

Pastor's letter: Greetings from our new pastor

Dear Friends:

I am looking forward with great joy and deep humility to being your pastor. As I begin, I want to tell you a little about myself so we don't have to feel like strangers the first time we meet. I grew up in Georgia, and the beginnings of my call to ministry came in a United Methodist Church that I attended as a teenager. I was ordained in Kentucky and served three churches there.

Sherry and I met in seminary (she grew up in New Jersey), and we came to Minnesota in 1993 when she took a job in the theology department at the University of St. Thomas. (When she first told me she was interviewing at "St. Thomas," I was thinking of the Caribbean; boy, was I surprised!) We have lived in Minnesota for the past 24 years, where I have had the privilege of serving in two great churches: Silver Lake in Oakdale (1993-2003) and Anoka (2003-17). We have loved living in Minnesota and enjoy winter, the North Shore, and the Boundary Waters, as well as life in the Twin Cities. We also love traveling – especially Europe – and since our families live far away, most of our vacation time is spent visiting the Northeast or the South.

When I was in seminary, I read these words of Irenaeus of Lyon, a bishop and theologian who lived in the second century: "The glory of God is a human being fully alive." These words have stayed with



me as a vision for what all of us can come to be by the grace of God.

As I begin my time as your pastor – as we begin this new journey together – my prayer is that it will be a time in which we all come fully alive, to the glory of God. You have many stories to share with me about what this "coming alive" has been like in your life – your individual and family stories and the saga of your community and the ministry of White Bear Lake United Methodist Church. I have stories to share with you about what this has looked like in my life: from my first experiences of God to my journey as a pastor, a traveler, and a catalyst for change and renewal in the church.

For all of us, becoming fully alive is an inward journey and an outward one. And of course we have our ancient and common story – our family story of the Bible – that is itself the story of an inward and outward journey that still breathes and inspires today. Together we will listen. Together we will dream. Together we will work for a faith that is life-giving and beautiful and for a world in which every human being is fully alive to the glory of God.

Sherry and I are so excited to be among you and to begin meeting you. We look forward to our first Sunday on June 25 and to many "firsts" with you in the weeks ahead.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Bill Eaves

Mission 2018: Common Hope Vision Team

Now's the time to start planning to make the dream of a summer 2018 mission trip to Guatemala a reality.

Common Hope is a St. Paul based organization that serves communities in the Antigua region of Guatemala. Its main focus is education, but affiliated families also receive services that help them reach their full potential. A rich part of the Common Hope relationship is the sponsorship program. It creates relationships and provides a feeling of support for the students who receive letters, small gifts and sometimes a visit from their sponsor.

Our church has been actively involved with Common Hope since 2001 when the first Vision Team traveled there. Since then five more teams have been sent and several individuals have traveled there to celebrate high school graduations and do medical work. There are about 15 students currently being sponsored by WBLUMC members and the Faith in Action group. The congregation also sponsors a student – 16-year old Luis Guillermo Gil.

There will be a life-changing opportunity in the **summer of 2018** to participate in a Vision Team experience. The trip dates will be announced soon. Joining a Vision Team allows you to experience the people, culture and beauty of Guatemala. You will participate in work alongside Common Hope staff and meet the families whose lives have been changed by the partnership with Common Hope. The trip is for eight days and the cost is \$1,000 plus airfare. All expenses are covered once you arrive. The team also



fundraises \$500 per person and the church will work with the team on that aspect.

More information is available online at CommonHope.org. Brochures are also available at the Welcome Center. Beth and Sarah Smith traveled to Guatemala with another church in 2016 and they would enjoy telling stories of their trip.

If you're interested in this trip or have more questions, contact Marcia Faust, who is organizing this trip and has traveled to Guatemala on three teams and for a graduation of her sponsored child. Contact her at 651-653-7020 or mjfaust@comcast.net.



Above: Beth Schultz-Smith and the work crew last August.

Left: Sarah Smith works with kids as part of the mission's focus on education.

Summer fun is heading your way!

JUNE 17: Manitou Days pizza giveaway and church garage sale. Get a free piece of pizza and check out church items for sale! 11am-12:30pm. (Volunteers needed.)

JULY 12: Summer Pizza Night, 5-8pm Wednesday July 12 on the patio. Pizza, gaga pit, entertainment and fun on a summer evening. Invite a friend or neighbor!

JULY 13-16: Summer Festival Camp for youth grades 7-9 (completed) with interim youth director Amy McGrew, amy.mcgregrow@wblumc.org.



AUG. 4-6: Family Camping Weekend. It's our seventh annual WBLUMC campout! We'll be back at Lake Elmo Park Reserve. For more info, check with Jeremy Steiner at 952-846-7777 or jere-my@steinermn.com

AUG. 6: Outdoor worship begins. Our 10am service moves to the patio each Sunday in August.

AUG. 6-9: Good Earth Village Camp for children grades 2-9 (completed) in Spring Valley, Minn. Contact Joan Hartman at joan.hartman@wblumc.org



AUG. 13: St. Paul Saints vs. Sioux Falls Canaries at CHS Field in downtown St. Paul. Game starts at 5pm on Sunday Aug. 13. You can still get tickets online before July 10 for this family-friendly event. Contact Jeremy Steiner with questions.

AUG. 16: Summer Pizza Night, 5-8pm Wednesday Aug. 16 on the patio. A great way to enjoy a late summer evening. Invite your friends and neighbors!

SEPT. 10: Rally Sunday! Mark your calendars for our fun annual get-together to launch fall programming at WBLUMC.

SEPT. 17: Two services resume. Join us for 9:30am and 11:15am services.

Spotlight: Children's Ministries Friends 4/5

A little more than a year ago, I gave some serious thought to what I was seeing and hearing from our Children's Ministries' "recent grads," the 6th- and 7th-graders. Every fall, a few would hover by the children's rooms and look longingly at the glitter glue, tubs of frosting, and bingo prizes. I would point them to their middle school rooms and say a little prayer that they got used to the new structure. Some made the adjustment and some didn't.

It's a big transition. In Children's Ministries, we teach the stories while using hands-on activities to make it fun and stimulating. Silly is good, and we don't shy away from dressing up as "Beatrice the Bee" when we're talking about protecting Creation. We design each class to be a fast-paced learning environment. Few activities last longer than 10 minutes. Kids who attend regularly leave with a decent level of Bible-literacy and some awesome crafts.

For the most part, the structure works well for preschool – 5th grade. One of the biggest morale boosts for me is when a parent or grandparent say, "We planned to sleep in this morning, but Gracie said she didn't want to miss the fun of Sunday School." Kids love to show off their Bible knowledge. Being fluent in their faith tradition makes them unique from many of their peers at school and they are proud. That motivates me to keep going.

At the same time, I wondered what I should do to help prepare my late-elementary students for the next level. When I network with



other children's workers, I don't hear much about our role in preparing kids for the jump to youth group. We're immersed in the coolest art supplies, the newest Bible storybooks (check out the new Frolic bibles with Middle Eastern skin tones and gender-neutral references to God!), the latest tools for faith formation at home, and the safest nursery equipment. We're a group that loves the details.

Youth group, on the other hand, has its own vibe. Students are expected to engage in more discussion and encouraged to bring more of their personal stories to the group. This requires a level of trust. This age also tackles some of the "deeper tracks" of the Bible; sto-

ries with themes that weren't developmentally appropriate in the earlier grades. As a parent, I consider the most crucial aspect of youth group to be the safe, consistent, welcoming space. Every student endures the bumpy patches of middle school life; it's crucial to have a group where people know who you really are instead of defining you by your latest mistake.

Putting all these ideas together, this past fall, we offered a new Wednesday night small group with the following goals: group bonding, yearlong transition to a typical youth structure, deeper discussions, and creative prayer practices. It was designed for 4th- and 5th-grade students and named Friends 4/5.

It went better than I could have hoped for! We had all the ingredients for success. Attendance was consistent; families chose to schedule activities around Wednesday night whenever possible. Kids came each week with a good attitude. Our curriculum helped to make the Bible discussion age-appropriate and real-world relevant. We got to know each other well and we grew in our ability to apply scripture to today's world. I am confident the participating 5th-graders are ready for youth group. Watching the kids grow as individuals and as a group was the highlight of my year.

It was a fun, rewarding experiment. Thank you for continued support.

Joan Hartman,
Director of Children's Ministries
joan.hartman@wblumc.org



Office Hours
Monday-Thursday: 9am-3pm
Friday: 9am-12pm
Saturday: Closed
Sunday: 9am-12pm

Summer worship May 28-Sept. 10, 2017
10am Blended Worship Service
11am - Fellowship with coffee, tea and treats;
Individual prayer, Prayer Room

STAFF
Bill Eaves, Senior Pastor starting June 25
— ext. 102; 763.355.7825 mobile
bill.eaves@wblumc.org
Brooke Heerwald Steiner, Associate Pastor —
ext.103 brooke.heerwaldsteiner@wblumc.org
John McBride, Associate Pastor
mcbride.johnr@gmail.com
Amy McGrew, Director of Youth Ministries —
ext. 107, amy.mcgregrow@wblumc.org
Joan Hartman, Director of Children & Family
— ext. 105, joan.hartman@wblumc.org

John Koziol, Jr., Director of Music Ministries —
ext. 106, john.koziol@wblumc.org
Peteria Cochran Routt,
Director of Traditional Music — ext. 122,
peteria.cochranroutt@wblumc.org
Matthew Goinz, Chancel Choir Director —
ext. 121, matthew.goinz@wblumc.org
Patricia Kytola, Director of Operations —
ext. 104, patricia.kytola@wblumc.org
Lauri Hopple, Administrative Assistant —
ext. 101, office@wblumc.org

2016-17 WBLUMC Ministry Leaders
Mark Hebaus, Board Chair
Curt Jenkins, Trustees
Scott Vipond, Finance
Glenn Oliphant, Bread Team
Ginger Davis, Staff Parish
Mary Ellen Calderwood, Worship
Lori McBride, Adult Faith
Janis Hebaus & Jeremy Steiner, Hospitality
Barb Hinz & Roberta Schmidt, BeFriends
Lisa James, Congregational Care
Cheryl Larsen, United Methodist Women
Karen Flynn, Library
Denise & Larry Kerr, Community Garden
Julie Jacot and Dave Hegdahl, Prayer Team