

Complex world. Thoughtful church.



Clockwise from top left: Custodial Closet will be expanded to add another ADA bathroom to the lounge area. An old dormant heater will be turned into a small custodial closet with mop sink. The sanctuary painting project is underway. Moving a wall in the library will provide more space for the kitchenette expansion. Example of the sanctuary wall before the painting had begun. The lounge will also be getting a facelift with updated furnishings and other updates. The kitchenette will receive new cupboards, appliances and several much needed addition feet allowing more than 1 person at a time! Coffee service will move into the lounge for easy access also freeing up needed counterspace.

All The Time

There is a call and response liturgy that goes like this:

God is good! **All the time!**

All the time! **God is good!**

I love the way this litany does double duty: it both names our experience of daily life, and, strangely, helps shape our understanding of it *at the same time*. Phrases like these are simultaneously confession (naming truth about how our days are lived) and creed (claiming Truth about where our lives are centered).

As we begin the interim season together, I'd like to take a few weeks to think about the different kind of time this is. Hope is an amazing community. I am in awe of the variety of people, ministries, conversations, and dreams that inhabit this congregation. The work of searching for your next called pastor will be happening alongside a mountain of wonderful projects, programs, and passions.

Before we dive headlong into the fall schedule, let's spend August exploring "**All the Time**" that is part of an interim season, and how these different times will both shape and define us. Join me for a four-week sermon series about God's goodness across all these different kinds of time:

August 4	All the Time: Covenant Time
August 11	All the Time: Shadow Time
August 18	All the Time: Joining God Time
August 25	All the Time: Homecoming Time

Watch the Thursday Epistle for an introduction to each theme, and join us for worship in person or online as we explore God's goodness in, around, and throughout this interim time.

In Hope and with hope, Interim Pastor Susan

Worship and Music

Outdoor worship setup volunteers needed. We are hoping to have outdoor worship approximately once a month this summer, but to do this we really need more volunteers to help us setup beforehand. Please email Pastor Susan if you're available to help out. Our volunteer list for this task is very small and we could really use more people to share the load.

Soloists and ensembles for worship are welcome! If you play an instrument or sing and would like to offer a piece of music in worship, please let either Pastor Susan or Pastor Maria know! Our congregation has many musicians of all ages, and all are welcome to share their gifts. All are welcome, anytime.

Sanctuary Piano Update: On June 5th, the Steinway in our sanctuary was moved out to be rebuilt, and we are thankful to Unity Minneapolis for letting us borrow their Baldwin grand piano as they renovate their space. Our Steinway will be out for a year being rebuilt, and will return better than ever! This project is being financed by your generous donations to our current capital campaign, Opening Doors 2. Work has already begun on rebuilding our piano!

Thank you for 2.5 years!

I'm grateful for my time and experience at ULCH creating music in worship together, and I wish this wonderful community well as I depart. Thanks for having me!

Robert S. Ragoonanan, Minister of Worship & Music

Wild Church Gathering



This month, we will have a *Wild Church experience in our own gardens!* Our garden crew at Hope has worked hard to create and maintain these gardens over the years, so let's enjoy them! Join others for a time of connection and relationship

building with creation and with one another after outdoor worship on August 11th. People of all ages are welcome to stay. This will be a truncated experience including the wandering time and a time of reflection afterward as we will have just finished worship. Come with an open heart and an open mind, ready to be moved. Contact Pr. Maria (mariaa@ulch.org) with questions.

Hope Diamonds

Our most senior members will gather for a simple lunch and fellowship on August 14th from 12:30-2 p.m. Notice the change in date due to Pastor Maria being present for the Building Beloved Community Day Camp the third week in August. All are welcome! We'd love to see you!

Amnicon Congregational Camp

University Lutheran Church of Hope and First Congregational Church UCC are again planning for a weekend at Camp Amnicon. The dates are August 16-18, 2024. Amnicon (<https://amnicon.org/>) is on the south shore of Lake Superior (about 20 minutes outside of Duluth). The Amnicon River also runs through the camp. They have great hiking, canoes to borrow, and a fabulous beach for hanging out, swimming, and campfires. Meals will be provided by the camp under their outdoor pavilion. The lodging will be a choice between platform tents (permanent tents with beds - you bring your own sleeping bag) or bringing your own camping gear and camping there. Curious? Talk with Pastor Maria!

Building Beloved Community Day Camp

August 19-23rd from 9-4 p.m. at Diamond Lake Lutheran Church - Children entering Kindergarten through Middle School are invited to participate in singing, playing, and learning together. There is programming for elementary aged kids and middle school aged kids.

In order to make sure our Building Beloved Community Day Camp goes off without a hitch, we need adult volunteers and high school leaders! If you're an adult who can volunteer some or part of some days during the week of day camp, we will find a role for you. We also need high schoolers who can be present all week to help shepherd students.

You can find more information to volunteer and registration pages for all ages online: <https://www.smplsdaycamp.org/> or contact Pastor Maria (mariaa@ulch.org).

Save these Summer Dates

- Amnicon week for 9-13 year olds, August 5-9.
- Amnicon Retreat for all ages, August 16-18.
- Building the Beloved Community ecumenical day camp, August 19-23, 2024.
- God's Work, Our Hands Sunday, September 8th.
- First Day of Sunday School & Neighborhood Hope Party with Pizza and Circulation Day Event (see article), September 15th.

Children's Ministry 2024-2025 Overview

This year in Children's Ministry we will have opportunities for three different age groups to build relationships and deepen their faith at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings: starting September 15th.

Birth-3: Join with other families with young children in the nursery for a time to play and connect. This is a casual gathering. A story and snack will be shared and there will be lots of free-play time.

Pre-K - Grade 1: This group will meet to learn Bible stories, explore nature, and build relationships in a small group environment. A snack will also be shared.

Grades 2-6: This group will meet to connect Bible stories and faith practices together, beginning to think about how we connect our faith to the rest of our lives.

Parents will be receiving an email and information about the upcoming year with more details from Pastor Maria in August. If you are not already receiving emails, contact Pr. Maria to get on the list. You can also contact Pr. Maria with any questions.

Pr. Maria - mariaa@ulch.org

Hope Birthdays

Let's celebrate! The birthday list below is of Hope's members who are 80 years and older, in addition to some who may be homebound, living in assisted living or a care center. Their contact information is in the ULCH directory. A phone call, card, or note from folks in our community is always appreciated!

August Birthdays

August 1st – Greg Peterson	August 7 th – Betty Quie
August 9th – Nancy Swanson	August 13 th – Diane Kepner
August 15th – Roger Anderson	August 15 th – Pam McGowan
August 20th – LeRoy Erickson	August 24 th – Bob Paschke - 80!
August 29th – Dave Ranheim	

September Birthdays

September 4 th – Donna Perry
September 10 th – Miriam Hougen
September 11 th – Winnie Nyhus
September 22 nd – Jim Hougen
September 28 th – Rob Lindesmith

Children's Ministry – A Plea

For those who don't know me, I am Linnea Becerra. I got married here in the Hope courtyard on April 3, 2021 to my husband Cesar Becerra. The next year we welcomed our first daughter, Mira Becerra, to the world and a year and a half later welcomed our second daughter, Lucella Becerra. Both of our daughters were baptized here at Hope and now spend every Sunday running around the sanctuary, splashing in the baptismal font, eagerly partaking in communion, coloring and playing in the children's area and singing along with the choir. I have loved every minute of watching my daughters grow at Hope.

I could write an essay on what Hope means to me, my husband and daughters, my parents who married and grew a family here, and my grandparents who met here in the Hope choir. I will not do that though and will get straight to the point.

The children's ministry team needs help.

I want nothing more than to carry on the tradition of raising my kids here at Hope but to put it bluntly- I will not continue if I must do it alone. In the last few years the children's ministry team had long time members step down and those shoes have not been filled. Our current team is made up of four members, all of whom have kids in children and youth programming.

I grew up with Sunday school teachers who I loved- Don, I'm looking at you! It was a gift for me to get to know other adults in the congregation. I have felt your support throughout my entire life. I want this for my kids and all the kids who worship here. **Please, We Need Help!**

1 full time, lead teacher, Every Sunday. We will provide the lessons and resources.

5 support volunteers. You will be on a rotation and will be the second adult in the room.

Pr. Maria - mariaa@ulch.org

Reimagining the University Lutheran Church of Hope Women's Retreat

Save the date: Friday Evening - Saturday Night, January 24-25, 2025

The retreat will be held at one of our favorite places to explore and build community ULCH! Please read on about significant changes for next year.

Review: After the wonderful January 2024 Women's Retreat, the hope was that there would be a way to continue, in spite of the cost challenges for participants and general retreat funding. The reality, after looking at the final costs, is that with deficits for two years in a row, we cannot continue without some significant changes.

Discernment - What's Next? We explored the possibility of sharing the retreat center space with another group in order to bring down costs. This year's participants were supportive of this option. After reaching out to four churches, though appreciative of being contacted, none of them could make a commitment. That meant needing to pivot and shift our thinking. What could a retreat for 2025 look like if not held at Dunrovin Retreat Center?

Ann and Beáta met with pastors Jen and Maria and discussed ways to **Reimagine** the retreat. While the "getaway" factor of a retreat center is desirable, we know that for many, the rising cost has become a challenge. Available scholarship money cannot support making up the difference, as more and more financial assistance has been requested. From feedback we've received, we know that other roadblocks to attending include: time commitment, distance, physical limitations and sleep challenges.

A Solution: We are thinking positively about **Reimagining** a retreat held on our home turf at ULCH, with some twists, yet to be determined. The key pluses in having an "in house" retreat are:

- Community building
- Minimal cost
- Flexibility and accessibility for a wider range of people

Saturday morning will still be focused on a spiritual theme. The afternoon and evening might include time for additional theme-related discussions, quiet reflection, massages, crafting and dinner. There is an endless list of possibilities!

Friday Night Option - If Friday night is included, it will be purely a community builder with no set agenda. Time for dinner, fun, games, marshmallow roasting, or a movie. Participants can return home for a good night's sleep!

Planning Ahead - If you are interested in helping us plan for this new format, we'd love to hear from you! We will be reaching out again in the Fall, but please let us know at any time if you have ideas or would like to be part of the "**Reimagining**" planning.

Questions? Ann Beane spirit.beane@gmail.com or Beáta Rydeen beatarydeen@comcast.net

ACTION Project 2024-2025

ULCH will continue to participate with two cohorts in the ACTION Project this coming year. If you've participated in the first year, you are invited to register for the second year. If you have participated in the second year, you are invited to register for a third year focused on embodied anti-racism practice. The registration deadline is September 1st and the fee for participants is \$300. Look for more detailed information in upcoming Thursday Epistle newsletters. Contact Pr. Maria (mariaa@ulch.org) with questions and to register.

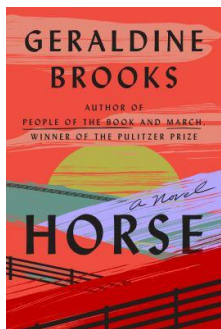
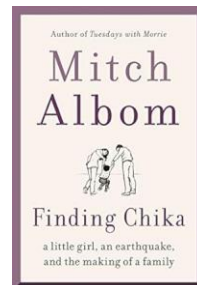
Bible and Brews

Exactly what it sounds like: bring your Bible, your favorite brewed beverage, and a penchant for laid-back but totally engaging conversations about faith, scripture, and current events. We meet the 4th Monday of each month from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. We will meet at Lake Monster Brewing in Saint Paul, August 26th.

Hope Book Club

Sunday, August 11, 2024, 7 p.m. in the ULCH Courtyard

August 11: *Finding Chika: A Little Girl, an Earthquake, and the Making of a Family*, by Mitch Albom. “Mitch Albom’s most personal story to an intimate and heartwarming memoir about what it means to be a family and the young Haitian orphan whose short life would forever change his heart.” Goodreads.com



Sept. 8, starting at 6 p.m. discussion and potluck at Silverwood Park: Horse, by Geraldine Brooks. Pulitzer Prize winner.

“Based on the remarkable true story of the record-breaking thoroughbred Lexington, Horse is a novel of art and science, love and obsession, and our unfinished reckoning with racism.” www.goodreads.com

“A book is a dream that you hold in your hand.” Neil Gaiman “

Please contact Sonja Peterson at speterson@dunnwald.com or 612-242-8711 with book suggestions.

Thanks! Sonja

CIRCULATION DAY EVENT

Do you have items that are in great condition that you no longer use? It's time to get them back into circulation! **Circulation Day** is an idea groups are trying that keep items out of landfills and get them to anyone who can use them. This year at the Neighborhood Hope Party on September 15th, our congregation will be giving it a try!

How does it work? Starting about a week before, you can bring items to the church where we'll hold them. After the service, all items will be set out on tables in the parking lot and be available for the taking. Leftover items will be brought to charitable thrift shops. Start gathering stuff now!

What can we bring? We're giving this idea a try by starting out relatively small. We will be collecting household items (kitchen, decor, small appliances, etc.), arts or crafts materials, tools, garden supplies, and office supplies.

What CAN'T we bring? Pretty much anything not listed above, especially no clothing, furniture, books, and any particularly large items. We want to be able to easily transport leftovers after the event. Also, be sure items are clean, in good repair, and not missing any parts.

Who can take items? ANYONE! If you see something you want or need, just take it and get it back into circulation. Don't be shy about grabbing something you can use. If you see something that you think a family member or friend would like, feel free to take it for them as well. We'll be advertising the event through Lutheran Campus Ministry and around the Dinkytown neighborhood, but if you know anyone else who'd like to take a look around, invite them to stop by.

Are there ways that we can help other than donating items? Since Circulation Day is not a fundraiser, there is no need for pricing items, collecting money, or safeguarding against theft since everything is free! We will, however, need some help putting out the items, keeping things organized, and bringing leftover items to various thrift stores afterwards. If you have further questions or would like to help out, please contact Nan Knutsen at jnkc@comcast.net.

President's Report: In the Season of Deep Listening

The Donation Discernment journey is transitioning into implementation! The initial projects are grounded in our Affirmation of Welcome, "University of Lutheran Church of Hope, believing that the gospel is God's gift to all people, seeks to be a welcoming community.... To the stranger we offer hospitality. To all, we extend a most heartfelt welcome and wish them continued peace in the Lord."

The Board heard loud and clear the wish to remodel the kitchenette and its adjacent hospitality spaces, approving projects which will be funded by a generous contribution from the donation and a portion of capital campaign funds. The Hospitality Spaces Exploration Group has envisioned the creation of "a functional, user friendly, energy efficient, visually appealing kitchenette that can better support our hospitality ministry to the congregation, visitors, students, other neighbors, and the larger community". The remodeling project will add four feet of counter space and 7.5 square feet of floor space, by reconfiguring the kitchenette's common wall with the library. New cabinetry will be installed in the library. Plans include installation of an electric radiant cooktop (replacing the gas range), a microwave, new refrigerator/freezer, new cabinets and countertop, a larger sink, and a new dishwasher. As I write this, I am imagining your big smile and enthusiastic "yes"!

A second, all-gender, ADA-compliant bathroom will be created to serve the heavily used, Eastside of the building. A custodial closet addition, also on the Eastside of the building, will provide a sink and cleaning supply storage. Work will begin in early September, continuing into October and November. There will be disruption and dislocation, and **this is where you come in** – volunteers will be needed to empty and transport the contents of the kitchenette and library to their temporary, relocation sites.

Refurnishing the lounge and Eastside hallway will provide comfortable and durable seating and ease in adjusting furniture to accommodate differing groups and activities, in an aesthetically cohesive, harmonious, inviting space. The lounge and hallway can continue to be used during the kitchenette remodeling.

These enhanced hospitality spaces will accommodate new programming planned by the Wellness Exploration Group, for the "people who live, work, and worship in our neighborhood [to] experience community, safety, healing, and support for their whole wellbeing" and the events envisioned by the Themed Programming Exploration Group, to be jointly developed by Hope ministry groups and community organizations.

Why are we doing all of this? Diana Butler Bass, author of *Christianity for the Rest of Us*, claims hospitality "...is a central practice of the Christian faith. Christians welcome [all] as we ourselves have been welcomed into God through the love of Jesus Christ. Through hospitality, Christians imitate God's welcome."

Congregational President, Linda Herman

Life Events

We're a community called to hold one another in prayer in every season—in our deepest need and grief, and in our experiences of new life. Here are a few of the life events affecting our community. We need your help to know for what we can pray. Please alert a pastor or contact the church office. We include in prayer...

Welcoming children and Baptisms—We pray for all who await and welcome children through joyful and challenging times. We celebrate with Ann and John Beane at the birth of their grandson Milo Beane Hamlin.

Marriages—We pray for all those preparing for marriage, and for all relationships of commitment, including Julia Reiman and Mary Perez who will be married on August 31st, 2024.

Deaths—We pray for God's strong embrace for all who grieve deaths and losses, those that are recent and those that were many years ago and whose memories fill us. We pray with the family of Tom Magnon whose memorial service will take place on August 7th here at Hope.

Significant Illness—We pray for those living with illness, cancer, recovery, uncertain diagnosis, hospice, chemical dependency and other addictions, and mental health struggles, including Zoe Odenbach, Patrick Colombe, Miriam Hougen, and Chuck Lewis. We also pray for caregivers.

Separation, divorce, retirement, moves, graduations, new beginnings, and the civil rights movements of this time.

Treasurer's Report

	<u>June Actual</u>	<u>June Budget</u>	<u>June Variance</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>YTD Variance</u>
General Giving	43,225	45,416	(2,191)	258,989	252,919	6,070
Rental Income	17,256	11,796	5,461	87,437	67,353	20,084
Interest	1,535	1,416	119	7,825	8,491	(666)
Total Income	62,017	58,628	3,389	354,251	328,763	25,488
Salary & Benefits	36,142	34,737	1,405	224,945	222,457	2,488
Total Expenses	52,040	55,381	(3,341)	359,208	360,904	(1,696)
Net Oper Income	9,977	3,247	6,730	(4,957)	(32,141)	27,184

Last month I reported that our General Giving was below by \$14.6K. With Nathan's assistance I was able to determine that there were no significant changes to pledges nor had any pledges been cancelled. While the amount was under budget by \$14K, the amount received was actual \$200 less than the average giving for the previous 4 months.

This month our General Giving is inline with our budgeted amount and is still inline with the previous month's averages.

In summary - our General Giving is still strong, our rental income is even stronger. Currently our Total Income is better than budget by \$25.5K.

Salary & Benefits is slightly over budget due to an overlap between Pastor Jen and Pastor Susan. I'm expecting to see July's Salary & Benefits also be slightly over budget due to same overlap. Due to timing, our Total Expenses are over budget YTD by \$3.3K. We have already paid for items that are budgeted in 2024 but for later in year. This is a normal occurrence. I'm still expecting July's expenses to be over budget due to an overlap between Pastor Jen and Pastor Susan and additional expenses for Pastor Jen's Going Away Party. However due to the generosity of everyone we will be able to absorb these additional expenses.

Our Building Fund has a value as of \$214K as of 6.30.2024. Our new front doors should be installed by the end of the summer. We have paid 50% of the expense of these doors. When the other invoice is paid it will be from this fund. This fund is also used to help pay our mortgage. Each month \$6.9K is transferred to our general fund to help pay for the mortgage.

Thank you for your continued support of ULCH. If you have any questions please reach out.

Ruth Hedman, Treasurer

Gather Young Adult Ministry

Gather is a ministry for young adults in the Twin Cities; a place for those who are hungry for community and connection with other young adults in the metro area. Setting the table for connection and rest through worship, meals, and monthly events. A place for you to deepen in faith as you discover your identity, uncover your vocation and develop as leaders who do justice in the world. Gather is LGBTQI+ affirming and eagerly invites siblings of any sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression into full leadership and participation. Follow our Facebook and Instagram pages for more information @gathertwincities



August Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 4:30pm - 6:00pm Compassion Care 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 6:30pm - 7:30pm Pickup Basketball - Contact Scott Hvizdos	2 Office Hours 9am-2pm	3
4 10:00am - 11:00am Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube	5 Amnicon Summer Adventure (9-12 year olds) Office Hours 9am-2pm 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters 10:00am - 12:00pm Pizza Bake Prep 6:00pm - 8:00pm Parents of PEASE support group	6 Amnicon Summer Adventure (9-12 year olds) Office Hours 9am-2pm 8:00am - 12:00pm Pizza Bake Prep 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Prog. 6:30pm - 7:15pm Personnel Committee 7:15pm - 8:30pm Executive Committee	7 Amnicon Summer Adventure (9-12 year olds) Office Hours 9am-2pm 8:00am - 8:40am Centering Prayer on Zoom 11:00am - 1:00pm Memorial Service for Tom Magnon	8 Amnicon Summer Adventure (9-12 year olds) Office Hours 9am-2pm 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 6:30pm - 7:30pm Pickup Basketball - Contact Scott Hvizdos	9 Amnicon Summer Adventure (9-12 year olds) Office Hours 9am-2pm 12:00pm - 1:00pm Election Equipment Drop off 7:00pm - 10:00pm Craft Group	10
11 10:00am - 11:00am Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube 11:15am - 12:15pm Wild Hope Gathering (Wild Church)	12 Office Hours 9am-2pm PEASE office staff return 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters	13 Office Hours 9am-2pm 7:00am - 8:00pm State Primary Election 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Prog.	14 Election Equipment Pick-Up Office Hours 9am-2pm 8:00am - 8:40am Centering Prayer on Zoom 12:30pm - 2:00pm Hope Diamonds 6:00pm - 8:00pm Facilities Team	15 Office Hours 9am-2pm The Visitor Articles Due 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 6:30pm - 7:30pm Pickup Basketball - Contact Scott Hvizdos	16 Amnicon Retreat Weekend (camping or cabins) Office Hours 9am-2pm	17 Amnicon Retreat Weekend (camping or cabins)
18 Amnicon Retreat Weekend (camping or cabins) 10:00am - 11:00am Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube	19 Office Hours 9am-2pm PEASE Teachers return 9:00am - 4:00pm Building Beloved Community Shared Day Camp at Diamond Lake Lutheran Church 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters	20 Office Hours 9am-2pm 9:00am - 4:00pm Building Beloved Community Shared Day Camp at Diamond Lake Lutheran Church 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 4:00pm - 5:30pm Sanctuary Coalition Meeting in Person 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Prog. 6:30pm - 8:00pm Vision & Governance Board	21 Office Hours 9am-2pm 8:00am - 8:40am Centering Prayer on Zoom 9:00am - 4:00pm Building Beloved Community Shared Day Camp at Diamond Lake Lutheran Church	22 Office Hours 9am-2pm 9:00am - 4:00pm Building Beloved Community Shared Day Camp at Diamond Lake Lutheran Church 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 6:30pm - 7:30pm Pickup Basketball - Contact Scott Hvizdos	23 Office Hours 9am-2pm 9:00am - 4:00pm Building Beloved Community Shared Day Camp at Diamond Lake Lutheran Church	24 10:00am - 12:00pm Oblates group - Chapel and Lounge
25 10:00am - 11:00am Outdoor Worship w/ Zoom/YouTube 11:30am - 1:30pm Joint WPT/RJT Meeting	26 Office Hours 9am-2pm 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters 6:30pm - 8:00pm Bible & Brews at Lake Monster Brewing	27 Office Hours 9am-2pm 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Prog. 7:00pm - 8:30pm Racial Justice Team	28 Office Hours 9am-2pm 8:00am - 8:40am Centering Prayer on Zoom	29 Gophers vrs. N. Carolina 7pm Office Hours 9am-2pm 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 6:30pm - 7:30pm Pickup Basketball - Contact Scott Hvizdos	30 Office Hours 9am-2pm	31

University Lutheran Church of Hope is a welcoming Christian community of faith centered in God's grace and called to demonstrate God's love for all the world.
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