Lutheran public figure: Rick Steves! Rick is host and producer of *Travel with Rick Steves* on National Public Radio and *Rick Steves' Europe* on PBS. You may recall that he recently created and narrated a film on Luther and the Reformation. He will speak about how travel and faith shape his politics and commitment to peace. In the second part of this multimedia program he will share the latest on travel in Europe.

Please join us:

6 pm, Reception with Rick (\$50, including the 7pm talk) OR

7 pm, Talk by Rick Steves (general admission: \$15 in advance, \$18 at door, \$8 student/limited income).

Tickets available from LPF, or online at Brown Paper Tickets here: www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3062792.

Our thanks to Rick Steves for his generosity in donating the proceeds to Lutheran Peace Fellowship to further its efforts towards peace with justice in our troubled world. (see: www.lutheranpeace.org)

MORE ANNOUNCEMENTS!

Save The Date

- ◆ **P. Rick Pribbernow, Open Door Ministries**, will be returning on Sunday, September 10th, to preach and lead a bible study. RIC will be providing another of Jim Poland's barbecue specials! See you there!!
- ◆ **The Cascadia Parish is putting on a German Fair!**
The Cascadia Parish Congregations, of which we are one, are hosting a German Fair. Come help us celebrate the 500th anniversary of Luther's Reformation with beer, bratwurst, sauerkraut, German Folk Dancers, accordion playing and a hymn sing! Donations accepted.
German Fair
September 16 from 4:00-7:00 pm
Salt House Church, 11920 NE 80th St., Kirkland, WA 98033
- ◆ **Seattle End Aids Walk 2017** Members of Northlake Lutheran's RIC Task Force will walk as a team on Saturday, September 23rd. If you'd like to walk with the team, or pledge financial Support to a walker, please sign up on Sunday!
- ◆ **"Luther's Great Discovery" Taught by Dr. Jonathan Sorum, Professor at the Institute of Lutheran Theology**, Saturday, September 23, 2017 — 10am-5pm at Warm Beach Conference Center. Admission is \$25 per person. It will be located at 20800 Marine Drive, Stanwood, WA. You can contact Vicky in the office to learn how to register.



(Continued from page 1)

Now this is difficult because our lives aren't necessarily that integrated. We tend to divide our lives into boxes - the sacred/religious in one box, the secular in another. But we need to work at understanding that God owns us both by virtue of creation (In the beginning God created) and by redemption through his son Jesus Christ. He is the source of both our biological and spiritual lives. Humans are the apex of God's created order, but we are still a part of that created order. And we are a part of God's plan.

If human life is simply an accident arising from millennia of human history, then we are free agents, accountable to no one but ourselves. But if we were created, then our creator has full rights of ownership over our lives. These are mutually exclusive propositions. Either we are merely an accident of history and therefore completely at liberty to do whatever we want with our lives, or we are intentionally created beings who will be held accountable to our creator.

When people start believing they are meaningless accidents, human life becomes cheap. And if human life is cheap, it becomes disposable whenever that's convenient. The weak, the elderly, the sick, the handicapped or others who are viewed as a drain - if they become bothersome, they become expendable. Where does that lead? Where does it stop? History has shown that it progresses to people who are the wrong color, the wrong race, the wrong religion. The most monstrous evils of our time have been built on the assumption that human life happened by accident.

But we know that is not the case. God not only created us, but created us by design, for a reason and has made us stewards of all creation.

Stewardship is not a means to an end such as raising money, volunteering time and talent to support the church's mission. Stewardship is the end, it is the mission, and for us, it's the way to abundant and purposeful life.

Let's keep this big picture in mind as we think and pray about our own sense of stewardship at Northlake Lutheran Church, in how we can help support, in all ways, the ministries God has entrusted to us.



Stewardship Update:

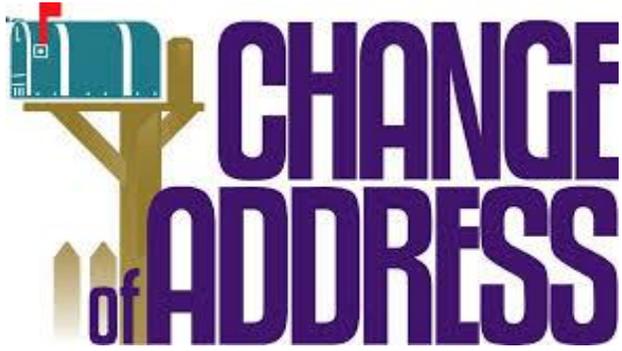
You should be getting pledge packages in early September with pledge cards and instructions concerning our new approach to pledging this year. Besides prayerfully considering your responses, please remember that pledge Sunday is on September 24, where you will have an opportunity to bring your pledges forward to dedicate to God. **If you can't make it to worship on the 24th, you may bring it on another Sunday, mail it in, or drop it by the office.**

2018 Budget Process Begins

The Budget Task Force began meeting in mid-August to begin the process of producing the 2018 budget for Northlake. This Task Force consists of Rick Huling, Bev Peterson, Jim Poland, Alan Murdock, Pastor Anja and Jeanie McBee.

A new budget-writing method is being used this year: Zero-Based Budgeting. A short definition of this method is: *A system of budgeting where each [committee/ministry] must justify all expenditures and allocations rather than simply assigning a percentage increases over the previous fiscal year.* That means they start with zero and add in the costs for the specific things to be included in their budget request, prioritizing these items so that if a cut needs to be made in order to stay within the projected offerings/income, their most important things will remain in the request.

The Task Force has met to forecast the fixed (non-discretionary) expenses for the coming year, e.g., utilities, salaries, etc. We are now at the stage of the committees/ministries working on their budget requests (discretionary expenses), to be completed by September 9. After that the Task Force will meet to meld the non-discretionary and discretionary items, keeping the expenses within the projected inflows for the coming year. The budget they produce will be submitted to the Church Council. After Council approval, it is submitted to the congregation for a final vote at the October 29 Annual Meeting. As always, we solicit your prayers for this process -- for the decisions to be made by the committees/ministries in prioritizing their requests and for the work of the Task Force in adequately forecasting offerings and fixed expenses and merging everything to produce the budget. Our goal is to write a workable budget that will further the ministry of Northlake, to the Glory of God.



**CHANGE
of
ADDRESS**

You undoubtedly have noticed the new mailbox on the street as you turn to come up the church driveway. This is now in use; the old Post Office box number is discontinued*. The Stewardship Team is reminding you to make any necessary changes with your bank if you currently use the *autopay* option for your offerings. Also, please use the new address if you mail your offerings to the church. The new mailing address is:

Northlake Lutheran Church
6620 NE 185th Street
Kenmore, WA 98028

*The Post Office will forward any mail sent to the old address for the remainder of this year.



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- Office Administrator Vicky Newland
- Organist Wendy DeLong
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- Community and Youth Outreach Coordinator Katie Reardon