

Minnesota Council of Churches – Refugee Services

Our Featured Mission Partner for February

Thank you for your continued financial support of Minnesota Council of Churches - Refugee Services! We raised \$4,438 in 2018 and are excited to continue giving and supporting their mission in 2019. Mission partnerships are envisioned to grow into social ministry opportunities for our congregation in addition to our financial giving, so Lona Hendricks and I are excited to share educational opportunities in February with you all! With great consideration we have curated February Sundays to witness refugee stories, to testify, and progress toward action. We welcome open hearts and minds; prayerfully submit your questions on the blue bulletin insert on Sundays to help us facilitate these educational moments throughout the month. Here is a schedule of opportunities and activities around the topic of refugees during the month of February:

- ♦ **February 3:** A Temple Talk introduction to our Christian call and refugee resettlement with Hannah Rosebrock
- ♦ **February 10:** A personal refugee story by Hawra Alnabi after Sunday worship
- ♦ **February 17:** Q&A and introduction to action and advocacy materials in the Narthex with Lona Hendricks and Hannah Rosebrock after worship
- ♦ **February 24:** "Refugee Resettlement 101" presentation and Q&A with Kathryn Berger of MCC-Refugee Services after worship

Thank you for coming with open hearts; prayerfully consider your questions and participation in February!

Hannah Rosebrock



MINNESOTA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
REFUGEE SERVICES

inspiring hope

Collecting Donations of Soap and "TP" for Refugees

During the month of February, as we hear about opportunities to help refugees through MCC-Refugee Services, we will be collecting toilet paper and hand soap to help prepare apartments for newly arrived refugees. We will have baskets designated in the narthex to collect these items, so please consider grabbing an extra package of toilet paper or bottle of hand soap when you are picking up your own essentials in the next couple of weeks.

Annual Meeting Highlights

Some of the highlights of our annual congregational meeting on January 27 included:

- ♦ a slideshow "year in review" prepared by Pastor Jo;
- ♦ the election of Cindy Bach, Andrea Carter and Sarah Larson to the church council;
- ♦ the ratification of an updated constitution and new bylaws for our congregation;
- ♦ the adoption of the 2019 operating budget;
- ♦ the formation of a task force to study the use of our south parking lot and garage property.

There are a lot of exciting things happening in our congregation. We hope you will get involved and keep reading this newsletter in the coming months to keep up-to-date with all the happenings at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church.

Booklet of Reports Available

If you were unable to attend the annual congregational meeting on January 27, we encourage you to pick up a copy of the booklet of reports and take some time to read the reports from staff and groups within the church from 2018 as well as take a look at financial reports from 2018 and the 2019 budget that was adopted at the meeting. Copies of the booklet are available in the Narthex at church. There will also be some copies of the newly-ratified Constitution and Bylaws available in the Narthex.

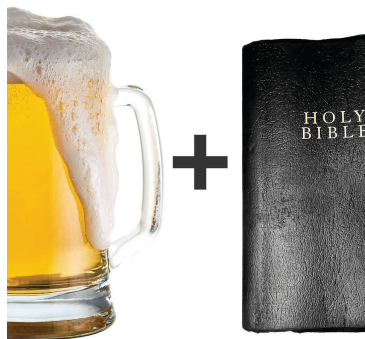
Bible and Brews

When: Tuesday, Feb. 19, at 6:30 p.m.

*Where: Sean and Jenny's,
1392 Buchanan Place NE,
Columbia Heights*

Join us on Tuesday, Feb. 19, as we discuss Scripture, current events, the Church, and of course. . . beer. Note that we're meeting one week later than usual this month.

Bring your favorite libation to share with the group. (If you'd like to help our hosts by bringing a snack as well, please do!) This month we'll once again meet at the home of Jenny and Sean Tessmer. Hope to see you!



Group Meeting Schedule

Women of the ELCA (WELCA) –

All women are invited to meet on Tuesday, Feb. 5, at 1:00 p.m.

Quilters – Quilting session on Thursday, Feb. 7, at 9:30 a.m.

Men's Breakfast – All men are invited to breakfast on Saturday, Feb. 9, at 8:30 a.m. Bring your appetite!

Deborah Circle – The circle will meet on Tuesday, Feb. 12, at 1:00 p.m.

Mutual Ministry Committee

With the new Constitution, GA will be looking to better utilize the Mutual Ministry Committee that has existed off and on here at GA. The goal of the Mutual Ministry Committee is to support called staff and the congregation, especially assisting with conflict resolution as conflicts arise. The committee will be a resource for staff to discuss things which are troubling them and a place for members of the congregation to take issues they see. The committee or a portion of the committee will work with the members who bring forward issues and the staff as a whole.

Below are the names and phone numbers of the members of the committee, as well as an e-mail address that will put you in touch with every member of the committee. Please reach out to them regarding any issues you believe need to be addressed.

Sean Tessmer
701-425-2991

Aaron Miller
651-307-1265

Jenny Parker
612-789-2968

Joan Mitchell
612-331-2052

Mike Ryan
651-636-2249

Erik Peterson
503-781-5750

You can send an e-mail that will reach all members of the committee: mutualministry@gachurchmpls.org.

February Community Meal

Saturday, February 23 – 6:00 p.m.

February's meal will be another "Great Chili Cookoff." Bring us your best! You can sign-up in the Narthex. Set-up begins that afternoon at 3:30 p.m. If you have questions, see Lynn Lurvey.



Feb. Serving Schedule	Assisting Minister	Lector	Sacristan	Transportation
February 3	Andrea Carter	Emily Miller	Nicole Navratil	James Hamilton
February 10	Hannah Rosebrock	Lynette Paulson	Aaron Bisping	Joel Lurvey
February 17	Justin Navratil	Julie O'Donnell	Andrea Carter	Pat Lynch
February 24	Joel Lurvey	Amanda Hakemian	Brandon Bisping	Brian Hendrickson

Our Congregation's Vision Statement

(The congregation adopted this vision statement on January 24, 2016.)

God in Christ loves us; therefore, through the Holy Spirit we will:

Do justice

- We **hope** for our community and all of God's creation
- We feed the poor and comfort the afflicted
- We welcome and **respect** our neighbor and the stranger

Love kindness

- We **love** and care for our congregation and our community
- We practice **forgiveness** locally and globally
- We strive for **compassion** and **acceptance**

Walk humbly with our God

- We find **joy** in creation
- We desire to grow in **spirituality**
- We delight in liturgical worship and creative expression

We are all children of God. Jesus calls us by name. With the Holy Spirit, we seek to live out God's grace.

Our Congregation's Core Values

(These values were adopted by the congregation in 2010, just before our current mission statement was written.)

Love

Joy

Hope

Compassion

Spirituality

Forgiveness

Acceptance

Respect

From Pastor Jo

I'm writing this in the week after our Annual Meeting to review 2018 and prepare for 2019. Lots of wonderful things happened in 2018, thanks to our committed congregation members and volunteers, and I have every expectation that 2019 will continue to show glory to God in activities of love and grace towards our neighborhood and those within our congregation who need assistance.

Yes, we discussed the budget, and there was some discussion as to the ability of the congregation to meet the number proposed by the Council, but the congregation did vote to affirm the proposed budget.

I wish to return to the topic of my sermon, the morning of the Annual Meeting: the important issue before any church is mission, not budget. We are called to fulfill the mission of God, not to balance a budget. Balancing the budget is what we do to create a financially stable GA Lutheran Church, and of course that's what we want as members of this church, but a balanced budget is not God's mission for GA (a component perhaps), but not the mission.

God's mission can be done on any budget. God's mission can be done with any number of people. God's mission is done when we love Christ, our neighbors and ourselves: honestly, and wholeheartedly.

There is no minimum standard to do that. There is no budget too small to do that. We always have what we need, right now, to do what is needed in Christ's name.

No one should feel guilty or pushed into giving more than they are able to do. Giving is to be a blessing, if it does not feel as such, then pull back. But God does mean for us to give; it has always been a part of the spiritual disciplines of the church. Listen, pray, and trust that God has already saved you and blessed you; your actions are not a payment, they are a response to God's love, and a means for work to be done in this world towards others.

Whatever is given is blessed and is used for God's work; we are all deeply grateful for the contributions of this congregation and the ability to go out into the world with God's grace...everyday. Amen.

Blessings to all of you -

Pastor Jo

GA Choristers Preparing for February 24

Kids in elementary and middle school can still get in on this session of the GA Choristers as the group prepares to sing in worship on Sunday, Feb. 24. **(Rehearsals did not start as scheduled on Jan. 30 because of the extreme cold weather.)** Rehearsals are held on Wednesdays from 6:00-6:30 p.m. beginning Feb. 6. Phil can provide a complete schedule of the rest of the choir year to those who are interested – but please consider joining us on Wednesday nights in February!

Senior Choir “Plus” to Present

Seven Last Words of Christ

Rehearsals will begin Wednesday, Feb. 6, for Dubois’ “Seven Last Words of Christ” to be presented as our 2019 MN FoodShare Concert on Sunday, March 24, at 4:00 p.m. This musical venture will be a combined effort of our Senior Choir and some singers from the Northeast Chorale. If there are members of GA Church not usually in the choir who would like to sing with the choir for the project, you are invited to Wednesday evening rehearsals from 7:30 to 8:15 p.m. beginning Feb. 6. in the choir loft.

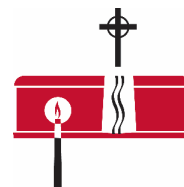


Sheridan Story Update

Our next month of distributing food to students at Waite Park Elementary School is March. However, it’s not too early to sign-up to help in March. Remember that the sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board at the top of the stairs in the Narthex at church. Sheridan Story food distribution is an ongoing ministry of our congregation; your help is always needed. Distribution generally takes place on Fridays, but specific dates are listed on the sign-up sheets.

Recent Funeral...

We extend Christian sympathy to Janet Femrite and the family and friends of Edward Femrite who died on January 14. Ed’s funeral was held at GA Church on January 19.



December Financial Report

	Dec. 2018	Dec. 2018 YTD	Dec. 2017 YTD
Income	\$21,054.45	\$325,589.71	\$304,563.32
Expenses	<u>37,761.14</u>	<u>344,753.97</u>	<u>304,623.94</u>
Income-Exp.	<\$16,706.69>	<\$ 19,164.26>	<\$ 60.62>

Notes about December 2018 financials:

As the numbers above indicate, one month can make a big budgetary difference! We went from a deficit of -\$2,457.57 to -\$19,164.26 in one month’s time. December is typically one of our highest giving months; however, Dec. 2018 did not follow that trend. GA also incurred a number of larger bills including: \$6,639 for boiler maintenance, \$5,790 for carpet in the chapel/office area, as well as money gifted to our Mission Partners. GA has money in reserves to cover this deficit and will begin 2019 with a fresh start (but lower reserves).

At our annual Congregational Meeting on January 27, the congregation voted to adopt a budget of \$345,535. This will allow us to do important work in our community, continue to support our Mission partners, and care for our building. This budget is about a 1% increase in expenses compared to our 2018 budget. To meet this budget, the congregation will need to increase their giving by 6.1% over 2018’s giving amount. Please prayerfully consider how you can support the work of GA in the coming months.

The “All Are Welcome” Capital Appeal is at 97% of goal as of December 31, 2018. We plan to update the congregation monthly. We encourage everyone to help us reach 100% of our goal by Pentecost 2019 (June 9). Watch for plans for a wrap-up event to our appeal in the near future.

Next Finance Committee Meeting: Thursday, February 7, at 6:00 p.m.

– Andrea Carter, Treasurer

More About Minnesota Council of Churches – Refugee Services

Hello Gustavus Adolphus,

This February we will embark on a month-long journey focusing on our refugee neighbors, which my co-mission partner representative, Hannah Rosebrock, will outline elsewhere in the Gazette. I'm going to talk about another topic regarding refugees this month. I would like to highlight some of the reasons that refugees benefit our community by sharing a handout created by the MN Department of Human Services Resettlement Programs Office. *(Editor's note: The "handout" is printed on the following two pages.)*

Please take a second to read the handout and then consider these questions: *If you became a refugee in your lifetime, how would you promote your work skills if your licenses, credentials, etc. were not recognized or valued in the country you are resettled in? How discouraged would you be filling out employment application after employment application only to receive feedback that you are not qualified for the position because you do not have work history in this country? How would you deal with the frustration that could result from struggling to find employment despite having a healthy career back home?*

What if we recognized and regarded work experience from other countries as valuable assets to our businesses? How would a company benefit from adding different perspectives to our company by including refugee voices? How different would our community be if we showed our refugee neighbors how welcomed they are? How different would a refugee's resettlement experience be if he/she were greeted by every passerby with a warm, "Welcome! We're so glad you're here!" Take this month to soak in the information we will be presenting during and after worship and reflect on your own actions and interactions with your refugee neighbors. Have you showed your appreciation for their contributions to our community? Do your actions reflect a welcoming spirit towards our refugee neighbors? How can I do better?

There are two more things I would like to mention this month. One is a donation drive we will be hosting for our mission partner, Minnesota Council of Churches-Refugee Services. We will be collecting toilet paper and hand soap during the month of February to help prepare apartments for newly arrived refugees. We will have baskets designated in the narthex to collect these items, so please consider grabbing an extra package of toilet paper or bottle of hand soap when you are picking up your own essentials the next couple of weeks.

We are also looking for volunteers to help prepare an apartment for a new arrival. We won't have a lot of advance notice (perhaps a week or so before the Bridging appointment and only a day or two afterwards on the time they will deliver the furniture) so we hope to compile a list of people that are interested in helping and are available during different times of the day. I envision a daytime week group, a weeknight group, and a weekend group that we can call for availability. If this is something that may interest you, please fill out the blue insert in the bulletin with your general time availability and drop it in the offering plate on a Sunday.

Thanks!

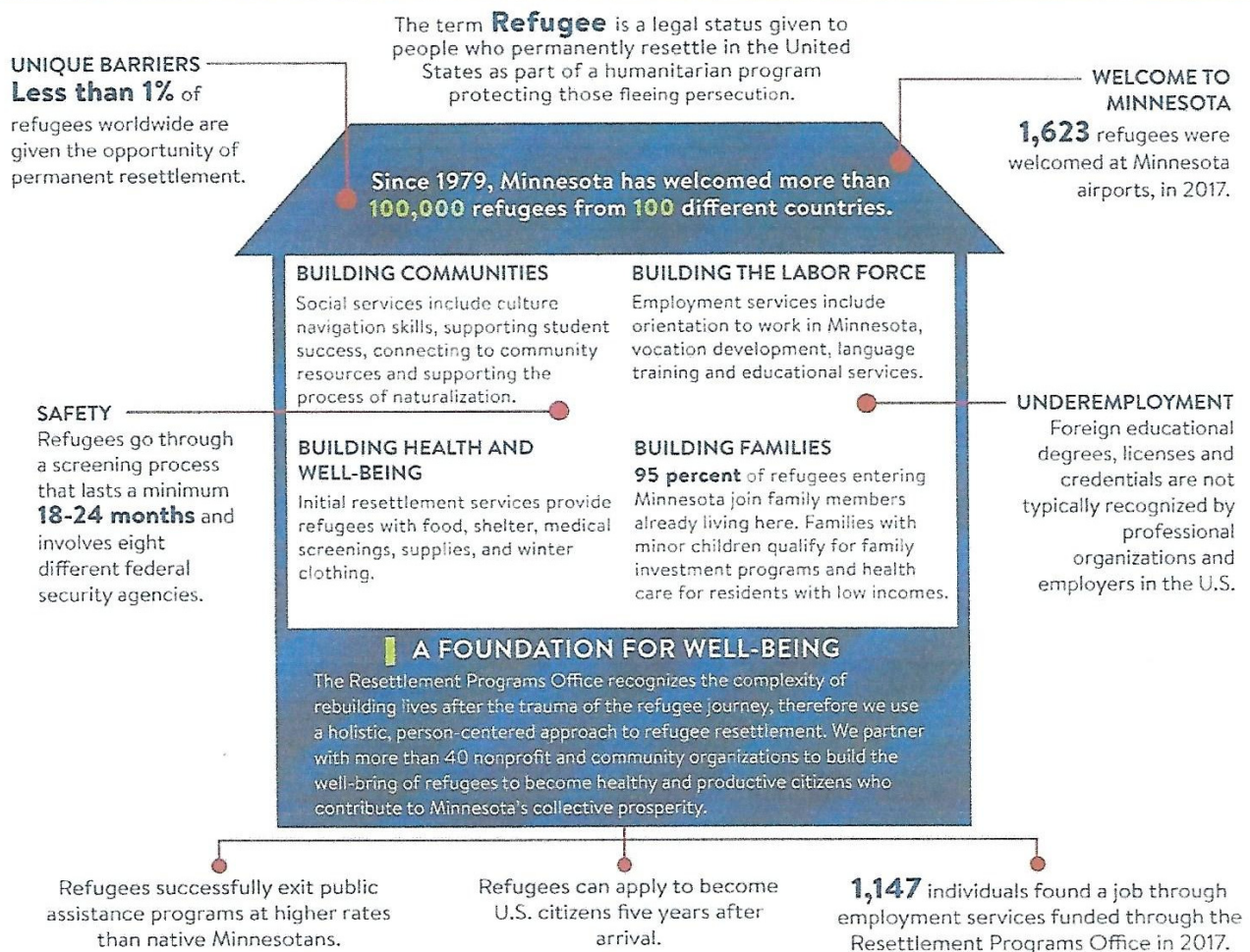
Lona Hendricks

***You might be wondering,
When does Lent begin this year?***

***Ash Wednesday is Wednesday, March 6.
Watch for our Lenten schedule and plans in next month's newsletter.***

Building well-being for refugees

Minnesotans are welcoming, compassionate people. Building well-being is like building a house. Constructing a house requires resources, expertise and collaboration. Building a thriving community works in the same way. The Resettlement Programs Office provides refugees with the resources they need to survive and thrive.



► Join us in building well-being for all of Minnesota.

- Increase your cultural awareness and engage citizens from other ethnic backgrounds in your community.
- Volunteer with our 40 agency partners that support refugee communities.
- Learn more about refugees in Minnesota at bit.ly/MNRefugees.
- Invite the Resettlement Programs Office to do a presentation or training on refugees in Minnesota by e-mailing us at dhs.rpo.outreach@state.mn.us.

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMS OFFICE

Wind in our sails

Refugee resettlement: Propelling our state's prosperity

Minnesota is the land of **10,000 lakes and 100 countries**. Throughout our history, refugees and immigrants have been the wind in our state's economic and cultural sails. A strong resettlement system moves us forward.

Minnesota's labor force powers our society

As the labor force grows, so does the economy — generating more goods, services and overall economic activity. A shrinking labor force slows the growth of the state and weakens our communities.

Building businesses and creating jobs in Minnesota

In 2014, **40 percent of Fortune 500 companies** in Minnesota were founded by an immigrant or the child of an immigrant. Together, these firms **employ more than 264,000 people** globally.

Attracting new workers



As our population ages, Minnesota needs to welcome more people to our state, joining our workforce and advancing our economy. Minnesota must attract more than **60,000 new Minnesotans by 2020** to maintain economic growth and meet the workforce demand.

Helping grow the labor force



Minnesota's population must grow by **4.5 times** the current growth rate to maintain a healthy labor force.

Initial investments in refugees and immigrants yield long-term benefits to Minnesota's economy.

\$227.2 Million

Contributed by refugees and immigrants in state and local tax, 2015

\$1.8 Billion

Spending power of refugees and immigrants in Minnesota, 2015

The story of refugees is one of resilience and hope. Refugees and immigrants arrive on our shores with courage and determination, bringing valuable skills and an entrepreneurial spirit, and strengthening our ties with other countries.

► When we welcome and support refugees and immigrants, we support Minnesota.

m DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN SERVICES

A publication of

Gustavus Adolphus

LUTHERAN CHURCH

1509 27th Avenue NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

*God's Mission for GA Church...
...to build community where God is at the center.*

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TWIN CITIES, MN
PERMIT NO. 612

Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church

Church Phone: 612-789-7256

Website: www.gachurchmpls.org

E-mail: info@gachurchmpls.org

Sunday Worship at 9:30 a.m.

Church Staff ...

The Rev. Jo Bauman Johnson, Pastor (Ext. 10)

pastorjo@gachurchmpls.org
Cell phone: 952-285-6945

Phil Holzman, Deacon/Minister of Word and Service (Ext. 11)

(Worship & Music, Parish Administration)
philh@gachurchmpls.org

Dan Hager, Finance Manager (Ext. 14)

danh@gachurchmpls.org

Joel Lurvey, Contemporary Choir Director

joel.lurvey@gmail.com



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

All Are Welcome Here!

Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church proclaims that the Gospel is God's gift to all people, to be shared unconditionally. We rejoice in the manner in which diversity has enriched, nurtured and challenged the life and ministry we share in Christ. We know that the world is often an unloving place and that the experience of alienation is all too common. Because Christ reconciles us, we welcome people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender identities, physical and mental abilities, educational levels, and socio-economic backgrounds. We strive to be an evermore welcoming community. Following the example of Christ, we extend a most heartfelt welcome to all. Gustavus Adolphus is a Reconciling in Christ congregation.



Gustavus Adolphus Church Council

Sean Tessmer, President

Sarah Larson, Vice-President

Gary Anderson, Secretary

Andrea Carter, Treasurer

Cindy Bach

Amanda Hakemian

Ed Huble

Jenny Parker

Erik Peterson