



Lifetimes

April 2023

From the Pastor



Pastor Kai Nilsen

Beginning Easter Sunday, we launch our sermon series, AWE! The background for this preaching theme comes from a book by Dacher Keltner, *Awe: The New Science of Everyday Wonder and How it Can Transform Your Life*. For Keltner, awe is defined as “the feeling we experience when we encounter vast mysteries that transcend our understanding of the world.” These experiences, says Keltner, open our minds and orient us toward big ideas and new insights.

Through his research, Keltner discovered that experiences of awe can affect our physiology, our spirituality, and our relationships with God and others. Awe can cool our immune systems inflammation response and strengthen our bodies. Experiences of AWE also elevate us out of ourselves, connecting us more deeply with the Spirit of God and with one another.

What inspires awe? Music inspires awe. Visual beauty. Nature. Collective effervescence (an experience of communal good will or joy or hope). Spiritual insights and epiphanies. What I found fascinating was that the number one awe-inspiring experience, across cultures, was hearing a story of personal courage, strength, and overcoming!

In my experience, awe can be both overwhelming and ordinary, eliciting a “Wow!” or a “that’s cool!” In both

cases, though, I’m reminded that life isn’t just about me. I’m part of a bigger story, a God sized story.

Through his research, Keltner discovered that just a few minutes of “Awe” a day could have transformative effect on our lives. So, let me ask you these questions:

What inspires “awe” in you?

Are there specific things you can do to give you a greater chance to experience awe?

If so, what is keeping you from doing them?

The resurrection stories and subsequent Easter stories are filled with awe and wonder. Our hope is to inspire you in worship and then encourage you, in everyday life, to intentionally seek out experiences of wonder and awe. We also hope you will use this season to extend yourself to a friend or neighbor and invite them to join you on this journey—in worship and in life.

Remember, a significant component of our spiritual lives is comprised of intention and purposeful decision. God’s Spirit is available always and everywhere. How will you design your day, your week, your life to put you in the flow of God’s “Awe” inspiring presence?

In wonder and awe,
Pastor Kai

	<h3>Holy Week Worship</h3>	
	Palm Sunday 9:00 & 10:30 a.m.	Easter 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 a.m.
	Maundy Thursday 7:00 p.m.	
	Good Friday 11:00 a.m. family worship with young children*	
	7:00 p.m.	<i>All services livestreamed except *</i>



Jim Meinen
President

“A vision without a task is but a dream. A task without a vision is drudgery. A vision and a task are the hope of the world.”
--Inscription on a church wall in Sussex England c. 1730

At a recent Faith and Work small group gathering, Bill Reichwald shared the above inscription

with our group. An inscription from a church wall in 1730 supports one of the Council’s 2023 priorities, which is to create

a 3-year plan for Incarnation. It starts with a 3-year vision; followed by a plan to achieve it. As we look into the future, there are many opportunities for our church and our faith community. The Council is embarking upon a process to identify the outlook for our 3-year plan by meeting with groups of people including staff, Council, church leaders and interested congregation members. The first session was held on March 28 with the church staff, and we are developing plans to have more sessions. Identifying these opportunities will help ensure our vitality as a vibrant church now and in the future.

We have heard input from the congregation to expedite the reduction of our mortgage. And thanks to generous donors that have donated to our mortgage fund, the Finance Committee and Council approved the prepayment of three additional payments toward our mortgage in March. This aligns with one of the three pillars in the 3-year plan, which is “Responsible Stewardship.”

It starts with a 3-year vision...

Listening and communicating is such an important aspect of our faith community. That is why the Council set another 2023 priority to increase our transparent communications. As mentioned in my February Lifetime article, the Council formed an ad-hoc communication committee consisting of Greta Grosch, Amy Johnson, Gil Hartley and Tracy Strantz. They met several times between the February and March Council meetings and shared their recommendations at the March 20 meeting. There is more work to be done, however; the Council confirmed the following goals:

1. Improve communication to better inform, engage, and connect congregation, Council, and staff members.
2. Encourage broader participation between Council, Staff, Committees & Congregation in evaluating, prioritizing, and supporting areas of focus.
3. Invite feedback and energize congregation in fulfilling Incarnation’s mission, resulting in consistent demonstration of our core values and actions inside and outside our walls.

The work that the communication committee has completed thus far is nothing but awesome. It is enlightening to see how people’s gifts are being utilized, along with the passion to continually strengthen and grow our church.

Among the Congregation

Prayers for: People as they recover from US storms; People in Turkey and Syria as they recover from the recent devastating earthquakes; Rachel Kraemer; Debbie Morse; Carl & Jan Kuhrmeyer; Mike Carey; Mary Blomquist; Gene Lindholm; Carl Johnson; Karen Ruff; Marian Ness; Jim Crawford; Kara Genia; Orris Haraldson; Joe Stepka; Lowell Odland; Erica Bratland; Linda Hudepohl; Chris McDermid; Mike Wielenberg’s parents; Carol Lacey’s bother-in-law; Janny Moses’ daughter; Bill Fitzsimmons’ brother; Al and Carolyn Ek’s son; Bill Bouley’s friends, Marie and Alan; Roger & Dede Mattison’s friends, Linda and Yvonne; Nancy Haugen’s friend Joyce

Sympathy to: the family of David Thorstad on his death; Bob & Joyce Iverson on the death of their son; Bette Olson on the death of her brother

Baptized: Bentley Robert Steger, son of Ashley Evans and Michael Steger

CARE OF CREATION CORNER



April showers in cities often create runoff. With so much pavement the water picks up contaminants and races untreated to the nearest storm drains, negatively affecting water quality and harming wildlife and forestry. Lessen runoff damage: Avoid lawn chemicals, recycle motor oil, wash a car on grass or at a facility that filters wastewater, remove debris from sidewalks and driveways.



Club 4/5 will serve as a Green Shirt Team at the Incarnation FMSC MobilePack™ event. They will have the opportunity to serve in many capacities including Greeting people, directing traffic, helping the FMSC staff behind the scenes, prepare Manna Pack samples to serve to the volunteers and say thank you after they have completed their packing, just to name a few. We are asking for sign-ups to be in by April 19 so we have a number of those who will be serving.



First Communion Milestone



Sunday, April 2 will be our time of learning –

- First and Second Grade 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.
- Third Grade and older 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.

If you have children in each age level, you choose the time that works best for you.

Thursday, April 6, will be our time of communion together at 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday. worship.

The First Communion Milestone at Incarnation is one of the ways we strive to help families honor the promises made at Baptism.

Learn more at: incarnationmn.org/children-youth-and-family/milestones/



Stellar, VBS will be hosted here at Incarnation June 19 - June 22. At Stellar, kids discover how they can shine Jesus' love and hope in everyday life! Kids participate in memorable Bible-learning activities, sing catchy songs, play teamwork-building games, eat tasty treats, experience one-of-a-kind Bible Adventures, and so much more! Kids will also learn to look for evidence of God all around them through something called God Sightings. Invite friends and family to participate in Stellar, Incarnation's Vacation Bible School this summer! Registration deadline is June 14, after that day you will be put on a waitlist.

Ages: 4 years of age – 4th grade
Cost: \$25 Family Max \$70
Scholarships are available.



Summer Volunteer Opportunities at Incarnation Cemetery

Our Incarnation cemetery committee is seeking volunteers in two areas this summer.

Grass mowing. We would like to invite you to join our group of 25 volunteers who mow each week. Teams of 4 mow for about 3 hours, once every 6 weeks from late May through October (3-4 times per person). If you would like to be included in this group, training will be provided. For details, write to bill.reichwald@gmail.com.

Gardening. We would like to invite fellow gardeners to join our group of 10 volunteers who assist in planting and maintaining our cemetery flower gardens. Our team meets approximately once per month for 2-3 hours beginning in June. We anticipate 3-4 work days for this summer. For details, once again write to Bill at the above email.



Care for Creation: Earth Day 2023

As we approach Earth Day 2023, April 22, we are reminded of our privilege and responsibility as stewards of God's creation to co-create a better world with God. While the challenges to care for the earth can seem overwhelming, each of us can play a role in making a difference. Perhaps this Earth Day we can each resolve to do one new thing for the coming year.

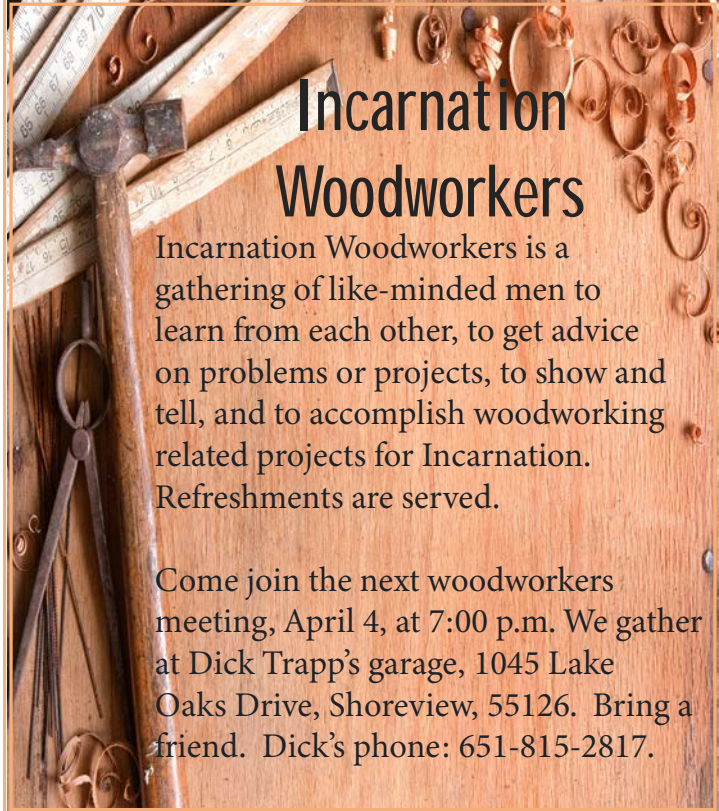
Some examples:

- Practice the 3 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.
- Become more energy efficient at home: LED lighting?
- Use less energy for heating and cooling.
- Eat less meat and waste less food.
- Read one of the many recent good books on climate change and individual actions that we can make.
- Talk to others about what we can do for the planet.

While it is clear that we need societal systems change and commitment for a sustainable future, by taking small steps, we as individuals can walk forward, living our values.

Just as spring is a time of renewal, we can revitalize our efforts to help with the renewal and stewardship of our planet.

Care for Creation Committee



Incarnation Woodworkers

Incarnation Woodworkers is a gathering of like-minded men to learn from each other, to get advice on problems or projects, to show and tell, and to accomplish woodworking related projects for Incarnation. Refreshments are served.

Come join the next woodworkers meeting, April 4, at 7:00 p.m. We gather at Dick Trapp's garage, 1045 Lake Oaks Drive, Shoreview, 55126. Bring a friend. Dick's phone: 651-815-2817.

May Brings the Annual Offering of Letters

The Farm Bill will be the focus of our Offering of Letters on May 7. The Farm Bill is federal legislation passed every five years; the current bill expires later in 2023. The bill is an omnibus one, having many different parts but has a tremendous impact on hunger in the United States and globally. We will be advocating for a farm bill that will promote a strong and resilient food-supply chain and provide needed nutrition through domestic and international programs. Our faith calls us to end hunger and create a more sustainable world for everyone on our earth. Be watching for updates and more information from the Hunger Awareness and Advocacy group.

Volunteer. Donate. Pray.

The Feed My Starving Children All Hands on Hope MobilePack™ is less than one month away – April 26-30, 2023. Over five days, we will host over **3,800 volunteers** to pack **614,304 meals** which will **feed 1,683 children for one year**. In addition to packing meals, we have committed to **raise \$180,000** to pay for the meals. We need your help!

Volunteer:

Packing meals is a fun and easy way to help. Anyone ages 5-95 is welcome to pack meals. Gather your family, friends, small groups, neighbors, co-workers, student groups, and teams and sign up to pack.

In addition to packing, we are bringing back the “Green Shirts” for this MobilePack! Green Shirts are responsible for “behind the scenes” work during MobilePacks, including checking in volunteers, assisting FMSC staff in the packing room, serving Manna Pack samples to volunteers and other duties as assigned. The time commitment for these individuals is slightly longer than a typical packing shift.



All the information you need to determine the best fit for your schedule can be found at <https://www.incarnationmn.org/ministries/ministry-partners/feed-my-starving-children-fmfc/2023-all-hands-on-hope-mobilepacktm/>

Donate:

Our goal is to raise \$180,000 to pay for the 614,304 meals that will feed 1,683 kids for one year. If you'd like to make a donation in support of this MobilePack, there are many ways to donate:

- Make an online donation via Incarnation's Secured Online Donation and Giving site.
- Make a check out to Incarnation with “FMSC MobilePack” in the memo and mail it to Incarnation at 4880 Hodgson Road, Shoreview, MN 55126.
- If you're a Thrivent member and you applied for a Thrivent Action Team grant of \$250, your Action Team card can be applied to this MobilePack. Mail it or drop it off at the Incarnation Office.
- Your employer might double or triple your giving! A list of companies that provide matching programs can be found at <https://www.fmfc.org/ways-to-give/matching-gifts>. Consider applying for matching dollars using the event number 2304-004EA.

Pray:

Please pray for all those involved in planning this event, the volunteers who will be helping during the MobilePack, in-country partners who distribute meals, and the recipients of these life-saving meals.

For more information, contact Mike Vant at mjvant@gmail.com.



A Few Notes from Worship & Music

Greetings from the Music Department!

What a wonderful Sunday we just had with beautiful singing from the Senior Choir, wonderful presentations from the bell choirs including additional media, and inspiring worship from the contemporary band! We also thank pianist Michael Galeski for his lovely playing of the first movement of Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata.

Last week's Lenten service opened with the beautiful cello playing of our own Drew Roloff. For our last Wednesday evening service in Lent, we are thrilled to have pianist Pastor Janet Karvonen-Montgomery provide the prelude music to help enter us into worship.



We look forward to presenting a wide variety of music during our journey through Holy Week. This will include music from our Senior Choir, Children and Adult Bell Choirs, ILC Brass, congregational members, contemporary ensemble, and musicians from our greater musical community.

We look forward to seeing you in the coming weeks and hope that the music in this season will greatly enhance your worship experience!

Sean Turner
Minister of Worship, Music & the Arts

Will Hale - Kids are Rock Stars!

INCARNATION PRESCHOOL
INVITES YOU TO

WILL HALE

KIDS ARE ROCK STARS!

*Come ready to sing
and dance!*

APRIL 25, 2023
10:45 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.

INCARNATION LUTHERAN CHURCH
GRACE HALL
WWW.INCARNATIONMN.ORG

 **INCARNATION**
LUTHERAN CHURCH

All April Kairos forums will be Sundays, 10:15 a.m. in the Fireside Room. (Monday night zooms will resume in the fall.)

April 2: Holy Week and Easter in Art

The powerful stories of Holy Week--the Entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, and Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection--have inspired artists over the centuries to create many beautiful and meaningful images. Kristin Anderson, Augsburg University art professor, explores a range of scenes from a variety of times and places in the Christian tradition.

April 9: Easter (No Kairos)

April 16: Faith Formation and Young Adults: Why Many are Leaving the Church and the Significance of Engaging and Supporting Them

Many young adults who grew up in the church, were baptized, and went through confirmation have difficulty talking about faith, lack a sense of belonging, and hold misconceptions about Christianity. Some join the growing ranks of the "nones," those who do not affiliate with any religious tradition, yet many are deeply interested in spiritual and religious questions.

Marcia Bunge, Bernhardson Distinguished Professor of Religion at Gustavus Adolphus College, will explore the significance and value of engaging and supporting young adults in their faith journey.

You are invited to attend Solid Ground's "Every Family Needs a Home" breakfast.

Funds raised at the breakfast support Solid Ground's work to provide families experiencing homelessness with the hope and opportunity needed to thrive. To join others from our community at this inspiring event, indicate "Incarnation" in your seating preference.

Join us Wednesday, May 3, at Vadnais Heights Commons for our annual Every Family Needs a Home breakfast fundraiser! During this inspirational event, guests are welcome to enjoy a morning of networking, listening to a personal testimonial from a program participant, connecting with Solid Ground staff, followed up by an opportunity to financially support our good work. This one-hour breakfast is free to attend!

Space is limited, so please register at <https://www.solidgroundmn.org/every-family-needs-a-home.../>

As a theologian, scholar and child advocate, Bunge is engaged in several ecumenical and inter-religious academic projects and advocacy efforts. Her current area of research is perspectives on children and childhood in world religions. Her most recent book, co-edited with Martha Stortz and Jason Mahn, is *So that All May Flourish: The Aims of Lutheran Higher Education* (Fortress, 2023).

April 23: Spirituality in Aging

What does it mean to tend to our spiritual lives as we age? Rev. Ruth Sorenson, director of Spiritual Care at Lyngblomsten, will share perspectives on the tasks and opportunities that aging allows us in our lives of faith. An ordained pastor in the ELCA, she served two congregations prior to her current position at Lyngblomsten. She also serves as a spiritual director.

April 30: Grit, Faith and Entrepreneurship

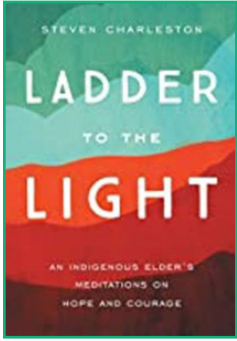
John Miller, retired entrepreneur and long-time Incarnation member, will share the story of how faith, creativity and business savvy brought his innovative ideas to life in the Turtle Mountain Corp., an electronics manufacturing company he founded in western North Dakota. He'll share highlights from his journey to successful entrepreneurship.

His presentation will draw from his new book, *Bootstrap Entrepreneur: How Grit, Faith, and Help from a Chippewa Tribe Built a Technology Company*, published last fall with help from a ghost writer.

Solid Ground News



Wednesday, May 3, 2023 | 8:00 - 9:00 AM
New location: Vadnais Heights Commons



Ladder to the Light: An Indigenous Elder's Meditations on Hope and Courage By Steven Charleston
Review by Vernita Kennen

Steven Charleston is a name familiar to the Christian community. I was fortunate to have once heard him speak at an ELCA Global Mission conference. He has served as the Episcopal Bishop

of Alaska and president/dean of the Episcopal Divinity School as well as a professor at Luther Seminary. As a member of the Choctaw Nation, he is a leading voice of justice for Indigenous peoples, the environment and spiritual renewal.

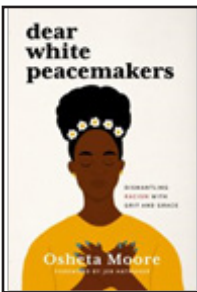
Ladder to the Light: An Indigenous Elder's Meditations on Hope and Courage is a compilation of part of the daily writings Charleston has been making available on social media for ten years. As an introvert, he was hesitant to even begin on Facebook but then decided to simply write down

what came to him daily in his own prayer time. He beings each day in prayer, acknowledging the four directions, the earth, and the sky, and then, humbly, waits for the Spirit to speak to his heart. This title is a collection of the Spirit's messages, arranged in a sequence like the ladder in kiva leading from darkness to the light. The eight rungs of that ladder include the spiritual messages plus his own commentary on them.

Charleston uses broad language for the Spirit, the sacred – a place holder – for the conscious, spiritual presence many people from different religious traditions call God, or the creator. He believes that most people of faith are not one-dimensional beings but made up of many different spiritual practices and a lifetime of experience. He feels these messages can speak to all of us.

Reading from rung to rung I think you will agree. You will feel the movement from darkness to light. You may want to look to connect with him on social media to read more.

Dear White Peacemakers: Small Group



Connect with others in a small group to talk about the book, *Dear White Drawing on the Sermon on the Mount*, spirituals, and stories from her work as a pastor in St. Paul, Minnesota, Moore invites all enter into the story of shalom and the work of anti-racism peacemaking. The group will take part in discussions on the book, along with a visit to the Science

Museum (optional) and/or a service project (optional). Osheta Moore was a guest preacher at Incarnation in 2021. The group will meet once a week, starting in mid-April. Register: nancystutzman@comcast.net. Order the book or find out more at: www.osheta.com.

When: Five Tuesdays, 7:00-8:30 p.m., hybrid (attend in person or by Zoom)

Worship Arts Banner

The Resurrection banner features a burst of light signifying Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness (Malachi 4:2). The water moving toward the light suggests our life journey, buoyed by waters of Baptism, leading us toward our final resting place in heaven. White and gold, the liturgical colors for Easter season, symbolize purity, light, glory and joy.



Financial Report - February 2023

Actual February Operating Giving	\$137,881.06	YTD Operating Giving	\$392,273.75
Actual February Operating Expense	\$166,088.38	YTD Operating Expense	\$365,654.02
	(\$28,207.32)		\$26,619.73
Actual February Mortgage Giving	\$22,089.36	YTD Mortgage Giving	\$95,537.03
Actual February Mortgage Expense	\$20,675.00	YTD Mortgage Expense	\$41,350.00
	\$1,414.36		\$54,187.03

Memorials

We honor the memory of loved ones in the memorial gifts given below:

Date Range: 2/20/23 to 3/23/23

Donor	Fund Name	In Memory of
Don Alsop	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Bernard & Phyllis Baltes	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Allen & Alice Bidne	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Joan & Loren Bidne	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Kevin & Cindy Bidne	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Ray & Sherry Bidne	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Jeanne Berkeland	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Esther Dant	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Anne Feist	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Marlys J. Nelson	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Stanley & Donna Parry	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Kevin & Janelle Van Sloun	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Murt Seltz	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Sonia Solomonson	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
James & Sharon Springborg	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
LeAnn Sullivan	Memorial – Undesignated	Anne Bidne
Don Alsop	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Gary & Mary Ann Anderson	Memorial – Endowment	Orv Bratland
George & Connie Aram	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Mark & Tamara Bratland	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland (<i>On behalf of multiple donors</i>)
Dick & Ann Christiansen	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Nancy Erickson	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Jim & Carol Fruehling	Memorial – Endowment	Orv Bratland
Arvin & Jane Gehrking	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Ken & Rosalie Grosch	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Jackie Best Holmstrom	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Carl & Jan Johnson	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Dale & Vernita Kennen	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Carol Lacey	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Gregory & Kathryn Lyford	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Don & Martie Martin	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Marlys M. Nelson	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Marlys J. Nelson	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Frank & Nancy Petersen	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Wayne & Barbara Quehl	Memorial – Endowment	Orv Bratland
Bill & Joan Reichwald	Memorial – Endowment	Orv Bratland
Bev Seabloom	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Murt Seltz	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Dick & Jane Trapp	Memorial – Worship & Music (Sr. Choir)	Orv Bratland
Tim & Katie Gray	Memorial – Worship & Music	Ardis Gallagher
Al & Janet Montgomery	Memorial – Worship & Music	Ardis Gallagher
Bill & Joan Reichwald	Memorial – Endowment	Ardis Gallagher (<i>Patty Nilsen's Mother</i>)
Gary & Mary Ann Anderson	Memorial – Endowment	Martin (Marty) Giere
Jim & Carol Fruehling	Memorial – Endowment	Martin (Marty) Giere
Al & Joyce Anderson	Memorial – Undesignated	Rollie Seltz
Chris Bretoi	Memorial – Undesignated	Rollie Seltz
Mike & Lisa Comstock	Memorial – Undesignated	Rollie Seltz
Allen & Susan Greimel	Memorial – Undesignated	Rollie Seltz
Rick & Lynette Hiles	Memorial – Undesignated	Rollie Seltz
Gary & Mary Lunstad	Memorial – Undesignated	Rollie Seltz
Sandra Martin	Memorial – Undesignated	Rollie Seltz
Kent & Diane Peterson	Memorial – Undesignated	Rollie Seltz
Steve & Marilyn Poss	Memorial – Undesignated	Rollie Seltz
Ronald & Mary Rademacher	Memorial – Undesignated	Rollie Seltz
Mary Ward	Memorial – Undesignated	Rollie Seltz
Robert Weygandt	Memorial – Undesignated	Rollie Seltz

Memorials are applied to whatever fund the donor designates. Note: If not designated, sometimes the family requests what fund they would like the memorials designated to.

HAPPY EASTER HE IS RISEN



Incarnation Lutheran Church, 4880 Hodgson Road, Shoreview, MN 55126
incarnationmn.org 651-484-7213