



# NORTHLIGHTS

## Northlake Lutheran Church's Quarterly Newsletter

### The Council:

**Rick Heinbaugh**  
*President*

**John Rowland**  
*Vice President*

**Jeanie McBee**  
*Secretary*

**Jim Poland**  
**Nancy Huling**  
**Tahnya Boyett**

**Alan Murdock**  
*Treasurer*

### Groups Active at Northlake:

Chuck's House  
Community Garden  
Finance  
Parish Life  
Property  
Reconciling in Christ  
Redevelopment  
Social Ministry  
Stewardship  
Worship & Music

### Staff:

Anja Helmon  
*Pastor*

Nicole McKnight  
*Office Administrator*

Wendy DeLong  
*Organist*

Keith Hood  
*Security*

## Welcome!

We are created, called and challenged to be in relationship with ...

- † God
- † Each Other
- † Community
- † All of Creation



*Believing that all are one in Christ, whether believer, doubter or seeker and being aware that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons are excluded by some congregations, we welcome people of all genders and sexual orientations, as well as all who suffer discrimination in any form. As followers of Christ, who calls us to reconciliation, we pledge to strive to live as a reconciling people in our life together and our outreach to the world. We welcome all to Northlake Lutheran Church.*

Pastor Anja Helmon

After having attended an amazing and inspiring Continuing Education week last week in Washington D.C. called the Festival of Homiletics, with the theme of Preaching and Politics, I was looking forward to my only evening at home this past week Tuesday night (my second evening at home if you count Memorial Day). I am convinced, however, that God laughs at us when we make our own plans, as I received an email on Tuesday morning, and I felt the Holy Spirit calling to me through that email.

The email was a request for voices at the Kenmore City Council meeting that evening. Apparently, the council has been discussing the possibility of creating an official proclamation of inclusivity of specifically the LGBTQ+ community, as well as formally stating Kenmore's backing and approval of a local Pride week here in Kenmore. I debated whether to attend as I very much was looking forward to my evening at home. I felt, though, that our experience going through the RIC process may be helpful for the Council to hear. Therefore, I answered the call. I thought you might like to hear what I had to say. This link will take you to recordings of all city council meetings. Below are my notes:

Hello, my name is Anja Helmon, a resident of Kenmore and Pastor of Northlake Lutheran Church, which is a member of the ELCA, one of the groups who call ourselves Lutheran.

The ELCA has a process specifically designed for churches to engage to help them become more inclusive and welcoming of all people, especially of the LGBTQIA community, called RIC - Reconciling in Christ. 3 years ago, Northlake began considering becoming an RIC church. When we did this, the biggest question I heard was "We have always been

welcoming, why do we need to say it?"

Our answer? The church has a history and reputation that is NOT welcoming, even though we ALWAYS claimed to be welcoming. This has brought us to a place where people don't believe us when we say all are welcome. We have to do more. We have to be explicit.

So, we became an RIC church. This included writing a statement of inclusivity that states that because "we are aware that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons are excluded by some congregations, we welcome people of all genders and sexual orientations." Since we did this, I have noticed:

- \* A greater awareness within our congregation of LGBTQIA concerns and ways that we were NOT being welcoming, but we didn't previously realize it.
- \* Some members of the LGBTQIA community are beginning to feel like they can be open about who they really are in our community. They can speak more freely. They can contribute, help us think about things in a new way. New to us, anyway.
- \* A few new members from the LGBTQIA community are attending worship.

- Overall, we are becoming enriched by this greater awareness, by the additional perspectives we are gaining through the new diversity, and simply feeling great about being public and open about our love for all people. And...

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Nicole McKnight

Happy summer! Summer is always such a fun time for me... since my birthday lands on the summer solstice! My loving fiancé, Jordan (they/them), gave me my birthday present early this year, my new puppy Duke! He is about 5 pounds, a Dachshund mix, and goes everywhere with me. To the right is a picture of Jordan, Duke, and myself on our way to Rainbow Bingo. We had so much fun and Duke won the costume contest in his rainbow tutu! It was also a great opportunity to test out our Pride Parade outfits, *are you going to Pride with us?*

The reason we were able to attend Rainbow Bingo was because I am now working as the Communications Manager for Open Door Ministries, an extended ministry of the Northwest Washington Synod that is involved in LGBTQIA+ issues and RIC Churches. Right up my ally! Duke and I hope you make it to Pride and the many more LGBTQIA+ events I'm sure we will get to attend in the future!



## 40,000 of My Closest Friends

Rev. Kirby Unti, Bishop



NWWA Synod  
From the JUNE 2018 edition of *The Spirit*

I am just coming off a wonderful pre-youth gathering event intended to prepare the 276 young people from the Northwest Washington Synod who will be traveling this summer to Houston, Texas for this ELCA's national youth gathering.

When I meet with the young people of our Synod I am both terrified and inspired. I am terrified because I am so disconnected from the world that they inhabit – apps, language, movies, music, etc. I worry whether I can relate to these remarkable young people. Do I have something of meaning that I can bring to the table?

I am inspired because I am so very impressed by the young people who are formed by this church. They have hearts that care. They exhibit behavior that is fun to be around. Repeatedly my experience has been how respectfully they treat me and others. I love their global awareness and how at-home they seem to be in a world that, at times for me, is overwhelming.

One of the things that our young people have shown me is how they resonate to authenticity and honesty. They will put up with an old goat like me if I strive to live within my own skin and answer their questions honestly.

We had a "Stump the Bishop" session at this recent prep event. They asked fun questions - and they asked hard questions. Where was God when the holocaust took place? How can there be different interpretations of the Bible? Who was my first crush? Did I like being a parish pastor more than being a bishop? Which of my daughters do I love the most?"

They wanted honest answers - and I did my best.

The ELCA Youth Gathering will make a real impact on the city of Houston. Unleashing 40,000 students equals a lot of worker bees - and I saw how much good can be done when we were last in Detroit.

The event also has the potential to have a major

impact on our young people - helping them to deepen their understanding of their baptism and their vocational call. We will worship together, pray together, play together, and serve together.

One day of the Gathering is set aside as a Synod Day. During that time, I will again have the joy of spending time with our synod youth – and sharing my personal faith journey with them. It is indeed a privilege to have this opportunity.

Research shows that young people who have this kind of religious scaffolding, experience less at-risk behavior and are three to four times more likely to be involved in their community in the following ways:

- Work on community projects
- Volunteer associations
- Vote in local elections
- Attend Public Meetings
- Donate time and money

So, June 27-July 1, think of me and 40,000 of my closest friends, as we will experience what it means to be the church together for the sake of the world.

## Kenmore Bothell Interfaith Group Report

Jerry Wagner

The Kenmore Bothell Interfaith Group (KBIG) is a coalition of several churches that are currently concentrating on finding ways to help with the affordable housing and the homeless problem in the King County area.

On Wednesday, May 16, Pastor Anja, Pam Lehde and Jerry Wagner, along with more than a dozen from other churches in Kenmore and Bothell met here at Northlake with the Mayor of Kenmore, David Baker. Mayor Baker is the Co-Chair of the Regional Affordable Housing Task force, a countywide body tasked with developing a regional response to the crisis of housing affordability and homelessness.

Together, we discussed the work of the taskforce and asked him to support five specific recommendations, including the use of surplus state-owned land for housing, and making it more straightforward for faith communities to develop affordable housing. We are pleased to report that Mayor Baker enthusiastically took up our recommendations and will use them at the next meeting of the Task Force.

We plan to meet with other members of the Taskforce, and to be present at several public meetings through the end of the year. The next meeting is the early afternoon of May 30. If you are interested in being part of this work, please contact Pastor Anja or Jerry Wagner.



## Helpers needed for October/November North King County Winter Shelter

Rick Heinbaugh

The overnight shelter being provided by Kenmore-Bothell Interfaith Group (KBIG) and Lake City Partners Ending Homelessness needs some helpers to run smoothly. The shelter will be at Northlake Lutheran Church in Kenmore.

**Hosts:** We need two volunteer hosts each evening to supervise setup of the dining area, to manage the kitchen, to identify needed supplies, and to provide general support. The two hosts should expect to work for a period of 90 minutes to two hours

**Drivers:** We need one person each evening and one person each morning to shuttle guests between the Kenmore Park and Ride and the church, about half a mile away. There will be a stipend paid to the drivers. The evening driver should expect to work from 7:15PM until 8:30. The morning driver will work from 6:30 until 7AM.

**Emergency on-call driver:** We will need one person to be available each night for the rare case when a guest needs to be given transportation away from the shelter. This may entail a call in the middle of the night.

**Dishwasher:** Each evening we will need one person in the kitchen to wash dishes by hand, run them through a sterilizer and to put everything away and clean up the kitchen. There will be a stipend paid to the dishwasher.

**Meal providers:** Each evening a volunteer group will bring prepared food to serve up to 40 persons. Members of this group will serve the meal to the guests. The providing groups will be scheduled on a website provided by KBIG.

**Training:** Required training will be provided.

If interested, please send your contact information to [kristin@bothellumc.org](mailto:kristin@bothellumc.org) before August 1, so that you can stay updated for training and scheduling information. We will collect a pool of names of interested helpers and start building a schedule in August.

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...we are developing a new reputation.. A reputation of the church who really IS welcoming.

This is specific to what my church is experiencing, but unfortunately, when it comes to the LGBTQIA community, governments have the same kinds of reputations. This is because the LGBTQIA community has experienced discrimination, persecution, and sometimes unknowing or unintentional exclusion by governments, by our civic leaders. If we want to change this, we have to be intentional about it.

Therefore, I encourage all of you to consider a public statement that makes it clear... the LGBTQIA community is not only welcome here, but VALUED here. We NEED this diversity. It enriches us, it brings

new perspectives, it helps us all become a stronger community.

I know this because I am thrilled to be experiencing it right now at Northlake Lutheran Church. I would love to also experience it as a resident of Kenmore. Thank you.

Later in the City Council meeting (after I was snuggled comfortably at home), the Council discussed and approved the creation of a proclamation, as well as the support for Pride week in Kenmore. The motion passed 6-1. I know this because a City Council member called me personally to thank me for coming and giving my testimony. Through these little appearances, we are making a difference.



### Compass Housing Alliance Liaisons Team Being Formed

Rick Huling

Northlake Lutheran is becoming more and more involved in the homelessness/affordable housing issue. We are hosting Camp Unity for four months this year and will be again hosting the Winter Shelter in the fall. Furthermore, several members are part of a group of churches advising the Regional Task Force on Affordable Housing and Homelessness, of which Mayor Baker of Kenmore is Co-Chair. I'm sure this is just a start.

For someone interested in this issue, Compass Housing Alliance is putting together a Compass Liaisons Team composed of Lutheran churches in this area (mostly King County). Their hope is to bring together like-minded church members for quarterly conversations on both Compass and our churches' work with the homeless. This will be done through face-to-face meetings, with the opportunity to dial-in by teleconference, and information-sharing discussions on the work of Compass and our local churches' accompanying ministries.

Northlake has long been a partner with Compass and it would certainly be appropriate for someone from here to serve on this new team to bring us closer together with Compass and converse with other churches working on the same issue. Anyone interested please contact Pastor Anja or Rick Huling.

**June Is National Pride Month !**

Molly Murdock

Our members will be celebrating this by marching with a Northlake Lutheran Church banner for the first time in our church's history! All of us, including of course, family, friends and non-members are invited to attend. There are over 25 "Lovin Lutheran" Congregations registered to march with us and The Open Door Ministries of the ELCA. This is a powerful and intentional display of Christ's inclusive love. Love is more than a sentiment, it is a way of life.

Please note, Northlake Lutheran Church is now a safe and inclusive place with the addition of locks on two of the restrooms. New signage and changing tables are also being added for convenience.

Congratulations and Happy Pride Month to all of you!

**Partnership in Ministry Explored**

Rick Huling

"With one purpose, one heart, one soul."

Representatives from Northlake Lutheran, Bothell First Lutheran, and Living Truth, a Chinese Lutheran faith community, met on May 19 to open a very important conversation. The overall question was: how can we three groups collaborate to make our ministries more effective and provide further opportunities for ministry without losing our separate identities.

It sounds so simple and obvious – and Christian! – to partnership in doing God's work in our neighborhood, but alas that is not always so. Competition between congregations or just plain indifference very often gets in the way. After much brainstorming and discussion, we settled on a way ahead.

First, in order for any collaborative endeavor to succeed we need to get to know each other, to build relationships between the groups. Ideas for this in the very near future include summer fellowship events, such as the block party Northlake hosts in August, holding SEED at Bothell First, dinner groups, and the like. This is a process that takes some time, but is essential – and fun.

Second, we are going to form a Leadership Task Force with the purpose of exploring options for partnership, planning events, and promoting and supporting communication between each other's councils and leadership teams. We are off to a good start. We're looking for a couple of people from Northlake to be on this Task Force. Anyone who is interested in this initiative and wants to participate or even just learn more about it, please see Pastor Anja or one of the two Ricks.



April 2018

**A Call for Congregational Liaisons to Open Door Ministries**  
Bishop Kirby Unti and Open Door Ministries

Last year Open Door Ministries celebrated its 25th anniversary. We have seen great strides in those years. Our synod now has 48 faith communities that have made public declaration that God's loving arms embrace us all, even those who for centuries the church held to be outside of God's grace because of who they were or who they loved. The NW Washington Synod, too, took the step of becoming Reconciling in Christ and continues to support ODM's ministry of serving as a resource to both congregations and individuals as we follow Jesus' example and walk in his path of love and service.

But much work remains. Most congregations in our synod have yet to become RIC. We have marriage equality, but that has not translated into universal acceptance. Hate crimes against our LGBTQ siblings have increased in our country with transgender people particularly marginalized and targeted. Many wounds remain to be healed.

For some congregations, once the important step of becoming an RIC church is accomplished, the question remains: Now what? One answer is to become actively involved in the work of Open Door Ministries.

**We are asking all Reconciling in Christ congregations in our synod to formally name one or two liaisons to Open Door Ministries.** These liaisons will serve as our eyes, ears and voices within your congregation effectively communicating the challenges and hopes of this ministry, as well as providing perspective and guidance as, together, we navigate the troubled waters that roil in these troubled times.

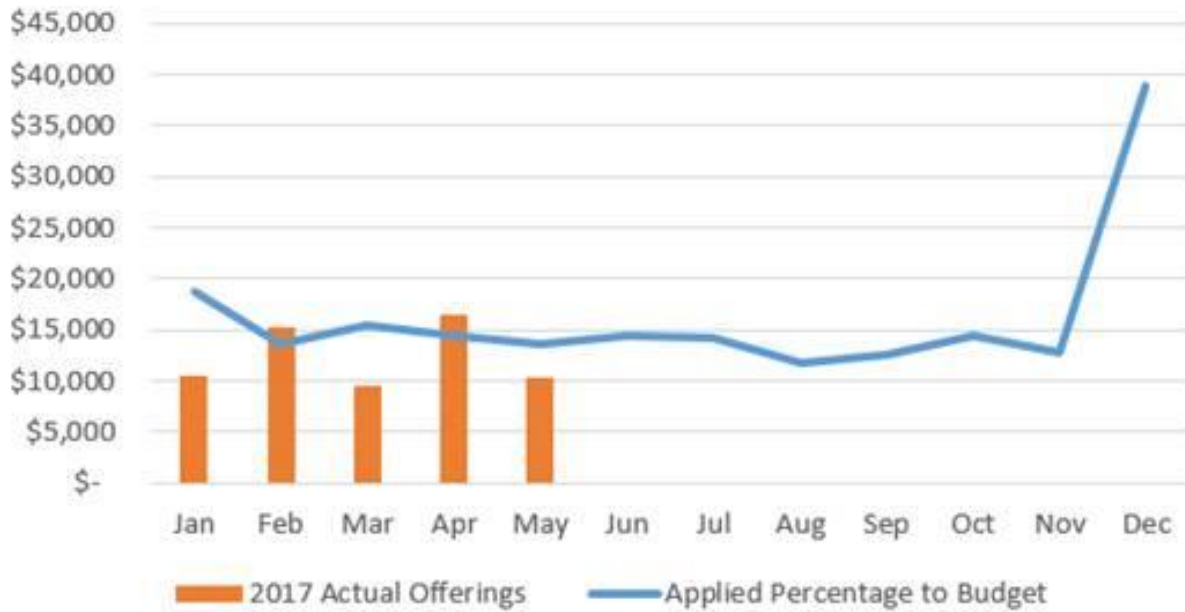
They will be invited to attend a liaison training as well as Open Door's annual meeting and at least one of our monthly board meetings each quarter.

An organization is only as strong as its people. These liaisons, along with the ODM board of directors and advisory council, will keep our ministry strong as we meet the challenges before us.

If you have questions about the ODM liaison program or any other aspect of Open Door Ministries, please do not hesitate to contact us at [communications@opendoor.com](mailto:communications@opendoor.com) or call Tom Payne, ODM Board President at 206-999-1612.

Thank you for your support in this and in all the work that we do. We hope to hear from you soon.

### Monthly Offerings: Actual vs Budget



		As of end of May:	
	2018 Budgeted Offering	75,891	
	2018 Actual Offering	62,127	
	Budget to Actual	-18%	



The *NorthLights* editor is Nicole McKnight.  
 Please send articles or calendar items you would like included in the next newsletter to:  
 office@northlakelutheran.org  
 by July 20th or earlier.  
*Thank you!*



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**Pastor Anja's Sabbath:** Friday

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