

# The *intercom* In Church and Community



## From the Senior Pastor Especially Now

It's interesting how a crisis can sharpen our vision and strengthen our resolve.



Here at Our Savior's, never has our ministry of proclaiming Christ and nurturing faith that connects with everyday life been more needed. These days are filled with fear and great uncertainty; even so, the mission we share leads us into these uncharted and turbulent waters with a sense of purpose and hope.

Earlier this year, the Governing Board held its annual planning retreat and together discerned the Holy Spirit leading us as a congregation to live into the following annual vision for ministry:

**Out of abundance we will joyfully celebrate  
God's grace and boldly embrace and serve all.**

Of course, in February this vision looked and felt different than it does today, but I believe it is exactly the vision we need to lead us through the COVID-19 crisis and beyond. It calls us to be people who are shaped by the abundance and extravagance of God's grace even as we experience times of shortfall and scarcity. It reminds us to live out of a sense of joy and celebration even as we struggle with the burdens of social isolation and distancing. And it compels us to be a community of inclusion and servanthood especially now when our instincts may be more self-serving. At a time when our newsfeeds are unrelenting with dire reports of disease and death and economic upheaval, this vision for ministry is God's gift of clarity and purpose for us as a community of faith.

So we have work to do, and now—especially now—is the time for us to be reflecting on how each of us is called to support financially this critical work of ministry.

By now, you have probably received materials in the mail that lay out for you in greater detail our plans for making this vision for



*Stewardship Appeal 2020*

ministry a reality in the year to come. We sense God leading us to:

- Develop a supportive partnership with Susan B. Anthony Elementary School.
- Provide teaching about our diverse neighbors and opportunities for us to connect with them in authentic community.
- Expand our high-impact spiritual care ministries.
- Explore and develop worship experiences designed for youth and/or young adults.
- Invest in paid staff through modest wage and benefit increases.

*continued*

# From the Senior Pastor

When we focus our resources and energy in these ways, we will be engaging in life-changing ministry at a time when our neighbors both near and far are hungry for hope and longing for the kind of love that our risen Lord displayed on the cross.

I invite you, therefore, to consider prayerfully and thoughtfully in the days ahead how you will be a 2020 Mission Investor here at Our Savior's so that the work to which God has called each of

us may continue to grow and thrive and hope may abound even now—especially now.

Grateful for your partnership,



Pr. Randy Gehring

## Ministry Spotlight — Stewardship

### My Generosity Story Dan Van Schepen

*As part of OSL's 2020 Stewardship Appeal, Faithful, Hopeful, Loving, members were invited to share a story from their life that embodies OSL's core value of Generosity.*

*Here, Dan Van Schepen, longtime OSL member and president of the Governing Board, shares his Generosity Story.*

*Learn more about Faithful, Hopeful, Loving at [oslchurch.com/stewardship](http://oslchurch.com/stewardship).*

#### **Where or from whom did you learn about the value of living a generous life?**

My parents. Growing up in a small town and being a child, you do not always realize how big of an influence some experience in your life will be until you reflect upon it years later. My parents both worked hard but moved between a few different job paths that left some significantly lean years. During my lifetime, I witnessed my parents tithe and volunteer faithfully to our hometown church. I remember overhearing their discussions (I'm not even sure they knew I heard them) about how those dollars would affect their



*The Van Schepen family: Dan, Gretta, Matthew, and Jacob*

finances through that month—their ability to buy groceries, buy school clothes, or allow us three boys to participate in different activities. In the end, the conversation always came back to “God will provide,” and of course, he did. Now, as an adult, with an unusually consistent career path (I haven’t moved jobs since I graduated college), I strive to maintain and live out the faith my parents had all those years, even when my decisions, thankfully, have not had to be nearly as consequential. I also rack my brain in an attempt to ensure I pass along these values to my children.

#### **When have you experienced the greatest joy in living generously?**

A few years ago, our family of four was able to participate in the Samaritan's Feet program as volunteers. The program is well run, meaningful, and consequential to the daily lives of a large swath of our Sioux Falls community. My joy in this was to view this experience through my oldest son's eyes. At five years old, he was so welcoming, excited, energetic, and full of questions; he buoyed the spirit of anyone within earshot that day. It was a time I truly felt God's hands at work, right then and there, in front of me.

faithful  
hopeful  
loving

Stewardship Appeal 2020



**What is it about Our Savior's mission that compels you to support it by giving your time, sharing your talents, and/or investing your finances?**

The outpouring of generosity we feel each week by all the wonderful staff, pastors, congregants, and visitors. Our family hopes that the efforts we return to OSL are a tiny reflection of the vast appreciation we feel for our OSL family, the connections we make, the aid in raising our children, and their developing faith journey.

**What difference have you seen Our Savior's make in the lives of its members and friends and/or in the broader community, both locally and globally?**

OSL's reach starts with the welcome and faith building my family experiences every week. That outreach gives us the stability, faith, and confidence to share our bounty generously to others in order that they may reap the joy we experience by being a part of this place.

To our community of Sioux Falls, OSL has kicked off our partnership with The Community Outreach to lead the faith community in Hezekiah House. We also partner with the Food to You Mobile Food Pantry, the Community Blood Bank, and the Summer Food Service Program, to name just a few local ties.

We partner with the South Dakota Synod of the ELCA in starting new ministries in the community: Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, WestSide Lutheran Church, Pueblo de Dios, Church on the Street, and more. At the state level, OSL takes a leadership role in the synod to be a partner in outreach to our Native American neighbors, Lutherans Outdoors, and Lutheran Social Services.

In addition, we have always had a vibrant TV ministry, and, more recently, Facebook Live ministry for those who are unable to attend weekly services in person. Now in this time of pandemic, this outreach has thrived and is touching the lives of many more. It also allows our members to maintain a semblance of community by staying engaged. Our staff has made creative and exhaustive efforts to reach out in new ways to make social distancing less demanding to our faith journey.

**How do you decide what a "faithful, hopeful, loving" offering to Our Savior's is, and how is this decision a part of following Jesus?**

Growing up in a small-town church that had a little more legalistic theology, tithing was not treated as a decision but more as an expectation. Though I have grown in my faith and have acquired a more grace-based theology, those early expectations are still there in the back of my mind. So when we were married, my wife and I decided early on that we were going to start tithing (giving away 10% of our income) and let faith push us to add to that each year as God's gifts crossed paths with ours. ♦

## See it Now!

**Gretta Van Schepen**, OSL member and the wife of Dan Van Schepen, also contributed her Generosity Story for *Faithful, Hopeful, Loving*, which OSL's Office Manager, Renee Aaker, presented for a video that launched the 2020 Stewardship Appeal. View Gretta's story at [oslchurch.com/stewardship](https://oslchurch.com/stewardship).

## Another Story of Generosity

Six hundred fruit trees planted in Mexico. Three-hundred fifty school uniforms and supplies distributed to children in Mozambique. Nine-hundred twenty-two water filters distributed to flood-affected households in Cambodia.

That's just the briefest glimpse of the work made possible by your gifts to ELCA Good Gifts last year.

At Our Savior's, in addition to purchases you may have made at Christmastime or Easter from the ELCA Good Gifts Catalog, half



of your Noisy Offering gifts go to ELCA Good Gifts. (The other half goes to support the Sioux Falls Hope Coalition's preschool scholarship initiative.) In 2019, OSL donated more than \$1,000 to ELCA Good Gifts through Noisy Offering gifts.

More than 85 percent of your gifts to ELCA Good Gifts directly support its programs, with less than 15 percent used for administration and fundraising.

Twenty-eight International Women Leaders scholarships awarded for higher education. Seventy-five health kits for newborns and 100 blankets for new mothers distributed in Madagascar. One-hundred fruit trees planted in Malawi. Sixty beekeepers trained and supported in Mexico. In all, your ELCA Good Gifts reach people in 72 countries around the world. Thank you for your continued generosity!

For more information, visit <https://goodgifts.elca.org>. ♦



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### *Worship Services*

Saturday Evening – 5:00 P.M., Sanctuary

Sunday Morning

Festive Worship – 8:45 and 11:00 A.M., Sanctuary

Celebrate Worship – 8:45 and 11:00 A.M., Celebrate Center

### *Television and Internet*

Celebrate: 9:00 A.M., KTTW (cable channel 9; channel 7.1)

Festive: 1:00 P.M., KSCB (cable channel 30; channel 53)

Website: [oslchurch.com](http://oslchurch.com)

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## Your Offering Makes a Difference

Your generosity is making a real difference in people's lives through the mission and ministry of OSL.

Thank you for your faithful and passionate commitment to God's work through this congregation. Your generosity helps Our Savior's fully fund its ministry of connecting faith to everyday life.

**Ministry Support  
Information Is Available  
from the Church Office  
on Request**