



LUTHER PLACE MEMORIAL CHURCH

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



 Hospitality ■ Worship ■ Justice ■ Spiritual Growth ■ Community Care 

lutherplace.org



Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you.

– Colossians 3:12-13



Letter from the President

Dear members of the Luther Place community:

The past year included a number of important milestones for our community. In 2012 the congregation affirmed a vision of where we felt called to be in 2017, which also happened to coincide with the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. Additionally, in March 2018 we observed the 145th anniversary of the congregation. We've come a long way over the past 500, 145, and five years. This report highlights the journey of the past year, reflecting the work of dozens of members and staff in growing a vibrant, equitable, and Christ-centered community.

Our work towards realizing God's vision for our community has led the council to learn some important lessons over the years. Here are five that stand out to me:

- **Balance administrative and maintenance tasks with strategic and relational activities.** We have to avoid the temptation of getting stuck in grind of routine and habit – careful not to miss what the Spirit is doing around us. And yet, good mission ideas require good administration. We've learned it takes both, and the congregation must actively tend to both.
- **Less is more.** The biggest barrier so many of us encounter to deepening our spiritual lives and engagement in the congregation is time. Work, family, and other pressures make “extra” time in our lives scarce. Therefore, we've tried to make opportunities more flexible, short-term, and easily accessible. We're also adjusting our expectations. Leaders can't possibly follow through on every good idea, and maybe it's ok if we let go of some things. Sometimes good is better than perfect.
- **Racial equity is about outcomes and power.** It's not about intention and inclusion. While many in the congregation share this understanding intellectually and through experience, we still struggle to translate such awareness into changes in our language, behavior, and institutional systems and processes. Nevertheless, we have made some progress, though the work can be slow. Learning about and confronting our white privilege and white supremacy more broadly is an ongoing process. These evils can trip us up. We're learning to own that and do better – not just say “I didn't mean to.”
- **Overcommunicate and ask questions.** It seems that each year there are more and more ways to learn about and access information about what is going on at Luther Place. Our refurbished website, integrated with the FellowshipOne member portal system, allows members to easily obtain information about our community. Further, we have a lively presence on social media, a robust weekly e-newsletter, and the Sunday bulletin and announcements time during worship remain available



avenues to get the word out about activities in our community. All of these means of communication (and others!) are available to members to learn about and share news with our community. Please use them! Still, if there's something you want to know more about, the best way is to ask. Ask the leaders mentioned in this report, ask our staff people. By and large, leaders make their best effort to communicate information to the congregation. Sometimes things get lost in the shuffle. Don't take it personally. Please ask.

- **Bear fruit that will last.** Sustainability has emerged as a value of the congregation. This can be seen in a variety of ways: the environmental stewardship of our new rain garden; emphasizing leadership development across teams and ministries; fostering engaging venues for faith formation among children, youth, and adults; and discerning how to leverage our building to improve our financial position. Jesus calls on us institutionally and as individuals to make decisions that allow for radical love, mercy, and justice to change our lives and the world. Lest we forget, answering that call requires stewardship of all kinds.

As this council year winds down, my time as President will also come to an end. I am honored to have had the opportunity to serve the congregation in this role for the past three years. It has been challenging at times, but mostly it has been incredibly rewarding. I am grateful and humbled by the trust the council placed in me, and I am confident that Luther Place will continue to bear prophetic witness to Christ in our neighborhood next year and beyond.

Love always,

Jackson Droney



Letter from the Senior Pastor

Dear Friends in Christ,

As I consider where the congregation is at this point in its over 145 years of life, I am drawn to the phrase: “The Beloved Community.” These are not Jesus’ words, although he does call followers, “Beloved.” These are not necessarily Lutheran words, which seem to focus more on saint and sinner or grace. Instead they are words that come to us through the faith and public ministry of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. And, through the gifts of discernment, these words have ended up in our congregational vision — we are living towards “building the beloved community.”

What is the Beloved Community?

Charles Marsh, author of the book *The Beloved Community: How Faith Shapes Social Justice from the Civil rights Movement to Today* writes about the Beloved Community in this way: it is bearing witness to the Prince of Peace in our violent and suffering world.

Within the last year, the Sunday morning adult spiritual formation class has been studying the Beloved Community by learning the expansive history of the Civil Rights Movement — and this effort has filtered into our worship. In preaching, I spent time this past summer exploring the witness of the Beloved Community, and considered people, both living and dead, who are examples of this witness.

We learned more about Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Harriet Tubman, both in the stained-glass windows, who did bear witness to the Prince of Peace. Bonhoeffer learned about the power of a faith rooted and grounded in God who freed the Hebrew slaves and who came alive in the Negro Spirituals sung and lived out at Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City. Tubman learned about the Creator God as her slave duties on the Eastern Shore had her working outside, a place where she would meet God in creation. She also met God as she gazed at the stars up above her head, and Tubman used them to navigate out of slavery into freedom.

Bonhoeffer and Tubman seem as if they are an unlikely pairing in the stained-glass windows at Luther Place until you know their stories. Both gave their whole lives to the witness of the power of peace in times of war, annihilation, and enslavement.

Later in the summer, we put up a large board that the Sunday morning adult formation class had created naming some of the participants in the Civil Rights Movement. We invited the congregation to write on that big board the names of people we know who bear witness to the Prince of Peace. We ended up with names of famous people next to the names of ordinary friends and relatives.

One of the lessons from this time was that everyone has something they can contribute to the Beloved Community.



This lesson is simple, yet it seems counter cultural these days. And God invites us to be awake and ready to view The Beloved Community when it shows up.

I've seen and heard The Beloved Community rise up around us many times during the last year, and I offer just one recent experience.

Luther Place can trace back much of the recent practice of radical hospitality to opening its doors during the riots of 1968, when this city erupted with grief upon Dr. King's assassination. At that time, Pastor Singer and leaders made a decision to be a place of refuge and grace, offering the tangibles of food and sanctuary in a time of turmoil.

On the day of the 50th Anniversary of Dr. King's assassination, we opened the doors of the church as well. The crowd was modest in size, and passionate about gathering. We had an amazing offering of food and had the chance to welcome ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton into our midst. We gathered in the All Saints Room and listened to Bishop Eaton talk briefly about the Lutheran Church doing better around race, and the audience, which was predominately people of color, received her with grace and joy!

And after the Presiding Bishop left, we moved into the Sanctuary for a sing-along. We were led in song by a man whose parents had been around 50 years ago. We sang with joy and hope. And we sang together. As looked around at the unlikely group of people assembled, including our own local Bishop, I got a glimpse of the Beloved Community, again, making music together.

Two songs particularly got me. First, that old Pete Seeger song, made me smile.

If I had a hammer, I'd hammer in the morning, I hammer in the evening, all over this land.
I'd hammer out danger, I'd hammer out a warning, I'd hammer out love between my brothers
and my sisters, all, all over this land.

And then because change always takes fortitude, I was encouraged by the song, sung with deep faith and confidence:

I ain't gonna let nobody, turn me around, turn me around, turn me around,
I ain't gonna let nobody, turn me around,
I'm gonna keep on a walkin', keep on a talkin', walking up to freedom land.

May God continue to teach us about The Beloved Community, and may we be part of building it in the world, today.

In Christ,

Pastor Karen Brau



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STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

We are blessed at Luther Place to have a staff committed to vibrant Spirit-led activity in our congregation and wider community. They have been instrumental in enriching our understanding of “place-based ministry” and bringing depth and joy to our worship life.

The staff has identified three ministry areas critical to our growth as a vibrant congregation: Sunday morning worship, children and family ministry (including ArtSmart Summer Camp), and the Steinbruck Center. Further, the staff has begun to dream about what may come next for the congregation now that the 2017 Vision period has passed. How might the congregation come together around a noble cause that values growing our community, in numbers and in spiritual depth?

Lastly, there have been a few important transitions within the staff this year. Through this time of change, the staff has continued to work with various lay teams across the congregation to realize the vision goals we set for 2017. The following pages highlight their teamwork and leadership in these major ministry areas and initiatives.

Church Staff

Full Time

Rev. Karen Brau, Senior Pastor
Israel Avila, Sexton
Xavier Williamson, Congregation Administrator
Sarah Johnson, Experiential Learning Coordinator

Part Time

Kristen Kane, New Connections Coach
Angelica Lopez, Sunday Sexton
Barbara Parker, Nursery Coordinator
Nancy White, Office Volunteer

Three-Quarter Time

Roni Ramires, Custodial Assistant

Interns

Justin Scheffer
Abigail Fisch
Maggie Lewis
Avi Mediratta
Jacob Sprunger
Wylie Cook

Half Time

Krista Sickert-Bush, Director of Family Ministries
Bianca Vazquez, Steinbruck Center Director





Youth and Family Ministry Report

Krista Sickert-Bush

“Don’t be afraid, I’ve redeemed you. I’ve called your **name**. You’re mine. When you’re in over your head, I’ll be there with you. When you’re in rough waters, you will not go down. When you’re between a rock and a hard place, it won’t be a dead end – Because I am God.”

Isaiah 43:1-4, The Message

Since our last annual meeting Youth and Family Ministry continues to grow and thrive! Moving from last year’s theme of being “Anchored”, the Isaiah scripture above has been the focal point of our **St.LuthRef** youth ministry as we laid out our 2017-2018 theme of being “Named.” In our fifth year of combined youth ministry, our annual fall retreat was attended by thirty-one junior high and high school youth and that numerical presence has continued throughout the year. One of our major endeavors has been fundraising for the National ELCA Youth Gathering which will take place in June. Twenty-five youth and five adults will venture to Houston for worship, service, and fun! We have three youth who will go early to join Pastor Mike Wilker and myself at the Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE). We are excited for this first-time adventure! Thank you to the congregation for your support as we continue to help young people build foundational pieces in their lives as disciples of Jesus Christ.

ArtSmart summer camp, in its fifth summer, was one filled with joy, fun and meaning! We hired a new Art Director, added additional staff, expanded my role to full-time director and formalized the **Middle School Leadership Program (MSLP)**, which was beautifully led by Kristen Kane and Bianca Vazquez. Our numbers grew to over fifty kids with this additional program! We also hosted our first ArtSmart fundraiser at Fathom Art Gallery and we have been gifted that space again by the generosity of the Logan Circle owner. We are also grateful to the University Club who gave us a significant grant.

Pray & Play young family ministry continues to meet monthly centering around our families with children five and under. With our continued baby boom, this ministry serves seventeen families! The **Friends and Family** group, which brings together all ages of kids and families, continues to meet and support ministry events throughout the congregation. The group’s annual retreat to Mar-Lu-Ridge brought twenty-eight children and adults together. This year’s theme of “Koinonia” helped us center on building beloved Christian community.

Sunday School and Confirmation continue to help our children and youth grow in their faith and knowledge of our Lord. With a team of teachers assisting, we picked a new curriculum called “Dig In.” This has taken us back to the great faith stories in the Old Testament and has brought new energy and life into teaching! We brought back our **High school class** which has six youth present and our Confirmation class is holding strong with five youth. I am grateful to the amazing team of teachers - all thirteen of them - for their yearlong commitment. I am also thankful for the gifts of hospitality from Ms. Barbara who keeps our nursery open and welcoming to all on Sunday mornings.



Steinbruck Center Report

Bianca Vazquez and Sarah Johnson

Background

The Steinbruck Center was founded in 2001, originally as a means to share both testimonies from the creation of N Street Village and highlight its continuum of care model, as well as to serve seminary students who were seeking urban ministry practicum experiences. The program began humbly with eight beds and a part-time graduate school student coordinator. Over the last 17 years it has grown drastically; we now provide comprehensive and transformative short-term immersion trips and housing for activist, protest, and social justice oriented groups from around the country and a wide range of neighborhood-based offerings. The Steinbruck Center ministry is staffed by Bianca Vazquez, Director, who enters her eighth year on staff this summer and Sarah Johnson, Experiential Learning Coordinator, who will be entering her fourth year.

Luther Place has always understood that in order to manifest the beloved community, we need to address the structural issues that keep people from thriving and being able to relate to one another deeply and authentically. Through the Luther Place vision process a few years ago, we began asking again, "Who is our neighbor?" In relating to people outside of our walls, we developed relationships with neighbors and found a common longing across race and class lines for connection and healthy, diverse neighborhoods. Our immigrant and people of color neighbors illuminated structural problems in our community that create further isolation and struggle -- including underemployment, rising rents, lack of community space, insufficient English-language learning opportunities, and a dearth of affordable enrichment programs for youth.

As a church community, we have a long history of investing in and creating justice programs with an impact far larger than the size of our congregation. This has happened by leveraging diverse relationships across the city. Bread for the City, N Street Village, and Lutheran Volunteer Corps are examples of this and the impact we can have. As displayed by these ministries, Luther Place has had a strong connection to affordable housing, and continues to support this via city-wide organizing work with the Washington Interfaith Network (WIN).

Gentrification and income inequality deeply shape the affordability and social fabric of our neighborhood. That fact is made real to us by our long-standing relationships within the community. It has called us to intervene through the creation of ministries offering economic equity through living-wage work, as well as opportunities for mutually beneficial action that address both needs and the real isolation that has been produced by gentrification.

The leveraging of a diverse array of neighborhood relationships generated our ArtSmart Summer Camp and a community language exchange. It has also called us to support a number of community members in micro-entrepreneurial ventures through the Community Craft Collective and small catering businesses. Our latest endeavor is the creation of an



incubator that will support the development of worker-owned cooperatives and social enterprise. Our neighbors have gained a sense of connection to Luther Place, and Luther Place has a new-found accountability to its place, resulting in lasting, unlikely relationships.

As the congregation began to create new neighborhood-based ministries, the Steinbruck Center's programming evolved along with it – creating a focus on place, community organizing, and creating economic and racial equity. The Steinbruck Center created an experiential learning paradigm that combined theological, economic, and social change theories with the community-based praxis opportunities offered by Luther Place. This combination has thrust us into being a national model for immersion learning.

Justice Ministries

The Steinbruck Center provides opportunities for all Luther Place, community members, and visiting hostel groups to participate in neighborhood engagement, structural change education, the creation of economic opportunities, hospitality, and direct service opportunities. The following programs are our place-based strategies and double as value-based teaching tools, showcasing mutuality, economic and racial equity, and highlighting the leadership/talents of local community members and historically marginalized communities.

Community Craft Collective: The Community Craft Collective is six years old. As the Steinbruck Center evaluated its staff job descriptions, the Community Craft Collective switched from a responsibility of the Steinbruck Center Experiential Learning Coordinator, Sarah Johnson, to Bianca Vazquez, Program Director. Recently, the Community Craft Collective went through a visioning process. The purpose of the Community Craft Collective is to showcase talent that otherwise wouldn't have a platform. The Craft Collective showcases unlikely relationships and unlikely artists, providing economic opportunity in community.

The CCC's primary sales opportunities come from Steinbruck Center hostel groups, meeting with 34 groups in 2017. We use it as a praxis opportunity to teach about alternative economies and the power of community. Over the next year, we will be intentionally creating a unified brand and simplifying and streamlining our products, and creating pathways for Luther Place support and mentorship for members.

Language Exchange: The language exchange is led by lay leaders Catherine Hinshaw and Miriam Perlacio. The language exchange provides an opportunity for the cultivation of unlikely relationships and second language skills. English speakers with a desire to learn Spanish are paired with Spanish speakers who want to learn English. Pairs meet weekly over a four month period and a monthly community dinner is provided. This past semester we had seven pairs with 14 participants.

Catering: We support local community members in their micro-entrepreneurial catering endeavors. First, Steinbruck Center groups are able to request local catering during their



stays in Washington, DC and we offer the option to local groups who are hosting their meetings at Luther Place. Showing Up for Racial Justice DC has hosted a monthly phone bank this year and has utilized this service. This endeavor has put \$4428.50 back into the local economy.

Both Luther Place members and visiting groups are able to also engage with the Ambassadors of Praise and ArtSmart Summer Camp, which is covered in other program reports.

Immigration Defense: Increased immigration enforcement in early 2017 propelled us to hold new listening sessions with our neighbors. We learned that our neighbors feared being stopped by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or other police on their way to or from work or if ICE came to their home. We connected with the Immigrant Legal Resource Center – a non-profit organization that that helps immigrant-serving non-profit and legal organizations across the United States. We got “red cards” and started distributing them at every community meeting. Red Cards help immigrant exert their constitutional rights in these situations. We also worked with CAIR Coalition to host two “Know Your Rights” training, where residents learned how to handle if ICE showed up at their home of work place.

Amidst those meetings, a consistently articulated concern was what would happen to their children if they were detained or deported. We contacted Hostetter Strent, a family law firm in Bethesda, MD, to put on community custodial and financial power of attorney (POA) workshops for Latino immigrant families. Hostetter Strent provided three attorneys at each event, and we contracted with pro-bono translators and low-cost notaries. We conducted three POA workshops throughout spring 2017.

Hostel Ministry

The 2017 program year was marked by growth, transition, and expansion.

	2016	2017
Total Number of Groups	60	75
• Number of Protest/Activist Groups	5	12
• Number of Groups Participating in Worship	13	17
Total Income	\$101,649.89	\$155,589.50

The 2017 calendar year for the Steinbruck Center was marked by extraordinary growth. In 2016, we reported an income of \$101,649.89 (\$97,141.89 of which was program and housing income), hosting 60 groups for a total of 2766 bed nights and 3847 service and



education hours completed. In 2017, we brought in \$155,589.50 (\$152,618.50 of which was program and housing income), hosting 75 groups with a total of 4775 bed nights and 4474 service and education hours. As we transitioned into 2018, we knew to expect a drop in our group numbers. Every three years, the ELCA has the national youth gathering. The measured implication of this is that most ELCA youth groups that are traveling are headed toward the youth gathering. We generally expect a 20% reduction in summer youth groups due to the gathering.

We experienced an increase in both the types of groups we received as well as the overall number of groups. Beginning with the inauguration in 2017, the year included our hosting of numerous protest and advocacy groups. We have seen an explosion in the number of protest-oriented groups – specifically related to immigration reform. In these cases, our space is ministry – as we are seen as a viable, cost-effective option close to the White House, with beds and showers.

Highlights from this new reality include being able to host and support United We Dream and the National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC) several times throughout the year. We also were able to host a group of 25 people from The Seed Project who had walked to DC from New York City, and were advocating for a clean DREAM Act. The Steinbruck Center worked to ensure that in addition to housing, the group had SmarTrip cards, dinner provided each night, and also received donations of snacks and breakfast foods. Overall the Luther Place congregation and other members of Sanctuary DMV congregations donated \$4497.55 to support our hosting of The Seed Project.

We also continue to see growth in the number of service learning trips. Our community justice ministries create an incredible learning environment for service learning groups and we continue to be seen as a leader in the field.

Steinbruck Center Transition & Expansion

We are taking advantage of a slightly lower group load by networking and preparing for our transition to the fourth floor of the Parish Hall Building in late 2018. This time has also allowed for travel and outreach. In January 2018, for the first time, Steinbruck Center staff attended and participated in the Youth Ministry Extravaganza in Houston. Extravaganza is the largest gathering of ELCA youth workers in the country. Bianca and Sarah tabled, showcasing the Steinbruck Center resources and programs to over two dozen congregational youth workers. Bianca was showcased as a mainstage speaker.

As we have been in preparations to expand our bed capacity, we realized the opportunity to expand our mission reach and impact as well. Through Kristen Kane's role of New Connections Coach we convened for a visioning session and have gathered a team around a new strategic plan. Kristen, Sarah, and Bianca have been meeting weekly as part of this coaching and planning process. Defined success of this effort will be that Luther Place staff and congregation contribute to, understand, and can communicate fully how the Steinbruck Center Hostel Ministry and the justice ministries add value to the church and broader



community.

When the Luther Place Night Shelter transitions out of the fourth floor, the Steinbruck Center will move upstairs. We are focusing on the implications of the move to the fourth floor, in terms of both programs and systems, so that come October we are prepared to handle an almost doubled occupancy capacity.

The transition has had two phases – first, a current programmatic and systems evaluation, followed by a scale up process. Kristen Kane has been working with the Steinbruck Center through this process. Beginning in the fall 2017, with a personnel and a programmatic review, the team identified processes that were functioning well. These include programs like community members cooking dinner for hostel groups and hosting non-service learning groups. We then identified what systems/processes should be put in place in order prepare for larger numbers of groups participating.

In January 2018, we convened a Steinbruck Center scale up team with a focus on marketing, outreach, social media, expanding programming, and strategic planning. Additionally, this team will have ownership of a roll out schedule for the move up to the fourth floor. The new team includes Bianca Vazquez, Sarah Johnson, Andy Weaver, Elizabeth Ellis, Katie Petitt, Richard Rortvedt, and Christine Frye. We plan to complete the physical transition by January of 2019.

INCUBATION at Luther Place

Vision: We envision a healthy and thriving neighborhood filled with unlikely relationships, flourishing families, and dignified employment. Our vision is one where people can stay in the neighborhood, money can be reinvested in our local economy, and a diverse neighborhood can be supported and maintained. Together with low-wage workers, residents and community partners, we have a vision of incubating worker cooperatives as a way of generating racial equity and economic justice in our community. The church is a place where all can participate in the building of the beloved community.

Mission: *We support and organize resources for community-based cooperatives and social enterprises with a vision for racial and economic equity and unlikely relationships.*

History of the project

The idea of cooperatives came out of the exploring more deeply the demands of the congregation's vision. One of the tenets of the justice pillar stated that the congregation would have a strategy for responding to poverty in a gentrifying context. With this idea in mind, we began researching our own neighborhood, researching possible funding sources, and talking to our neighbors to see if this would be a viable way to move forward on attacking underemployment and displacement in our community.



Our research showed us that the average disposable income within 3 miles of the congregation is \$79,000 and yet 50% of people make less than \$50,000 a year. There is a unique opportunity for us to bridge the social gap between low income workers and wealthier residents of our neighborhood because we are in deep relationship with a wide range of neighbors.

WE RAISE FOUNDATION (Formerly Wheat Ridge Ministries)

We Raise Foundation has funding priorities in direct response to the forces shaping our communities today – violence, inequality, and mass incarceration. In response, they fund projects that focus on workforce development, education, and anti-recidivism work. We were invited to apply for a GrantsPlus grant because of our history as a successful partner and the overlap between our current project and their new priorities.

Luther Place Church Council gave us the approval to apply at the August 2017 council meeting and the grant was submitted on September 15th. We began having conversations with both Luther Place members and neighborhood residents who might be interested in the project and saw tremendous interest. In December of 2017 we learned that Luther Place was selected as a grant recipient. The \$50,000 will come in payments every six months – two \$10,000 payments during years one and two (\$40,000 total during the first two years), and two \$5,000 payments during year three (\$10,000 total during the third year).

Implementation: Organization between Luther Place, the Incubator, & Co-ops

The Wheat Ridge grant has three purposes – to set up the infrastructure for a cooperative Incubator, which will be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and incubate two worker-cooperatives. Grant expenses will be split between incorporation expenses, translation services, investment in ONE DC, materials, group visits to other successful cooperatives in other states, food for meetings, travel expenses, administrative support, and worker stipends.

In order to implement our We Raise Foundation grant, we need to start an incubator. An incubator is an organization geared towards facilitating the growth and success of startup and early stage companies. Our incubator will provide early stage support to cooperatives and social enterprises (e.g., training and back end administrative services) with a vision for racial equity, economic equity, and unlikely relationships. The incubator will be a separate legal entity from Luther Place and the relationship will be determined between the two organizations. Each cooperative or social enterprise that is supported by the incubator will also be its own entity. We will have MOUs written between all of the institutions – Luther Place, incubator, and co-ops.

Luther Place will start a 501(c)(3) organization, the incubator, name TBD. Having a separate 501(c)(3) will isolate Luther Place from the risk and liability of activities of the incubator and the cooperative(s). It will also open us up to other funding sources, such as grants from non-religious foundations. Each cooperative will have worker/owners and no employees. The co-op will decide its own salaries and benefits. Once the cooperative breaks even, a percentage (TBD) will be given back to the 501(c)(3) for incubation costs for



a undetermined number of years, to be specified in a future MOU. Neither Luther Place nor the incubator will be responsible for salaries, worker's compensation, or payroll taxes.

Financial plan

The Incubator will be a separate entity from Luther Place. Luther place will not be responsible for the costs of incubation. Incubation of a cooperative costs \$35,000 - \$40,000 annually, including staff time, training, and administrative costs.

The Incubator will be able to receive charitable donations. The incubator will also engage in a crowdfunding campaign via Wheat Ridge's crowd funding platform – WeRaise. We plan to raise \$10,000 through a fundraising campaign. A fundraising plan will be put in place to raise a part-time salary for Bianca. For FY2018, Steinbruck Center Director, Bianca Vazquez, is giving 8 hours of volunteer time weekly and Kristen Kane is contributing 2-4 hours per week. For the cleaning cooperative, we have 25 hours of training committed that will be donated in-kind. We value the in-kind donations of trainings at \$6,250.

Incubator: Board members

Luther Place Memorial Church will be guaranteed to have one board member on the Incubator's board for a minimum of five years. The three founding board members for the forthcoming non-profit organization are three Luther Place members: Becky Ballard, Katy Argueta, and Joe Migas.

Luther Place Incubation Team

The Luther Place Incubation team was convened in November of 2017. Members include Dick Rortvedt, Becky Ballard, Kristen Kane, Margaret Maring, Nicole Newman, Kate Wulff, Kirk Sander, Katy Argueta, and Joe Migas. The incubation team is delineating the incubation project in the following way and has split its workload into four working groups: legal team, congregation engagement, worker training & education, and grants.

Legal team – Focused on 501(c)(3) formation for the incubator, finding the lawyers to do the incorporation of the incubator, and the LLC formation for the cooperative. During the spring of 2018, we will put in our application for non-profit status to the IRS. We have a lawyer willing to do the process for us pro-bono.

Actions completed:

- MOU created between Luther Place and ONE DC.
- Relationships defined between the 501(c)(3) Incubator, Luther Place, and each cooperative.
- Facilitated the creation of a working mission statement for the Incubator and the cleaning cooperative.
- Partnership with Small Business Economic Development Clinic at George Washington University
- MOU created between Luther Place and worker-owners to facilitate stipends.



Luther Place Engagement – We are excited about engaging members and friends of Luther Place in pathways for one-time, short-term, and long-term engagement with the incubator and its cooperatives.

Actions completed:

Facilitated Three Kings Day cooperative blessing and March official grant announcement to the congregation.

- **Three Kings Day** -- We used Three Kings Day to launch the cooperative project within the congregation with a narrative, “*Everybody has a role in the building of the beloved community.*”
- **March 4th Grant Announcement** -- On March 4th the We Raise Foundation grant in the amount of \$50,000 was officially announced to the congregation via a Sunday morning temple talk. We framed the grant as being part of the trajectory of engaging our neighborhood, desiring to make a tangible difference in people’s lives, and part of our strategy of how to be a church in a gentrifying context.

Defined roles for congregational support:

- **One-time** – Offer a one-time training on a business topic or be interviewed to further develop the business model
- **Short-term** – Be a grant reader or participate in the community language exchange, serve as an English/Spanish practice partner for a worker/owner.
- **Long-term** – Serve on the incubation team — Six month to a year commitment to help support the cooperative and serve a working group.

Worker training & education – Focused on engaging trainers, community members to share their gifts and talents with the cooperative; focused on producing a business plan and governance structure

Actions completed:

- Created a worker training and education plan.
- Facilitated twice monthly meetings with two-hour sessions for the women in the cleaning cooperative in January, February, March, and April of 2018.
- Connected with Latino Economic Development Corporation and SCORE DC to secure small businesses coaches for the cooperative and for a multi-session business plan training for the women in the cooperative.

Grants – Focused on writing grants to support the Incubator and the cooperative.

Actions completed:

- MOU meeting between Luther Place and ONE DC took place in January 2018
 - Meeting was to determine the relationship between our two institutions – political education, worker curriculum, learning journeys, leveraging funds, etc.



- Applied for the ELCA Deaconess Community grant in the amount of \$5,000 a year over three years.

STARTING THE FIRST CO-OP

The first co-op is a women-owned house cleaning cooperative. Eight women from the neighborhood have already committed to the process of creating a worker-owned business and others are also interested in joining. The cooperative will be incorporated as a limited liability company (LLC) from Luther Place as well as the Incubator. The cooperative has written its vision and mission statement.

Vision – We are a worker-owned house cleaning cooperative. Our worker/owners are both well trained and well paid. Our high quality work generates happy clients and ample referrals. Our growing business allows us to extend economic opportunities to others. We will welcome new worker-owners to our business and we will help empower and support other cooperatives in formation.

Mission – We offer high quality house cleaning and renovation cleaning services. Our motto is – do the work until it’s done right! We will complete every job to the satisfaction of our clients.

Guiding principles –

- Trust – We will trust each other with the work. We will discuss problems and opportunities together. We’ll make decisions together and stay united.
- Quality – Each one of us will maintain a commitment to do the type of work that is consistent with the vision that we have for the cooperative.
- Responsibility – We will be each responsible for the quality of work we produce.
- Care – We will care for each other (be warm and polite) and for the whole.
- Honest & transparent communication

History: Information sessions & Committing to the process, Fall 2017

In October of 2017, we held information sessions in collaboration with ONE DC. The information sessions were an opportunity to learn more about what is a cooperative and share what people’s work interests might be. Between the two meetings, nine of our neighbors from the local community came to the meeting to learn more about what are worker cooperative and their benefits. All are already working in cleaning, either through agencies or personal relationships with homeowners. People shared stories of their experiences of being a worker. Their responses were filled with stories of abuse, wage theft, vulnerability, and powerlessness. They lack insurance, equitable wages, and control over their schedules. Eight community members were interested in pursuing this opportunity together. They all spoke about how Luther Place has become a place of trust and shared about their belief in the power of the collective. The prospective worker-owners understand that this is a process of incubation, as opposed to guaranteed work, and are excited and



ready for the labor of the process. The women had their first meeting on Sunday, October 29th and have committed to meet twice monthly for the foreseeable future.

PROJECT TIMELINE

By the end of 2018, we will have completed the startup phase of the first cooperative and entered into the operational phase. The start-up phase includes regular training for worker owners and encompasses the planning and launch of the co-op, including engagement of first clients. By the end of the first 12 months, we will have 5-8 worker owners, 150 neighborhood residents engaged, completed a feasibility study and market research, and received 500 professional in-kind hours donated to the cooperative.

PRE-WORK - FALL 2017

First Cooperative – Cleaning Cooperative

- Conduct Information and interest meetings, teach-ins about cooperatives and democratic ownership
- Creation of Incubation Team, made of 5-7 Luther Place members

YEAR ONE - 2018

JANUARY 2018 – APRIL 2018

- **Stage I: Feasibility & Business Planning**

APRIL 2018 – OCTOBER 2018

Stage II: Start-Up

- Plan and facilitate hard skills training
Name and brand development --name, website, marketing materials, logo.
Marketing plan created and implemented.

- Back office and customer service -- phone, e-mail, client protocols
- Business structure -- bank account, financial structure and dues, price lists, EIN #

Special activity: Learning Journey

- A multi-day trip to tour successful worker-owned cooperatives in Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York City.

OCTOBER 2018 – DECEMBER 2018

- **Stage III: Operational -- Women begin working**
 - o Facilitation of governance structure, revising bylaws, new member process
 - o Marketing strategy
 - o Operations manual
 - o Database



New Connections Campaign Report

Kristen Kane

New Connections—Metro DC Synod Campaign is focused on growing the number of people involved in the life of congregations and also raising money to support growth. The main focus of the campaign is growing congregations, developing church leadership, starting new ministries, and tithing to the ELCA.

Through this campaign the Metro DC Synod supported Luther Place with a grant that originally focused on funding the 5:00 PM Worship service. Due to staff transitions and the wisdom of our worship team, we scaled down our efforts for the time being regarding the evening worship service (see the Worship report for further information). The synod agreed to fund Kristen Kane at 12 hours a week to support “new connections” at Luther Place—her main coaching arenas have been the staff, Steinbruck Center, Youth and Family Ministries, and the 5pm Worship Team. Kristen additionally, supports this campaign by serving on the New Connections Coaches team. Additionally, this grant has allowed us to have Kristen focus on administrative needs during staff transitions over the past year.

As part of this focus of growth, Kristen has facilitated over seven staff retreats focusing on getting the staff and program areas in alignment to advance our vision at Luther Place. The results of these meetings are in the process of being finalized and shared with the council and then the broader congregation. A sneak preview—we will be planning big ministry events such as SoulFiesta two years in advance to allow for a strong concentration on a process and effort of invitation to new people while also facilitating teams around these events to help us create the right “container” for new folks and diverse interests.

Please see the reports of the Steinbruck Center, Worship, and Youth and Family Ministries for the results of these coaching efforts.

Music Ministry Report

Rev. Karen Brau

We welcomed Justin Fitch as Interim Music Director to Luther Place in the fall of 2017. Justin is a graduate student at the University of Maryland, studying collaborative piano. Justin loves and can play a wide range of music on both the piano and organ. He is a trained singer and has shared music making with all ages at Luther Place. He has directed the bell choir and has worked with volunteer musicians in the congregation. We enjoyed a very rich Holy Week and Easter, welcoming many into musical leadership, and the effort was well received. Justin will play a role in the newly forming morning worship team. That team will serve in the areas of planning, inviting, and welcoming to worship.



Operations Update

Kristen Kane

How can our systems and space usage support the vision of our congregation?

Over the past couples of years we have been engaging this question. Last year we transitioned and consolidated our giving and membership platform and database to FellowshipOne (F1). This has allowed users to manage their own membership profile, online giving, and access record, including giving statements. Also, F1 provides the capacity to track groups and connect more easily with teams and congregation members. We will continue to explore the ways we can use this system and train others. We hope to transition all of our volunteer communication to F1 as well; they are still in the process of releasing this capacity as part of the system.

Kristen Kane remained on staff throughout the year offering eight hours a week for administrative support. Once Deborah Shephard, previous Director of Operations, found her dream job and transitioned out, Kristen along with all staff filled in the administration gaps. We were pleased to welcome Xavier Williamson, our new Congregation Administrator, in April 2018. Before coming to Luther Place, Xavier was the Program Assistant for the Health Division within the Bureau for Africa at United States Agency for International Development. In this role, he was responsible for monitoring communication and correspondence, as well as the collection and analysis of information and data for use in content development for the Bureau. He received his B.A. in African American Studies and African American Health from Virginia Commonwealth University. Xavier loves to sing and is a fan of musical theatre. He also enjoys cooking. As part of his new role at Luther Place, Xavier will be attending Sunday services regularly, so please give him a warm welcome to our community.





COUNCIL REPORTS

For a second year in a row, all fifteen seats of the Church Council were filled at the start of the council year beginning last June. This has allowed the Council to have broader capacity for action and engagement in the congregation without overburdening the same individuals with too much work. The Council has organized itself to partner with existing congregation committees to tend to core functions of organizational life as well as to steer new teams to enrichen our community's connections to each other. In all of this activity Council has sought to remain spiritually grounded, staying keenly aware of how the Spirit moves in our work and in our world.

At the first council meeting of the term, the Executive Committee proposed a list of teams to be led by pairs of council members. Some of these teams are committees designated in the bylaws of the congregation while others were new. Over the summer months teams were formed, their purposes clarified, and their goals for the year were established.

While the teams focused on their work, the Council at-large considered the FY19 budget, engaged a book on challenges to congregational growth, and considered next steps for the proposed reorganization of the parish hall building. Additionally, the council periodically dedicated time to have cross-team discussions on areas where multiple teams needed to partner to best realize their goals, such as membership, engagement, and stewardship. Along the way, the Council clarified aspects of its operations and decision-making procedures.

In the following pages each team lays out its purpose, goals, and progress toward meeting those goals.

2017-2018 Church Council

Members serving terms expiring in . . .

2018	2019	2020
Alex Adams*	Tara Hogan	Candace Lilyquist
Chelsey Christensen	Ann Hill*	Einar Olsen
Faith Korbel	Christina Davis	Mike Wendt*
Alberta Williams	Patrick Callahan*	Christiana Lundholm*
Kate Wulff*	Betsey Mountenay	Jackson Droney

*These members of Council also serve as trustees.

2017-2018 Executive Committee

President	Jackson Droney
Vice President	Chelsey Chistensen, June 2017 – Oct.2017 Tara Hogan, Oct. 2017 – June 2018
Secretary	Faith Korbel
Treasurer	Kate Wulff





Finance Committee Report

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Finance Committee is to develop the annual operating budget, communicate the financial status of the congregation, seek out grant opportunities, and advise Council on financial decisions.

Team Members

Kate Wulff, Chair (Treasurer); Patrick M. Callahan, Co-Chair; Julie Hamre, Comptroller; Karen Gardner; Abbey Mebratu; and Andrew McIlroy.

Goals

The goals of the Finance Committee are to provide timely, accurate information on the congregation's financial position, prepare a budget, assist in identifying and preparing grants to help sustain short- and long-term funding, and recommend policies for and manage the congregation's cash reserves.

Actions

The Finance Committee has reported monthly on the state of the congregation's finances, assisted in successfully applying for the University Club Grant to support the ArtSmart Camp, and coordinated the 2018 budget planning process. The committee also reviewed the status of insurance policies owned by the congregation and began developing a plan for use and/or investment of cash reserves.

Next Steps

- Partner with the Stewardship, Property, and Personnel Committees to identify short- and long-term solutions to improve the congregation's financial sustainability.
- Work to establish a procedure for determining Mission of the Month/Moment process.
- Manage 2019 budget planning process.

Update on Current Finances

Luther Place's financial performance is continuing to improve, although the congregation passed an operating deficit budget in December 2017 for the 2018 fiscal year.

Congregational giving as of March 31, 2018, is at \$135,205.49, which is lower than the \$148,000.00 forecasted. The figures through March 31 include a large annual commitment paid up front at the beginning of the year.

Expenses are running ahead of what we predicted year to date, but that appears to be primarily due to the timing of several large expenses such as repairs to 1325 Vermont Avenue.

At the end of March, the congregation's net income was \$48,321.28. A positive result compared to an original forecast of \$37,668.28, partly attributable to strong income performance from the Steinbruck Center and some grants.



Property Committee Report

Purpose Statement

The committee is responsible for our physical plant, for planning and overseeing the necessary maintenance and repairs for the church building, the parish hall, and 1325 Vermont Avenue. The committee balances the need for specific projects with the available budget.

Team Members

Tim Reed, Chair; Israel Avila, Sexton; Andrew McIlroy, Dick Rortvedt; Jeff Serfass; and council members Alexander Adams and Patrick Callahan.

Goals

Creating and updating a facilities condition assessment,¹ proposing for council's approval an annual schedule of major maintenance projects and overseeing the implementation of those projects and the church's monthly maintenance budget.

Actions

In 2017, the ceiling in the apartment on the third floor of the parish building was repaired, the apartment was repainted, the external handrails were repainted, and the chapel floor was refinished. New carpet was also installed in the sanctuary and the nursery, and exterior signage was hung on the exterior northwest corner of the parish hall building. The rooftop generator was rebuilt, and a 3-way valve was added to the boilers in the basement.

Next Steps

Major projects still scheduled for 2018 include replacing the built-up roof on the flat roofs, replacing the elevator, and installing two wheelchair platforms in the sanctuary.

¹ A facilities condition assessment lists all the physical parts of the buildings and the systems necessary for using the buildings (HVAC, plumbing, electrical, etc.).



Personnel Committee Report

Purpose Statement

The Personnel Committee maintains relations between the congregation and staff, oversee the compensation structure of the staff, develop personnel policies and job descriptions, provide oversight for interview and selection processes, conduct performance evaluations, and resolve conflicts.

Team Members

Charles Stepanek, Chair; Betsy Mountenay; Susan Boyle, and Jackson Droney *ex officio*. Note: the bylaws limit the Personnel Committee to three members appointed by Council who each serve three-year terms, staggered so one term ends each July. At least one member must be from the Council and at least one member must not be on the Council.

Goals

Our goals for the past year have included reducing personnel spending without negatively hurting overall staff performance; revising job descriptions, systems, and allocation of responsibilities to increase staff efficiency; preparing for the pastor's sabbatical; and promoting meaningful staff relationships and a professional organizational culture.

Actions

1. Met with staff members regularly address their concerns, provide them with feedback, and have meaningful discussions about their work and staff culture.
2. Submitted recommendations to the Finance Committee and Church Council regarding the 2018 personnel budget.
3. Collaborated with Steinbruck Center staff to ensure organization has sufficient staffing time and resources to sustain the current level of effort and identify priorities to ensure that anticipated growth happens smoothly.
4. Reflected on the musical leadership role after Jeremy Grenhart's departure.
5. Entered into contract with Justin Fitch as Interim Music Director. We renewed that contract once and, based on congregational feedback, will renew a one-year contract with Justin as Music Director.
6. Worked with Deborah Shepard, prior to her departure, and other staff to create a job description that better reflected Deborah's responsibilities as Director of Operations.
7. Organized a search committee to hire a Congregation Administrator (to replace Deborah). Hired Xavier Williams, who began April 11, 2018.
8. Established a Sabbatical Team, led by Susan Boyle, to prepare for Pastor Karen's sabbatical, and made recommendations related to staff responsibilities during that time.

Next Steps

We are working on building a more effective, meaningful performance evaluation process that will take place later this year. We will continue to meet with staff to discuss how we can support them in their respective roles and help them achieve the church's vision and desired growth.



Membership Team Report

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Membership Team is to facilitate the current processes for new member invitation and welcome, synergize with other teams to evaluate and improve those processes, and discern a strategy for meeting Luther Place's vision goals for growing membership

Team Members

Chelsey Christensen, Kate Muetting, Kristin Murray, Alberta Williams

Goals

- *Evaluate*
 - Evaluate New Lay Led Membership Processes
 - Offer Suggestions/Changes to Processes
 - Formalize and Facilitate Updated Processes
- *Engage*
 - Engage New Members
 - Connect New Members with Current Members

Actions

In 2017-18, the Membership Team effectively evaluated the new lay-led membership process and facilitated recommended changes. Additionally, the Membership Team established "Luther Place Connectors" to ensure meaningful relationships between new and existing members. Since our last congregational meeting, we have welcomed 24 new members.

Next Steps

The Membership Team looks forward to evaluating and continuing to improve the membership process. The Membership Team also hopes to expand welcome and outreach efforts within the congregation and community.



Stewardship Team Report

Purpose

The purpose of the Stewardship Team is to facilitate the current processes for financial and non-financial giving, evaluate and improve those processes, and discern a strategy for connecting new and longtime members to share their time, talent, and treasure at Luther Place.

Team Members

Patrick Callahan (Co-Chair), Candace Lilyquist (Co-Chair), Alexander Adams, Christina Davis, Justin Fitch, Edward Leffler, Wendy Mayer (remote counsel), Kathryn Perry, Thomas Randall, and Kate Wulff.

Goals

- 1) Launch a year-round Stewardship education program (**status: ongoing**);
- 2) Replace the aging church management systems (CMS) (**status: implemented FellowshipOne**);
- 3) Develop a website integrated with the new CMS (**status: implemented**);
- 4) Create a Welcome Video to highlight Luther Place online and in social media (**status: implemented**);
- 5) Develop a mechanism for sharing thanks and appreciation with those that provide time, talent and treasure (**status: implemented thank you program**);
- 6) Utilize door hangers to help spread the word in the Logan Circle community about key church services (**status: delivered door hangers to 200+ area residences and businesses for the 2017 Easter service**); and,
- 7) Partner with other committees and ministries to leverage the synergies across the teams (**status: ongoing**).

Actions and Next Steps

The committee continues its partnership in working with staff and congregation members to deliver year-round education and engagement opportunities that connect the stewardship message with key audiences. Stewardship messages are included in the bulletins, eNews, social media, and the Luther Place website. In partnership with Engagement, the #IamLutherPlace campaign continues to feature the diverse membership of the congregation. The Thank You program continues to acknowledge individuals' time and talent commitment to Luther Place. A traditional Stewardship Member Visit Campaign will launch in April 2018. A formal Year-End Giving Campaign will launch in November 2018, and conclude on December 31, 2018.

Stewardship matters. It is through relationships that we encourage and support spiritual growth in ourselves and others. By our word and example, a place to start is within the relationships of our families, with children and youth, friends, neighbors and co-workers. Let us remember to "be in the moment" and intentionally look for Jesus in the spaces of our lives. See Jesus in those with whom you engage in life.



Engagement Team Report

Purpose

The purpose of the Engagement Team is to make nominations for the election of council members at the annual congregational meeting, to make recommendations to Council for all Council-appointed leadership positions, to help connect church members with volunteer and participation opportunities, and to help maintain a current roster of lay leaders on all congregational committees and teams.

Team Members

Faith Korbelt, Alex Adams, Rebekka Meyer, Ann Hill, Krista Martin, Terri Jackson

Goals

- 1) Use Fellowship One to help the team match opportunities to members of the LP congregation
- 2) Develop an organized and consistent system for sharing opportunities that are available/needed at LP.
- 3) Have a shared process in place for helping both current members and new members find and use their gifts at LP
- 4) A slate of 2018-2019 Council Members for approval at the May Council Meeting.

Actions

The Engagement Team is transitioning away from its former role as simply the nominations committee, taking on a broader scope to meet the *Church + 1 (Treasure) + 1 (Time and Talent) = YOU* Congregational Covenant that helps members focus specifically on their time and talent. To achieve this, the team is creating materials to explain what to expect when volunteering for various Sunday worship roles. These include training videos, which the high school Sunday School class has agreed to create and will be available on the LP website. Volunteer information is also being shared via the e-blast. We are also creating Volunteer Spotlights (#IAmLutherPlace) for the e-blast, which show how members of LP find value in volunteering.

There is a Volunteer Skills Survey on the Engage section of the website. We receive notification when an individual has completed the survey and note the skills and talents they identify. Individuals receive a response email when the survey has been submitted. The LP Opportunities List is close to completion and is already being provided to new members. We hope to have it available to everyone on the website. Also, the slate of 2018-2019 Council Members is filled and ready for congregational approval.

Next Steps

Training on Fellowship One, to help the team identify and match the best individuals for the best volunteering positions within LP, will commence shortly. The team will also audit the teams, committees, and ministries as they are presented on Fellowship One, in order to identify and fill gaps where necessary.



Racial Equity Team Report

Purpose

The purpose of the Racial Equity Team is to develop a strategic plan for racial equity at Luther Place, and to work actively and with accountability, towards racial equity and reconciliation at Luther Place and beyond.

Team Members

Ann Hill and Tara Hogan (co-leaders); Sarah Bagge, Susan Boyle; Veronica Edwards; Jay Forth; Candace Lilyquist; Katie Pettit; Paul Ramshaw; and Tanay Tatum.

Goals

- Develop strategic plan for 2017-18, starting with recommendations from last year
- (re-)Introduce congregational-wide conversation about racial equity. This introduction will include telling an honest history of Luther Place's racial justice work and the state of people of color at Luther Place and the neighborhood.
- Ensure that the annual congregational retreat (including planning and invitation) is intentional in inclusion and participation of all people.
- Identify and create opportunities to collaborate, work alongside, and listen to, all voices and experiences, particularly those of POC (e.g., caucusing, intentional invitations extended to hear Word/teaching from pastors, vicars, leaders)

Actions and Next Steps

We were most successful in organizing events for collaboration, listening, and outreach. Specifically, we successfully organized several events:

- September 2017: nine LP members marched in the March for Racial Justice
- November 2017: seven LP members participated in Decolonize Lutheranism 2017 conference in Philadelphia, PA
- November 2017: 15+ LP members participated in a presentation by Rev. Eudora Heath, on her experience working with institutions on diversity and equity initiatives.
- January 2018: 25+ members and friends participated in Racial Equity training, which was a follow-up from training conducted by Race Forward in 2013.
- April 2018: Unite to End Racism March, including Bishop Eaton providing comments in the All Saints Room, and a Civil Rights Era singalong.
- Where we struggled: At times, we struggled to find the critical mass or quorum needed to move forward on more difficult outcomes, particularly given the desire to make sure that everyone is heard on sensitive topics.
- Next steps: Clarify and publicize our understandings of key terms and purposes. For example, articulating the differences between diversity, equality and equity, as well as identifying both concrete and conceptual outcomes. Also, develop a shared understanding of accountability so that we can move forward.



Celebration Team Report

Purpose

The purpose of the Celebration Team is to propose and organize ways to mark important ELCA and Luther Place events including the Reformation 500 celebration in 2017 and the Luther Place 145th Anniversary in 2018.

Team Members

Christina Davis (co-leader), Einar Olsen (co-leader), Michael Sonnenberg, Christine Frye, Sheena Foster

Goals

Our goal was to look for ways to celebrate the Reformation 500 celebration in 2017 and Luther Place's 145th Anniversary in 2018 through a variety of displays and activities and to assist the Luther Place staff as needed for planning the special services for each event.

Actions

Reformation 500

- Reformation Signage: four signs were created and placed outside around the Martin Luther statue detailing key events in the history of the Reformation.
- *Martin Luther: The Idea that Changed the World*: Luther Place partnered with three area churches (St. Paul's, Grace Lutheran Church, Reformation) to host a viewing of this documentary at Landmark Bethesda Row Theater in Bethesda, MD.
- Calendar: A calendar of Luther Place and DC area Reformation activities was shared in the bulletin and the newsletter during the weeks leading up to Reformation Sunday.
- Partnering with Other Churches: Churches in the area were invited to join Luther Place for a prayer in front of the Martin Luther statue on Reformation Sunday.
- Reformation Sunday: The service included "themed" desserts, family activities in the basement, a display of books and artwork, and a service themed around the day's events.

Luther Place's 145th Anniversary

- Anniversary Service: The 145th Anniversary was celebrated during the March 18th service.
- Adult Forum: Gary and Margaret Maring prepared a power point presentation and led a discussion on the history of Luther Place after the March 18th service. It was well attended, and a recording was shared on our website for those that couldn't attend.
- Signage: Signs are being prepared to be displayed outside the church. They will display in text and photos key moments from Luther Place's history.

Next Steps

With both celebration activities complete, the Celebration Team will no longer be active. We offer our sincerest gratitude to all those involved in both celebrations.



Community Care Team Report

Purpose

Luther Place currently offers a variety of community care efforts such as the Stephen ministry, elder brunches, home visits and communion, and small groups. The Community Care Team's purpose is to assess the current state of these programs, discern how to implement a teamwork approach to community care, and develop a framework to guide the congregation closer to our 2017 goals.

Team Members

Christiana Lundholm (co-leader), Christina Davis (co-leader), Pastor Karen Brau, Elizabeth Ellis, Doug Walter, Eddy Ameen, Rico Martínez González

Goals

Our goal was to evaluate the current state of Community Care at Luther Place and use the information gathered through that evaluation to develop recommendations on how best to fulfill the congregation's vision Community Care, which is: "Community Care is how we sustain a vibrant community, our intentional practice of supporting and nurturing one another in all stages of life, in celebration and in sorrow."

Secondary goals that developed throughout the year were evaluating the community care aspects of the new FellowshipOne online member portal and how the team could facilitate or assist with community care needs that fell outside of an existing community care group.

Actions

The Community Care Team was a new Council Team this year. Beginning in August, we drafted a purpose statement for the team, recruited members, and formulated our goals for the year. Since December, we have been holding intentional one-on-one conversations about community care with leaders of many of the community care ministries at Luther Place, including Stephen Ministry, Elders Brunch, Home Communion, Home Visits, Hospital Visits, and Small Groups. We have also held conversations with leaders of other groups that are not explicitly focused on community care, but where this ministry can occur: Embrace, 20s/30s, Gen X, Men's Fellowship, Craft Collective, Youth & Family, and Pray & Play.

The team has been asked to consider how the FellowshipOne member portal can or should be used in the context of community care, and several team members have received a thorough overview of the capabilities. We will consider the possibilities of this online tool as we develop our recommendations.

This spring we have been working to expand the community care discussion to a broader cross-section of the congregation by hosting two open discussion forums and developing an online survey. We are also researching community care approaches used by other congregations and groups that may be helpful for Luther Place.



Next Steps

During the late spring and early summer of 2018, we plan to complete our research and develop recommendations for the Luther Place congregation. We will be working on process to present our recommendations to the Luther Place Council and to obtain support from the congregation as a whole.



SPECIAL REPORTS

Worship Team Report

Michael Wendt

The makeup and purpose of the Worship Team has been fluid over the last year. As we prepare to once again refine our focus, it is helpful to understand how we got here.

In June 2017, an initial team was formed to understand how our ministry was meeting our vision at both the morning (10:30 AM) and evening (5:00 PM) services. The group of 8-10 consisted of staff (including Jeremy Grenhart), Council members, and congregation members. This iteration met twice (July 10 and July 31).

Upon Jeremy's resignation from Luther Place in August 2017, this initial group was disbanded to allow for a time of healing while Council discerned how to proceed. In conjunction with this shift, our contract musicians from Howard University were released and the evening service moved from the Sanctuary to the Chapel.

In January 2018, a new team was formed with the unofficial goal of "reimagining the evening service." This new group is a larger, more diverse cross-section of the congregation. It still consists of staff, Council, and congregation members. At our first meeting, we established that we would meet monthly on the fourth Sunday. We have held each other accountable to that commitment. To date, meeting topics have included shared leadership, the value of relational practice, and anecdotal "market research" around how neighboring churches are meeting the community.

At our March meeting, six months after that significant shift in the evening service, we took a moment to pause and reflect. We considered what has changed within Luther Place and within the community around us since then. We invited each member of the group to offer their understanding of the group's purpose in our current context.

We learned that:

- 1) **We are passionate about worship.** There is a craving for music, for fellowship, and most importantly for the movement of the Spirit that comes only through Word and Sacrament. There can be no substitute for regular worship.
- 2) **We are passionate about connecting with our community and neighbors.** We recognize that there are many ways to make connections beyond worship. These may include health, meditation, music, fitness, LGTBQ issues, and so on. Connection made around any of these interests may serve as a bridge to worship and congregational life.
- 3) **We don't know what we don't know.** Luther Place has a history of seeing and responding to needs in our surrounding community. There is a certain amount of



irony in a team that meets inside the church building, looks inward, and expects to discern what the current external need is.

To that end and with renewed energy, we sense that it is time for the group to shift once more. At our April meeting, we will seek group consensus on a go-forward plan that includes the following:

- 1) Plan and initiate a season of *listening*.
 - a. Leverage Kristen Kane in her capacity as New Connections Coach to facilitate training and planning session(s) around listening. Targeting Sunday, May 6, for an initial session.
 - b. Dedicate the months of May, June, and July to our listening practice.
 - c. Consolidate and summarize our findings. Make actionable recommendations to Council before Pastor Karen leaves for sabbatical.
 - d. Continue our regular monthly meetings throughout this process.

- 2) Invite members of the Worship Team to participate, if so desired, in a parallel group focused on the morning service. This “morning service team” will do ministry in the areas of planning, invitation, welcoming, and bridging to further congregational connections.

- 3) Temporarily suspend the evening service after May 20.
 - a. Attendance at the evening service has been low (often <10) and will likely remain low over the summer months.
 - b. Reallocate time previously spent planning and executing the evening service towards our listening practice.
 - c. Create space to launch a new offering of some kind based on recommendations to Council.
 - d. Recognize that an intentional, temporary suspension of the evening service does not constitute failure but instead indicates a desire to refocus and “get it right.”

We pray that the Spirit would continue to guide us as we discern how best to respond to our neighbors’ innate desire for relationship with God.



Building Vision 2017 Team

Dick Rortvedt

Purpose

In late 2014, Council approved a resolution to constitute an *ad hoc* team to help develop medium and long-term priorities and plans for future building renovations to help the church achieve its vision and mission while remaining sustainable in the long run.

Team Members

Pastor Karen Brau, Patrick Callahan (Council Representative), Brian Cooper, Andrew McIlroy, John Means (Co-Chair), Tim Reed (Property Chair), Dick Rortvedt (Co-Chair). Staff members who also contributed to the Team's work were Sarah Johnson, Kristen Kane, Krista Sickert-Bush, and Bianca Vazquez.

Goals

Incorporating extensive congregational input obtained in 2015 and 2016, the team's 2017 goal was to work closely with the Inscape Publica architectural firm to complete a proposed schematic design for the parish building and to obtain some preliminary cost estimates.

Actions

In 2017, the architects worked with the BV-17 Team and staff to develop an expanded, more comprehensive concept and completed schematic design drawings involving all four floors of the Parish Building, including moving the Steinbruck Center to the fourth floor and designing spaces that could be rented and dedicated to revenue-generating purposes. Inscape arranged for three contractors to provide preliminary bids for renovating the parish building based upon schematic design drawings (about 20% of complete construction drawings and specifications). In April we met with the three contractors to further understand their assumptions and cost components.

The bids are:

- MCN \$2.743 Million
- Monarch \$1.257 Million
- W & M \$1.519 Million

It is considered prudent to add a 15% contingency to contractors' estimates. In addition to construction costs estimated in contractors' bids, the project would require architects' fees (Inscape estimates \$78,000) plus engineers' and permit fees; perhaps adding a total of \$200,000 above and beyond contractor costs.

Business Planning: Considerable concern has been expressed regarding Luther Place's chronic annual operating budget deficits (around \$100,000). Part of the justification for renovating the parish building is to upgrade facilities to generate more revenue from outside sources. To test the hypothesis that more attractive, efficient physical spaces will attract more rent-paying groups, we will conduct due diligence by assessing demand for such



spaces and prepare business plans which analyze costs versus benefits. This process includes:

- On April 6, Callahan, McIlroy and Rortvedt met with Cushman-Wakefield – a commercial real estate developer/manager – to review schematic design and seek feedback about feasibility of renting *commercial office space* in our parish building. CW estimated that upgrading office spaces from existing, as is condition (Class C) to more attractive rental space (class B) could average \$75/sq.ft. Monthly office rentals in our neighborhood for non-profits should average in the lows \$30s/sq.ft.
- CW discouraged the concept of short-term shared work spaces due to existing high-quality competition at 16th and P and the need for constant management staff time. CW recommended dividing second floor into three suites that could be leased to longer term tenants [might involve relocating current tenants]. A more aggressive approach could also involve renting the third floor.
- Evaluate potential for events rental (e.g., weddings, receptions, parties, conferences); start discussion with LP member Christine Frye, a professional events planner.
- Explore potential for a commercial kitchen as part of the new incubator ministry and for possible food preparation pop-ups. It was suggested that the market could be tested before any renovation (possibly summer 2019) by charging below market rates. It is assumed that after renovation market rates would be charged.
- The Steinbruck Center Steering Committee met April 11 with three new members with business planning experience. They will help plan the *hostel program* transition to the fourth floor and help design a marketing and communication strategy to enable hostel program growth that will generate more income in the larger space starting in 2019. The initial goal is to replace income lost by closure of the NSV night shelter (around \$30,000).

Next steps

BV-17 co-chairs met with the Congregation Council on April 12 to report that, with delivery of the schematic design drawings and preliminary bids, our work as the *ad hoc* team was now nearly complete. The BV-17 Team asked the Council for decisions on several follow-up issues as outlined below.

A) Should the BV-17 Team be re-designated as a Renovation Committee or Long-Range Planning Committee? If so, what would be the objective(s) and charge of responsibilities? Council decided to establish a Long-Range Planning Committee; objectives were determined at Council's May 10 meeting.



B) Should Council, Finance, Stewardship, Property, Personnel and Long-Range Planning Committees undertake a longer-term, proactive analysis of prospects for closing annual budget deficits (including using our biggest asset, the building)? Council agreed.

C) Should LP explore feasibility of applying for an external grant from National Fund for Sacred Spaces? Planning and fundraising assistance is provided (\$50,000 to \$100,000 grant requires 1:1 match - \$100,001 to \$250,000 requires 2:1 match). Options include submitting initial letter of intent by April 17, 2018 or waiting until April 2019, the final year of the program. Council decided to wait until 2019.

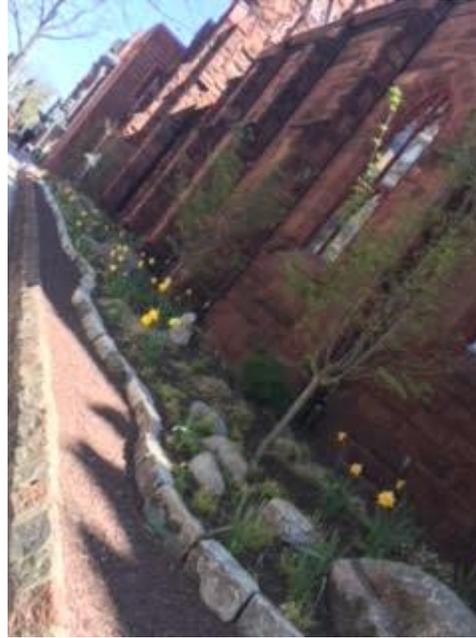
D) Should the Council or Congregation appoint a Capital Campaign Committee? Decision will be made in early 2019 after results of above analyses are available.



Sacred Commons

Ed Miller

Our team implemented the 14th Street Garden during the summer of 2017. Presently, our rain-garden project, through a grant of \$50,000 from the Anacostia Watershed, is coming to life!





NSV Special Committee Report

Jackson Droney

Purpose and Team Members

Many years ago, Luther Place (LPMC) provided N Street Village (NSV) a \$2.1 million loan without an expressed desire to have the money repaid. However, the debt has stayed on NSV's books, and since 2013 LPMC and NSV have been in negotiations over ways to remove that debt in order for NSV to be able to more easily obtain Low Income Housing Tax Credits and other financing. In return for forgiving this debt, Luther Place has explored ways to secure the use of the N Street land for social justice ministry purposes long into the future.

Since February 2016, the congregation has provided a Council the authority to negotiate an arrangement with N Street Village under a set of criteria. Council has received recommendations in carrying out this authority from a special committee composed of Henry Bowden, Julie Hamre, Jackson Droney, and Pastor Karen Brau. Michah Elazar, our pro bono attorney, has been invaluable to this process.

Motion

Below is the motion the congregation most recently approved in December 2017.

I, Jackson Droney, move that the congregation of LPMC delegate its authority to make final decisions regarding the NSV property and debt to the Church Council provided:

1. this authority expires on June 30, 2018,
2. the Church Council solicits recommendations from the existing lay committee working on these issues,
3. the Church Council notifies the congregation once a final agreement on a covenant is reached and agreed to, and
4. the powers herein granted to the Church Council shall not apply to any negotiated covenant that does not meet the following four negotiating priorities:
 - a. The covenant ensures the land at 1333 is used for affordable housing/social services long into the future.
 - b. The covenant maintains a role for Luther Place in decision-making authority over a potential future sale of the land by NSV.
 - c. The covenant ensures that any profits from an agreed future sale of the NSV land are equitably distributed between the parties.
 - d. The covenant allows, in return for meeting these objectives, the forgiveness of the \$2.1 million balance on a loan Luther Place provided to NSV many years ago.



Proposed Covenant and NSV Bylaws Changes

In May 2018 the special committee completed negotiations with NSV on an agreement that meets the terms of this motion. The terms of the agreement were:

- A covenant restricting the use of the property to affordable housing, transitional shelter and related and supportive uses;
- Provisions giving LPMC consent rights over potential transfers of the N Street property;
- A provision for the sharing of sale proceeds in the event of a future sale so that LPMC would be compensated for the debt that it is forgiving; and
- A provision giving the Church the right to purchase the N Street property during a period between 50 and 99 years after the recording of the Declaration, subject to an agreement to enter into a 50-year ground lease with NSV.

Additionally, N Street Village asked Luther Place to agree to change the NSV Bylaws. The bylaws provided Luther Place six designated board seats and allowed the senior pastor to serve as an NSV board member ex officio. NSV asked Luther Place to agree to cede all of its board seats and to changes that remove all references to Luther Place from the bylaws. The current bylaws prevent N Street from selling, leasing (except for short term), transferring, etc. any real property located at 14th & N Street without the approval of a majority of voters at a duly called congregational meeting.

Council requested that NSV agree to reduce its board representation from six seats to three, but NSV desired a complete separation. They were willing to enter into a "side agreement" that allows Pastor Karen and two of our board members to complete their terms over a three-year period. The other three Luther Place board members' terms expired on June 30, 2017 (and one seat was vacant).

The church asked that the side letter memorialize that the parties currently intend to continue the Church-related programs (Bible study, Ambassadors of Praise, etc.) at N Street for the indefinite future. Also, the Church asked for an \$80,000 payment (made in lumps sum or four \$20,000 annual installments) from N Street that satisfies a separate loan and reflects the good rapport between our organizations. NSV agreed to these requests.

NSV Board President Peter Shields presented at the 2017 annual meeting on Sunday June 4, 2017 to explain NSV's position so that any questions can be addressed before the congregation votes on the matter. At that meeting the congregation voted accept the changes to the bylaws. The covenant was still under review so the congregation chose to extend the authority in the motion above to the council to approve the final covenant once it was complete. It was expected by all parties that the covenant would be finalized within weeks, coinciding with the change in the NSV Board year. It was the understanding of the parties that upon the recording of the covenant, LPMC would forgive the \$2.1 million (plus interest) in debt and the modification of the NSV Bylaws would take effect.



Developments over the Past Year

The recording of the Declaration of Covenants as an encumbrance on the N Street property requires the consent of both the current lender on the property, as well as NSV's tax credit investor. While NSV's counsel has attempted to facilitate the consent of such parties to the Declaration, the tax credit investor has raised objections to the proposed draft of the Declaration and has requested changes that would fundamentally impair the benefits of the Declaration to LPMC. Specifically, it has proposed that the Declaration would be terminated if the investor were to exercise its rights to take over control of the joint venture with NSV. In addition, LPMC has been informed by a prominent national title company that the covenant to share sale proceeds would be unenforceable. Accordingly, LPMC is of the view that there is currently no viable path to achieve the original goals of the parties via the proposed Declaration.

LPMC remains committed to achieving the originally stated goals regarding the long-term control over the N Street property and the forgiveness of the debt. It appears, however, that the parties are currently unable to find a mutually agreeable resolution due to the different interests of the lender and tax credit investor at this time. LPMC currently believes that its interests are best served by leaving in place the protections that are afforded to it under the terms of the NSV Bylaws, the Deed of Trust Note and the Deed of Trust encumbering the Program portion of the N Street property. We would be happy to meet to explore further options toward a resolution of the issues described in this letter.





MINISTRY BRIEFS

Coffeehouse Hospitality

Sunday Morning Coffeehouse hospitality is intended to create a touchpoint each Sunday where people can build community. We offer simple food, coffee and tea as the spirit seems to always show up around a table. We want the space and food to feel welcoming, inviting, and nourishing. This also offers a space for visitors to connect and for people to contribute from a place of service and meaning. Our intention is to deepen community, bridge with visitors, and build unlikely relationships. And yet we are aware that there are difficulties with hospitality—Dorothy Day teaches us well. This year we have implemented some new processes and will continue to work to improve the space.

Late last year we gathered the Coffeehouse Hospitality Teams to discern how to make the space more inviting, deal with security concerns, and create ease around the food. We are slowly implementing our discernments. Our Coffeehouse Assistant—Angelica Lopez opens the N Street Doors at 6:00 AM and brews coffee for those that are seeking shelter. People are invited to sit in the All Saints Room. The Sanctuary Doors are opened at 10:00 AM and everyone is invited to Worship. Starting soon we will be shutting the All Saints Room at 10:15 AM to minimize conflicts that have been occurring during the service. Every Sunday, coffee and tea will be provided throughout the entire morning until 12:30 PM. Coffee house Hospitality teams provide snacks which will be served from 10 – 10:30 AM and then again after the service. On first Sundays of the month, we will provide breakfast at 9:00 AM and coffee/tea will be provided throughout the morning. Additionally, we will be bulk purchasing granola bars for people who come early on Sundays.

Also, we will be doing Spring Cleaning of the All Saints Room and basement Kitchen closets to ensure that we have enough serving utensils and platters to make the snacks on Sundays warm and inviting. Angelica will oversee resetting the All Saints Room and Basement Kitchen Closet weekly—and clean out both the small refrigerator in the All Saints Room and walk-in refrigerator in the basement. We are also aware that norms and postage of expectations are necessary for both the All Saints Room and bathroom usage. We are also clear that support and training is necessary to leaders in the congregation specifically around how to best minister with people who have mental health issues. We are working to figure out how to ensure that we provide a safe and welcoming place for as many people as possible.

20s/30s Ministry

This year, the 20s/30s Ministry has continued to build upon its momentum, while refining our events to better meet the needs of the group. This year's events included the following:

Happy Hour - On the third Thursday of the month, we gathered at Baan Thai, a restaurant on 14th Street, for discussion of a timely topic and its implications on our faith. This year's topics included reformation and the church; what type of gun God



would carry; and a collaboration with the young adults of First Trinity Lutheran Church on food justice.

Brunch - Once a quarter after the 10:30 AM service, members of the group met for fellowship and brunch at different restaurants along 14th Street.

In addition to these regularly scheduled events, the 20s/30s Ministry hosted the following one-time events throughout the year:

Volunteer Event: We spent a Saturday morning and afternoon assisting with We Are Family Senior Outreach Network. Through this half day of service, we delivered groceries to senior citizens in the Columbia Heights neighborhood and connected with fellow volunteers.

DC Brau Gathering - During the summer, Pastor Karen hosted the 20s/30s group at the parsonage for an evening of fellowship and food.

Dolores the Movie Outing: In keeping with the theme of honoring those who contributed to building the beloved community, the 20s/30s attended a screening of Dolores the Movie.

Fall Retreat - Pastor Julie Bringman of Hope Lutheran Church facilitated a weekend retreat at Rolling Ridge in West Virginia this Fall. She led us in a spiritual discussion of reconciliation to ourselves, each other, and to God.

Ash Wednesday Gathering: We provided pizza and gathered for fellowship before this year's Ash Wednesday Service. This event was well attended by Luther Place and MeetUp members alike.

DACA Fundraiser: The 20/30s group raised approximately \$750 in one weekend for the DACA advocates who stayed at the Steinbruck Center.

Good Friday Service - In March, we organized and led the evening service on Good Friday. Several members of the group provided reflections during the service on the seven last words of Jesus

Bible Study - In Spring 2018, we had a four-session small group Bible study at a member's home on weeping and rejoicing.

In addition to communicating with members in person, via a Google Group listserv and Facebook, we continued listing our events on MeetUp which allowed us to reach our surrounding community and brought new faces and different perspectives to events. As we look forward, we hope to begin a visioning process with the group this upcoming Fall to create a mission statement for the Ministry. Come join us for the journey.

**Friends of the Feast**

Friends of the Feast (known as the altar guild in many congregations) has added a few new members and always looking for more to join. Over the past year, we have streamlined our scheduling process and added checklists for easy set up and clean up duties. If you are interested in joining Friends of the Feast, contact Michael Sonnenberg.

Embrace! (LGBTQ Ministry)

Embrace! The LGBTQA Ministry has been active throughout the year including leading worship on Reconciling in Christ Sunday (in January) and Pride Sunday (in June). Embrace! has also held several potluck brunches after worship, gone out for brunch, as well as attended Gay Day at the Zoo and Nats Night OUT watching the Nationals take on the Atlanta Braves. Embrace! has also seen growth in participants, as many as 20 folks joining us for events. Starting this fall, Embrace! is adding community service to its list of activities. If you are interested in these events, contact Michael Sonnenberg.

Luther Place Small Groups

Two small groups met regularly in the second year of Small Group Ministry at Luther Place. Both groups met 1-2 times per month in the fall and in the spring, discussing books and sharing snacks and fellowship. One group met at Luther Place, while the second group met in Arlington, Virginia. Some of the books discussed were "Breathing Under Water" by Richard Rohr, "Traveling Mercies" by Anne Lamott, and "Barking to the Choir" by Gregory Boyle. Small groups are a great way to meet new people, as you grow together. If you are interested in learning more about small groups, please contact Pastor Karen.

Stephen Ministry

Entering its sixth year at Luther Place, Stephen Ministry is a one-on-one lay caring ministry used by more than 12,000 congregations from 160 Christian denominations. Stephen Ministers attend 50 hours of training based on the Stephen Series System (created by Rev Kenneth C. Haugk, Ph.D). The training is basic introduction to human psychology and peer-to-peer counseling. Through the training, caregivers learn about providing care for individuals who are going through a difficult time (grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, etc), also focusing on confidentiality, healthy boundaries, and recognizing when referral to mental health professionals is appropriate.

Luther Place currently has six trained Stephen Ministers prepared to aid the pastor and staff in providing care. Upon referral from Pastor Karen, an individual experiencing life difficulties will be paired with a Stephen Minister, providing companionship and support. The meetings and formal relationship continue until both the Stephen Minister and care received feel it is no longer necessary.

If you have any questions about Stephen Ministry, please contact Margaret Maring or Nancy White. If you are interested in being paired with a Stephen Minister, please contact Pastor Karen.



Men's Fellowship

This year the Men's Breakfast group morphed into the Men's Fellowship. Normally a small monthly breakfast gathering of 4 to 8 people in someone's home at 8:30 AM on a Saturday, the group has also helped with Soul Fiesta annually and has held a winter retreat each January for reflection, fellowship and adventure at Rolling Ridge Retreat Center in West Virginia. At the retreat, with much reflection on the desire to be more inclusive and representative of the Luther Place men's diversity, it was decided to change the name of the group to Men's Fellowship consistent with holding the monthly events in different settings, at different times, to embrace those that really don't want to get up early on a Saturday morning. So, we are holding breakfasts and brunches at 8:30 or 10:30 on Saturdays, in homes or at Luther Place, will hold a Saturday afternoon barbecue, will meet in a bar/pub on a weekday evening for food and brews some months, and we will meet any other time or place that we can accomplish our intended plans.

Each gathering of the Men's Fellowship will continue to include a mix of sharing the highlights and challenges of our lives, sharing of food, and spiritual reflection that may help our personal journeys and our intersection with the journey of Luther Place. And we will continue to assist Luther Place's events and retreat annually in the woods of West Virginia. We announce events on the LP/Men's Fellowship website, e-blasts, Sunday bulletins and Facebook as well as through the Men's Fellowship Google Groups.



SYNOD REPORTS

2017 Synod Assembly

The 2017 Metro DC Synod Assembly was held on June 16-17, 2017 at the National Conference Center in Leesburg, VA. The theme of the assembly was “Freed in Christ, Bound by Love.” The Metro DC Synod is comprised of about 80 congregations in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

Attending the assembly from Luther Place were: Rev. Karen Brau, Jackson Droney, Julie Hamre, Kate Wulff, and Michael Sonnenberg.

The assembly:

- Heard a report on the synod’s New Connections Campaign to connect with 3,000 new members. ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton was present and shared her thoughts on the importance of the campaign.
- Welcomed special guest Dr. Reggie Williams from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. He offered a lecture based on themes from his book Bonhoeffer’s Black Jesus: Harlem Renaissance Theology and an Ethic of Resistance. Dr. Williams had visited Luther Place in 2016 and preached on the themes in his book.
- Received a report by Bishop Graham on the opening of the new United Lutheran Seminary – a consolidation of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.
- Elected new members to the Synod Council. Julie Hamre was elected to be Synod Treasurer and Michael Sonnenberg was elected to be the DC Conference Lay Representative.





BOARD REPORTS

Luther Place has designated seats on two nonprofit organizations it helped found in the 1970s. Currently, three seats on the N Street Village Board and one seat on the Lutheran Volunteer Corps board are reserved for Luther Place members.

N Street Village

Gary Maring

Luther Place continues to be strongly involved in advancing the N Street Village (NSV) mission to be the leading service provider in seeking to end chronic homelessness for single adult women in D.C. This year, two Luther Place representatives served on the Board of NSV; Portia Robertson Migas and myself. We served in various board and committee capacities contributing to this vital mission in the city.

This past year, Luther Place and NSV reached preliminary agreement on long term ownership and stewardship of the N Street land. Luther Place agreed to forgive the \$2 million plus mortgage it held from the original land transfer to NSV in the early 1990s. In exchange, Luther Place was to attach a covenant to the land deed assuring continued social justice use of the property. Luther Place would have a voice in any proposed disposition of property and share in proceeds if it was decided to sell the property. Unfortunately, the agreement was not able to be completed because the tax credit lender objected to attaching a covenant to the property deed. Although Luther Place still supports the proposed agreement there does not seem to be a mutually agreeable solution at this point; further updates will be provided by Council should the situation change.

As NSV heads into the start of FY19 it can look back on major accomplishments. NSV recently announced the \$9 million capital campaign conclusion with half a million over its target fundraising goal. In addition to the capital campaign success, NSV also secured \$5 million in new Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, and long term forgivable loans from the City, all of which together enabled NSV to renovate and reconfigure both Miriam's House and the flagship property on N Street as well as to fund a Strategic Growth Reserve for the future. NSV's emergency shelter in Chinatown, Pat Handy Place serving 211 women, just celebrated its two-year anniversary, and is now providing supportive housing for 40 women at Phyllis Wheatley YWCA at 9th and Rhode Island Ave. This marks NSV's fifth location, providing emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing for homeless and formerly homeless women in D.C.

Although the Luther Place Night Shelter will be closing soon due to changing program needs both at Luther Place and NSV; NSV is reconfiguring its 5th floor for additional transitional housing for women recovering from addiction and mental health challenges and adding an employment training program. Additionally, NSV is finalizing design and funding plan for a new trauma informed transitional recovery program at a potential new location.



NSV will be utilizing funds from the Oprah Winfrey Foundation and possibly a competitive award from The D.C. Community Partnership.

In concert with the city's 5-year strategic plan, Homeward D.C. which seeks to make homelessness a rare and short event, NSV will continue to play a vital role and likely collaborate to provide yet new opportunities to close the transitional and permanent housing gap for single adult women. It has been truly amazing to me to watch the growth and impact of the NSV mission over these last 45 years, from its meager beginning here on the block. Luther Place can be proud of its long history of advocating for and providing housing here on the block and beyond for homeless women in the city.



Lutheran Volunteer Corps

Julie Klein

Purpose

The Lutheran Volunteers Corps (LVC) is a community of faith uniting people to work for peace with justice. LVC pursues this mission by placing Volunteers in full-time service positions at social-justice organizations for one or two years, and through programming around its core values. The LVC Board supports the work of LVC and provides mission-based leadership and strategic governance, using a consensus model of decision making.

Luther Place founded LVC in 1979 and has sustained and nurtured LVC in many ways since. One way Luther Place does this is by adhering to LVC's policy that there must be one to two active Luther Place representatives on the Board. Julie Klein serves as the current Luther Place representative on LVC's Board. As one seat is still open, if you are interested in applying please email Julie at kljulie@umich.edu to let her know.

Goals

- 1) Achieve and maintain long term financial stability by developing a culture that fosters building relationships with our community, generating requests for financial supporters from all parts of our community, and providing excellent stewardship for the gifts received.
- 2) Improve our ability to invite, unite, and sustain our diverse community of stakeholders.
- 3) Continue efforts to create a unified curriculum that meets the organization's goals and attracts Volunteer participation.

Actions

To help LVC achieve and maintain long term financial stability, Julie serves on the Fund Development Committee. The committee's work includes holding Board members accountable for increased fundraising, calling former donors, and helping to promote fundraising events.

To help LVC improve its ability to invite, unite, and sustain its diverse community of stakeholders, Julie currently chairs the Board's Journey to an Inclusive Community (JIC) Committee. This committee helps guide LVC's ongoing process of confronting racism and oppression through intentional and often uncomfortable personal and institutional transformation. Committee work this year has largely focused on re-instating a Board anti-racism training policy.

LVC's work to create a unified curriculum that meets the organization's goals and attracts Volunteer participation is primarily the responsibility of staff. Strong leadership is important for creating a vision for the organization and unified curriculum. Julie currently serve on the Board's Presidential Search Committee, which is currently in the process of interviewing candidates for LVC's President/Executive Director position following the departure of Sam Collins earlier this year. Tait Danielson Castillo currently serves as Interim President.



Applications continue to be accepted and Luther Place members can help spread the word about this open position (listed at <http://lutheranvolunteercorps.org/careers/>).

Next steps

LVC has work to do to increase its Volunteer base, which is critical to the organization's long term financial stability. LVC will need to continue to consider how to best address the trend toward lower numbers of volunteers in LVC and similar service organizations. Round 1 matching results for the upcoming year were strong. However, Round 2 results currently look quite low and are a point of concern. This is at least in part due to closing the West Coast this year. Closing the West Coast was a difficult decision but those involved in making it believe this will allow LVC to focus on building stronger community in the cities it operates in. Rolling Round 3 is currently open, for which applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until positions are filled. Luther Place members can help by spreading the word about LVC to those who may be interested in applying (see <https://lvc.hiretouch.com/apply> for more information).

The JIC Committee has work to do around articulating LVC's Journey to an Inclusive Community and re-committing Board members to anti-racism work. Volunteers now complete an anti-racism training during their Orientation, but Board members have not had such training in 3+ years. Julie is working with the Board Chair to arrange an anti-racism training for the full Board during the next in-person meeting in August.

Ideally, the Board will hire a new President/Executive Director in time to help plan and attend this August's Volunteer Orientation in Chicago.



VISION UPDATE

Background

A Vision Coalition was started in 2010 to listen to the congregation in a variety of formats to develop the Luther Place Vision for 2017 and the goals leading up to the manifestation of that vision. Goals were set under each vision pillar, divided into short-term (1-2 years) and long term (3-5 years) goals.

Vision Statement

In 2017, Luther Place will be a community that looks and feels like God's kingdom in its beautiful expansiveness, where all are called into relationship with Jesus Christ and one another. In this place we will use our gifts to act in the world and build the beloved community.

As we moved into 2018, we evaluate ourselves on reaching the longer-term goals we have set in each area.

Worship attracts and gathers a range of people with various services and styles, engaging the community in a depth of traditional practices and creative endeavors.

1. Experiment with worship times and modes other than Sunday morning.
See Worship Report for details on this
2. 300 worshipping weekly.
Target not met. Attendance ranging from 145-225. We welcomed 325 people on Easter.
3. Develop additional choirs, including for children.
Target not met. Aspirational goal with new musician.

Spiritual Growth is how we are formed as disciples of Jesus Christ, embracing scripture and all opportunities to engage the divine, and nurturing us to contemplate, study, and question our faith.

1. Outreach to immediate community to connect 5-10 new families with children's education opportunities.
Effective with 2-3 neighborhood families in connecting with the congregation. Operationalizing this specific goal in this year's iteration of summer day camp ministry.
2. Over half of congregation engaged in spiritual growth activity monthly.
Target not met. Effective in a more robust gathering, Sundays at 9:15am.
3. Initiate an adult discipleship process — for new Christians as well as maturing disciples.
Using the Epiphany and Lent season for the Adult Contemplative Catechumenate, offering a Baptism or the Affirmation of Baptism at the Easter Vigil. Experimenting with a lay led



teaching on contemplative leadership this Easter Season and early Pentecost, and planning for a fall/Pentecost season implementation of teaching beginning contemplative practices.

Justice is a public witness to our faith; we will continue our history of openness to what arrives, standing in solidarity and acting with people who are struggling, in our community, country, and world.

1. Add one new opportunity for international social justice ministry.

Our work with the immigrant community this year — implemented after a listening campaign to hear what people needed at this point in time. See Steinbruck Center report.

2. Create a strategy to grapple with being a congregation with a priority for the poor that exists in a gentrifying neighborhood.

The work is in full swing on an Incubator of Co-ops and the first coop is in its building stages. See the Steinbruck Center report.

Hospitality is how we – each of us – extend God’s kingdom to a dynamic and diverse city, growing our community and engaging all of God’s children, from the powerless to the powerful.

1. Expand hospitality beyond coffee house and greeters.

Worship now includes a more extensive sharing of the peace, and follow up with guests is effectively happening through FellowshipOne.

2. Every ministry group is examined for its practice of hospitality

Focus on the coffee house, see report in Ministry Briefs section.

3. Scores welcomed and 30-40 join each year.

We welcomed many, many guests into worship. Since last year, and with a new group yet this spring, we are closer to 30.

Community Care is how we sustain a vibrant community, our intentional practice of supporting and nurturing one another in all stages of life, in celebration and sorrow.

1. Maintain Stephen and Martha Ministries with 5-10 people trained to be new participants each year.

Target not met. See Community Care report and Stephen Ministry report in Ministry Briefs section.

2. 2/3 of congregation is connected in a small group.

By including affinity groups like Men’s Fellowship, 20-30’s ministry, Gen X plus, Embrace!, and the Elders Brunch, we are approaching 1/2 of the adults of the congregation.



VITAL STATISTICS

2017-2018 New Members

Kyra Reuman-Moore
Tanay Tatum-Edwards
Travis Edwards
Dorothy Moga
Christina Andeweg
Edward Lefler
Genevieve Dorneman
Valdis Lens
Sarah Bagge
Rick Grimm
Emma Northcott
John Groth
Marcia Good
Catherine Hinshaw
Donna Mank
Matt Olin
Sheena Foster
Elizabeth Clapp
Rose Shaw
Rachel Carle
Collin Bradley
Jacob Nordman

Baptisms since June 2016

Nathaniel Ballard-Means
Weston John Christensen Groth
Felix Kasten
Asher Desliva
Alise Lenss

Youth Confirmands

Annika Miller
Nate Cooper
Skyler Gately
Stephan Gately
Christina Eayers

Members who passed away

None

Attendance

Over the past year, average attendance is 160 at the 10:30 AM service and 20 at the 5:00 PM service.





APPENDIX I: RACIAL EQUITY AT LUTHER PLACE

Background

Racial equity is a value of the congregation because it is a manifestation of the love and justice called for by Jesus Christ. This biblically-rooted value bears particular importance at Luther Place because of its context in a racially diverse and changing neighborhood and because of its longstanding commitment to prophetic social justice actions and ministries.

The Power of Love and Justice

“Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love.”

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“Justice is what love looks like in public.”

- Dr. Cornell West

Definitions:

Equity: Fair treatment, opportunities and outcomes across race, gender, class and other dynamics. Equity moves us from shame/blame/guilt/grievance to causes, effects, systems, and solutions.

Inclusion: Authentic and empowered participation, more than mere representation (diversity). It is full access, acceptance, rights and opportunities.

Unity: Building authentic relationships; acknowledging and accounting for differences, privilege as well as similarities; connecting mutual interests; generating shared power.

Unity without equity is superficial and fragile; when we are inclusive and united, we are more powerful, and power is needed for justice.

Equity + Inclusion = Unity

Racial Justice: Justice is NOT Diversity (variety). Justice is NOT Equality (sameness).
Justice IS Equity (fairness).

Therefore, **racial justice (equity) is the systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all.** Understood in the context of worship, racial equity refers to systematic processes and relational interactions that create equitable opportunities for participation and generate shared power over worship-related decisions, and yield intentional equitable racial outcomes (attendance, musical variation, leadership, and outreach).



APPENDIX II: AFFIRMATION OF WELCOME STATEMENT

As updated by the Congregation on December 3, 2017

ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation hereby certifies that

Luther Place Memorial Church
Washington, DC

has adopted an affirmation of welcome to persons of all
sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions and is recognized as

Reconciling In Christ

on the 17th day of October in the year 2000.



APPENDIX III: GUIDELINES FOR TEAM INVITATIONS

As affirmed by Council in August 2017

Purpose: The way members of the congregation are invited to participate in committees and teams demonstrates the congregation's values of inclusion, equity, creativity, and accountability. Disclosing how invitations are extended and through what criteria they are considered builds trust in the legitimacy of organizational decision-making.

Invitation Process: Council-sanctioned teams and committees operate on a July-June calendar. Unless otherwise established in the congregation's bylaws, such teams should provide the opportunity at the close of each operating year for members to decide whether to continue on the team for another year. At the start of the new year, continuing team members shall determine the number of invitations they would like to extend and consider the criteria below. Teams and committees operating independent from Council are not bound to the timeline prescribed in these guidelines, but should establish their own annual invitation cycle using the same criteria.

Invitation Criteria:

- To ensure variety of experience, skill, and viewpoints – as well as practical limitations – Council recommends that each team and committee have between 7 and 12 members.
- An honest baseline understanding of the time commitment necessary for team membership should be articulated as invitations are extended to potential team members. Council recommends that all teams meet each month and that each team member takes on a particular role/responsibility to carry out between meetings.
- When considering who to invite, teams should take into account the current makeup of the team and the following characteristics of potential new members: skills related to the team's function, diversity across multiple demographic categories and viewpoints, demonstrated reliability and availability, expressed desire to work collaboratively, and spiritual maturity.

Role of Council: Once invitations are extended and accepted, they should be reported to the Council at the next meeting. Changes to team rosters should be recorded in Council's meeting minutes. In rare and extraordinary cases, Council may rescind an invitation or suspend/remove a team member from a team or committee.



APPENDIX IV: DECISION-MAKING GUIDELINES

As affirmed by Council in April 2018

This guide is intended to bring clarity to who decides certain congregational matters. The constitution and bylaws are provided on the congregation's website for more information.

Decisions are categorized in a hierarchy based on the substance of the matter in question. Decisions can always be voluntarily brought up one level. Conversely, lower-level decisions can be overturned or overruled by a higher-level authority. Lower-level decisions cannot conflict with existing higher-level decisions or policies. Determining whether such a conflict may occur requires consultation of multiple parties. Again, certain decisions may be ambiguously identified, and therefore greater consultation among and between decision-makers at various levels is advised.

Prime Decisions – decisions that explicitly require the consent of the congregation and/or council according to the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the congregation. In most cases, the congregation retains the power to overrule decisions of the Council.

Examples

- Budget
- Major Expenses
- Hiring/Firing of permanent staff
- Sale of Land
- Election of Council Members
- Vision Statement
- Amendments to Constitution and Bylaws

Second-level Decisions – decisions that affect the whole congregation and/or have long-term implications on congregational life, and therefore are brought to Council. Often the staff or other ministries bring an issue to council seeking its blessing/affirmation/consent. In other cases, the council may request an affected party bring a matter to its attention for consideration.

Examples

- Property Committee's long-term project plan (which is reviewed annually)
- Building Vision 2017 (whose plans/progress are reviewed annually)
- Updating the congregation's affirmation of welcome statement
- Transitioning the Steinbruck Center to the fourth floor
- Sunday Worship service consolidation
- Children and Youth in Community Policy
- Implementation of FellowshipOne
- Chartering teams and committees, and other long-term volunteers in specific roles



- Major personnel policy changes
- Neighborhood Incubator Co-op Project

Second-level Staff Decisions – at times the staff may make decisions that reflect long-held values of the congregation that may have institutional implications and that require immediate action. Such decisions are usually discussed with the Executive Committee.

Examples

- Housing of DACA recipients to protest
- Authorization of translation and/or interpretation for specific events

Second-level Executive Committee Decisions – at times the Executive Committee makes decisions that relate to the prioritization and pacing of broader second-level decisions. In almost all cases, such decisions are subject to review by the full council.

Third-level Decisions – decisions that affect the work of a particular team, committee or ministry, and therefore do not require council-approval. These are typically decisions that teams make in order to carry out their purpose. These decisions are reported as “actions” in monthly reports to council and/or in the annual report. Such decisions can be reviewed by the full council.

Examples

- Stewardship Plan
- Membership Plan
- Staff Performance Review Structure
- Hiring Process
- Men’s Fellowship Reorganization
- 20s/30s Reorganization
- Embrace! Reorganization

Third-level Staff Decisions – decisions by the staff that relate to how they discharge their duties, and that do not overrule second-level or prime decisions.

- Office Administration
- Property Maintenance
- Program Administration

Third-level Executive Committee Decisions – decisions by the Executive Committee involving discrete and sometimes sensitive situations in congregational life. Such decisions are usually made in consultation with the Senior Pastor, other appropriate staff member(s), and/or other appropriate leaders in the congregation.

Examples

- Issues regarding specific members and their relationship with the institution



- Issues regarding institutional integrity and risks
- Supporting staff, teams, ministries, and committees in processing decisions

Individual Member Decisions – how individual members choose to involve themselves and participate in congregational life. There have been questions at times about what members are “allowed to decide” in terms of initiating a new group or other type of church activity. To be clear, individual members have a great deal of discretion in making decisions about how to associate with other members of the congregation, qualified with the understanding that the purpose of such new groups or associations does not conflict with other existing formal groups and that such associations are not discriminatory, conflict with Christian teaching and/or values of the congregation.

Examples

- One-off events
- Short-term groups
- Long-term groups



APPENDIX V: OBJECTIVES FOR TASK FORCE ON DEFICIT REDUCTION AND LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

As affirmed by Council in May 2018

The Task for on Deficit Reduction Charter and Objectives:

- The Council shall constitute a task force composed of members of the Finance, Personnel, Property, Stewardship, and Long Range Planning Committees, as well as other individuals in the congregation with relevant experience and technical expertise.
- The Task Force shall propose to the Council by Jan. 1, 2019 a plan to eliminate the congregation's operating deficit within five years. In fulfilling this mission, the task force shall examine:
 - Existing capital needs and planned building improvements;
 - Bequest balances and other existing reserve funds;
 - All sources of income to the congregation including offering, tenant rents, space use fee schedules, investments, and grants;
 - Market rates for tenant rents and space use fees;
 - The staffing and compensation structure of the congregation's employees; and
 - All expenses of the congregation not otherwise referred to above.
- In reviewing the income and expenses of the congregation, the Task Force shall consider anticipated changes in the congregation's operations, including:
 - Revenue projections from the Steinbruck Center, and
 - Proposals from the Long Range Planning team on revenue-generating building renovations.
- The Task Force will be open to anyone in the congregation with ideas for achieving financial sustainability.

The Long Range Planning Committee Objectives:

- The Council shall constitute a Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) to succeed Building Vision 2017. The leader(s) of the LRPC shall serve on the Task Force on Deficit Reduction (TFDR).
- The LRPC is commissioned to review the work of BV17 and to make building renovation recommendations to the Task Force with financial sustainability as an



overriding value. The final report of the LRPC shall be presented to the Task Force and Council by Nov. 1, 2019.

- In completing its mission, The LRPC shall
 - examine all the existing ways LPMC currently uses its building and its other property assets to generate revenue;
 - examine proposals by BV17 and other proposals on ways to renovate the building to maximize income; and
 - compare such proposals to ideas for using the existing facility to maximize income.
- Upon completing a thorough review of these options, and considering the work of the Task Force, the LRPC shall propose no more than three building renovation proposals to the Task Force and Council in its final report. The LRPC may elect to endorse one or more of these proposals.
- The proposals by the LRPC shall include cost estimates for the proposed renovations, expected revenue as a result of the renovations, and associated timelines. The recommendations shall also describe how the renovations relate to the discerned vision of the building by BV17. Further, they shall describe what trade-offs and/or changes to Luther Place's congregational life may result or be necessary due to changes in the building's configuration – both during and after the renovations.
- The LRPC may consider facilitating the grant application process for available grants, including from the Partnership for Sacred Spaces.
- The LRPC shall complete other duties as assigned by the Council.