



NOT UNTO US

LIVING HOPE LUTHERAN



Not Unto Us
His Grace, His Mission, His Gifts

Not unto us, not unto us be glory, Lord;
Not unto us but to your name be praise;
Not unto us but to your name all honor be giv'n
For matchless mercy, forgiveness, and grace.

Amazing grace—that chose us ere the worlds were made;
Amazing grace—that sent your Son to save;
Amazing grace—that robed us in your righteousness
And taught our lips to sing glory and praise.

O faithful love—that shepherded through faithless years;
Forgiving love—that led us to your truth;
Unyielding love—that would not let us turn from you
But sent us forth to speak pardon and peace.

Not unto us but to your name be glory, Lord,
For grace so rich, so wide, so high, so free.
Abide with us till trav'ling days are over and done,
And pilgrim feet lead us home, Lord, to you.

Christian Worship #392

From Living Hope Campaign Chairman

Dear fellow recipients of God's grace, mission,
and gifts at Living Hope,

I write you about a once-in-a-generation opportunity
we share.

Through Christ Jesus our Savior, you and I have received
“matchless mercy, forgiveness, and grace.” To God's
name be glory! Through Christ Jesus our Savior, you and
I have been “sent forth to speak pardon and peace” to
our neighbors. To God's name be glory! Through Christ
Jesus our Savior, God has “taught our lips to sing glory
and praise” and to reflect his praise in our lives by using
his abundant gifts of time, talent, treasure, and truth. To
God's name be glory!

You and I have the opportunity to proclaim the Good
News of God's grace in Christ through Word and sacra-
ment in our community of Midlothian, within the greater
Richmond area, around central Virginia, and throughout
the world.

Following God's mission, we as a congregation have decided
together to expand our worship, fellowship, education, and
office spaces. Under God's blessing, this program will facil-
itate the growing ministry of our church family: **tripling the
number of souls** we can reach in Midlothian, **positioning us
to daughter congregations** in central Virginia, and **contrib-
uting to training Gospel ministers** in the world.

We launch this program not for ourselves. The new building
God enables us to create together will serve not ourselves,
but our neighbors. The congregations God enables us to start
will pass on our confession of the true faith to our children.
The Gospel ministers God enables us to equip will serve in
the U.S., on the world mission field, and back here in our
own mission field of Virginia. We as leaders at Living Hope
pray that you will join us generously and joyfully.

Not unto us!

In Christ,

Ryan Olson





Why Living Hope Lutheran Church?

Recall our mission statement: As recipients of God’s grace through the gospel of Jesus Christ, Living Hope exists to proclaim the gospel in Word and sacrament in our community and throughout the world in order to bring the lost to Christ and to nurture believers for lives of Christian service.

Remember the Scripture that inspired our name as a church: “By God’s great mercy he gave us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, into an inheritance that is undying, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you. Through faith you are being protected by God’s power for the salvation that is ready to be revealed at the end of time” (1 Peter 1:3b-5).

Can you comprehend it? By your baptism, you have received new birth. An inheritance of eternal life and blessing with Jesus forever is being kept in heaven *for you!* God has done this in Christ *for you.* He said “It is finished” *for you.* How can we not share this message of Good News for all?

While most churches are giving up on this message to accommodate to the culture or are withdrawing into enclaves or are fighting political battles, Living Hope stands firm and reaches out with the timeless message of God’s grace in Christ.

Living Hope is...

A church family rooted in Christ through the gospel.

A distinguishing characteristic of our church is its emphasis on teaching and learning the Word of God. Visitors regularly comment on the expositional nature of our sermons and the educational focus of our worship. People who take our *Jesus and Me* class regularly comment on the depth in which we study the Bible and how much it opens their eyes to the truth. This is sadly unique among churches today. It is our strength.

Our vision is to be a congregation where people learn the Bible. This is how God establishes and fosters a relationship with each individual in his church family through faith. It is also how we grow closer to each other in love.

Education defines not only our nurture, but our outreach. We want to advertise *Jesus and Me* and Confirmation Class in our community and personally invite friends to attend with us. For many, coming to a class with a friend can be less intimidating than coming to a service. The dialogical nature of a classroom builds trust and relationships between people in a way that corporate worship doesn't.

A long-range goal in education (beyond the scope of our present plan) is to start a Lutheran elementary school.

Living Hope is...

Strengthening relationships in Christ through His Word.

The family is the basic building block of both society and the church. When the family suffers, society suffers. When the family suffers, very often its members' relationship with Christ suffers. Many unbelieving families experience the misery of brokenness and recognize the damage it inflicts. Help is also needed by families within our congregation.

Since Jesus' love is the essential—and often missing—ingredient for familial love, marriage and family ministry provides an opportunity to proclaim the gospel to people who hunger and thirst for its peace. Programs that meet marriage, family, and other relationship needs provide opportunities for our members to invite friends to events that meet their needs with the gospel.

Living Hope stands as a link between heaven and earth in Midlothian and central Virginia. By God's grace, we deliver his gifts to people by joining him in his mission.

In a world as broken and desperate as ours,
how can we keep this Good News to ourselves?

Not Unto Us: Campaign Overview

Launching a building program will be great for us, won't it? We will enjoy uncrowded classrooms, easier access to parking, greater space to have refreshments after church, a more impressive worship experience, and many other blessings. And won't accomplishing all of this be great for us to do as a church? Think of what we can do when we share our resources and work together!

But this project is not for us! The focus isn't on us. Anything that is accomplished is not from us. Even the gifts we will give are not ours. The focus and the accomplishments and the gifts are all his! Not unto us, O Lord, but unto you!

In Psalm 115, the inspired psalmist gives God alone the glory because God alone is worthy of it! The idols that try to take his place are "the work of human hands." Instead of those worthless idols, the psalmist exhorts God's people to trust in him since he is our "help" and "shield." He is the only one who is worthy and trustworthy, so God's people have the opportunity to serve and praise him alone—on earth for today and in heaven for eternity.

His Grace

Not to us, O LORD, not to us,
but to your name give glory,
because of your mercy,
because of your truth.

Psalm 115:1

We were objects of wrath. We were dead in our sins. Like our neighbors, once we were beholden to idols. And even still, our sinful flesh wants to love and trust false gods: money, family, security, prestige, perfect health. But we are able to give glory to God instead of to idols because of *his* mercy and *his* truth. He has saved us from our sins through Christ's perfect life, innocent suffering and death, victorious resurrection, and glorious ascension. He has had mercy on us by the washing of rebirth in our baptism. And he preserves us by giving us the Word of God in its truth and purity.

Indeed, through Christ Jesus our Savior, we have received "matchless mercy, forgiveness, and grace!"

None of this was the result of anything we have done! It's totally **his grace!**

His Mission

Why should the nations say,
"So where is their God now?"
In fact, our God is in the heavens,
He does everything that pleases him.

Psalm 115:2-3

God's grace in Word and Sacrament totally transforms our lives. As a result, our neighbors mock us. They say that our beliefs aren't logical or that we don't follow science. They say that we're wasting our time or money. They say that we're hateful and exclusive. They say our hope is naive.

But God has been pleased to give us his forgiveness through Christ Jesus our Savior. And now we have been "sent forth to speak pardon and peace" to our neighbors. Despite their objections and scoffing, God loved them so much that he gave his only Son to save them and to give them peace with God and peace with their neighbors.

That peace is completely missing from their lives. He sends us on his mission to extend his forgiveness and peace to our neighbors.

His Gifts

The heavens are heavens for the LORD,
but the earth he gave to the children of Adam.

Psalm 115:16

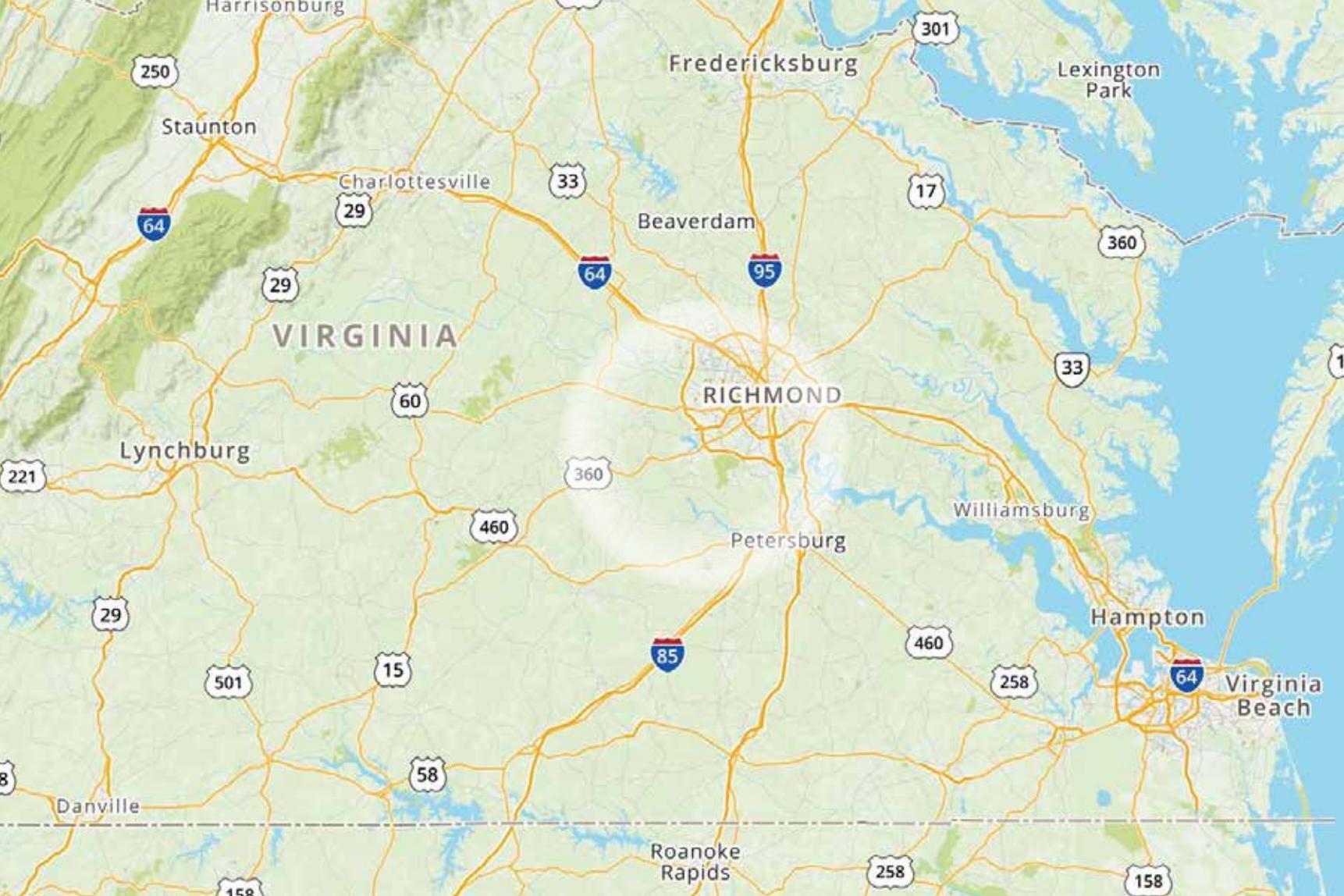
When God created the heavens and the earth, he gave the earth to humans to care for it. He showers each of us with blessings: daily food, a job, a home, a vehicle, a peaceful city with police to keep us safe, a system of laws to make our society orderly, talents and abilities, many years of grace during a time of great abundance. God has also put us in relationships, maybe with a spouse, perhaps raising children or helping with grandchildren, within a church, under an employer and a government, providing for employees, honoring parents who may still be alive, and so on. These are all godly vocations because God has called us to them. And he provides everything we need to love and serve those with whom we are in relationships. Best of all, God did not even withhold from us his Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. He has provided his holy Word and his Sacraments to deliver forgiveness of sins and the eternal blessing of heaven through Christ. And he promises his presence and his peace.

Our gracious God gives us these things not only for ourselves. He gives them to us so we can steward them and manage them in service to our neighbors. Without him, we would have none of these things. Out of thanksgiving, we offer him his blessings and our lives in service to Jesus and our neighbors.

Through Christ Jesus our Savior, God has “taught our lips to sing glory and praise” and to reflect his praise in our lives by our use of his abundant gifts of time, talent, treasure, and truth.

In view of God’s grace, mission, and gifts, what are we to do at
Living Hope Lutheran Church in Midlothian, Virginia?

The Capital Campaign Committee and Church Council have outlined
three goals for Living Hope in the Not Unto Us Campaign.



Goal #1: Triple the Number of Souls Reached

As the Holy Spirit blesses our gospel efforts, the gifts of God’s people at Living Hope will **triple the number of souls** we reach and nurture personally and corporately in greater Richmond.

Surveys show that 80 percent of the U.S. population have an “immanent” picture of the world. What does that mean? These are people who make their decisions entirely based on this world. Their ethical systems depend on whether their decisions will make them happy, whether they’ll get ahead, whether they’ll be following social conventions, or whether they’ll be contributing to the community.

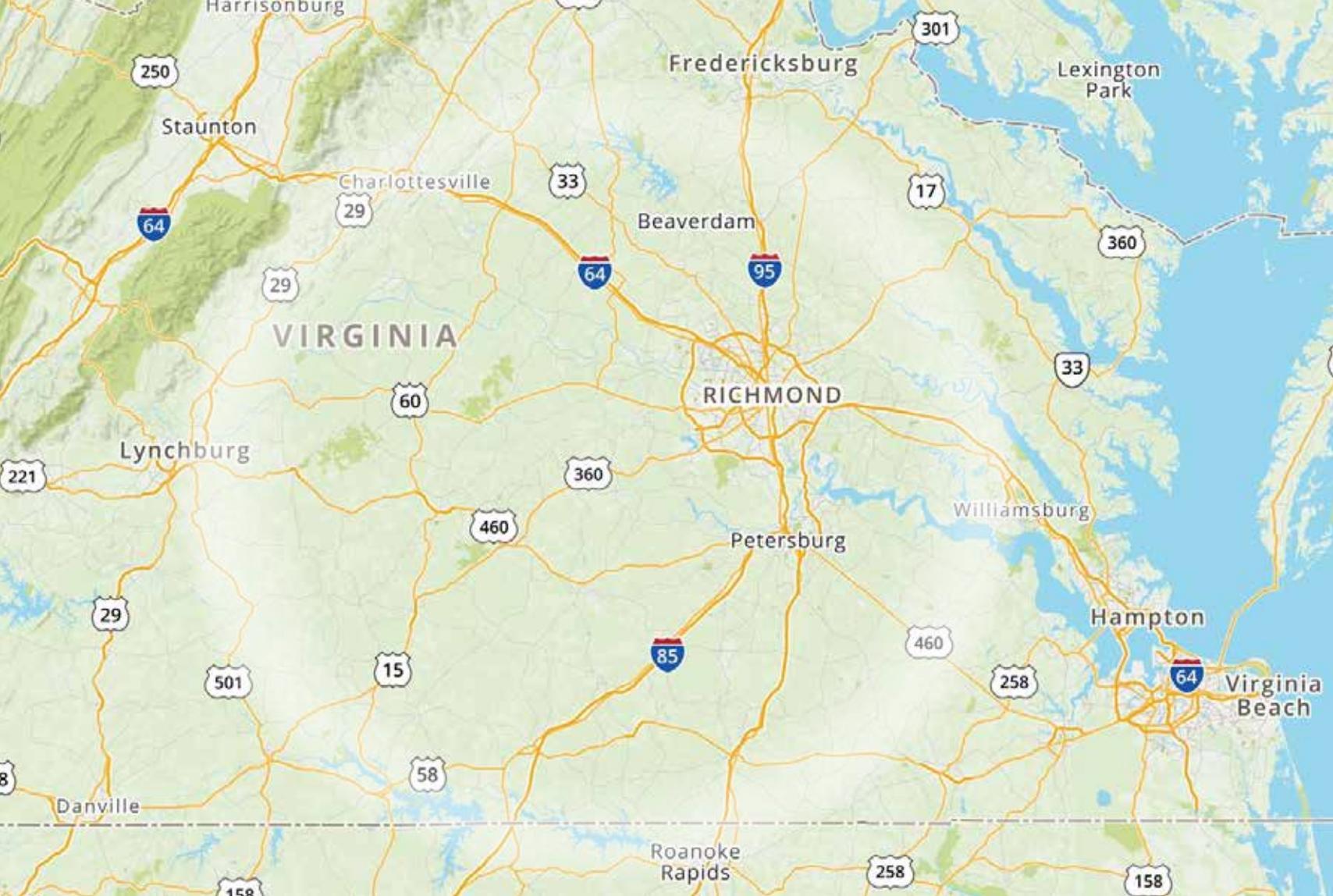
So in our home of Chesterfield County, some 252,482 men, women, and children are living their lives only focused on this world. Their hope and purpose go no further than the brass sky—their feelings, their financial gains, their moralistic self-satisfaction, or their local community. Of course, we, too, are tempted by these idols, but by God’s grace, we know forgiveness in Jesus.

Christ died for all of us—including those 252,482 people who are our neighbors in Chesterfield County. Many of them drive by us on a Sunday morning and see a full parking lot. If they came inside, they would find fellowship and forgiveness and freedom in Christ. But today, if they entered, they would see a sanctuary and fellowship hall that are full and cramped. We need to build!



Expanding our capacity would increase the seating available for worship, increase the number of parking spaces available, increase the availability of classrooms for Sunday mornings and mid-week classes like *Jesus and Me*, and provide office space for our Pastor and support staff to have meetings and to welcome members and guests to the church during the week. The space available for fellowship after services would expand also, enabling us to extend hospitality to visitors. A cry room with a view of the sanctuary would provide parents with active children a place to participate in the service.

Tripling our size sounds major. Imagine if we could go from serving 90-100 on a Sunday to serving 300 with all of our services and ministries. But even that is still a drop in the bucket compared to the need in our own backyard. How can we not build extra room for our neighbors to hear the Good News that they are forgiven—fully and freely—and that their lives can be shaped by the hope and purpose that we have found in Jesus?



Goal #2: Daughter New Congregations

As the Holy Spirit blesses our gospel efforts, our gifts will **daughter new congregations**, establishing a strong foothold of confessional, evangelical Lutheranism in central Virginia.

Today, our focus is on growing our capacity to reach more souls through our own congregation. When we develop our site with additional facilities and parking, we will have the opportunity to think beyond the souls we can serve in our own building. Then, we would be able to meet the need for churches centered on teaching God's Word in its truth and purity.

Even in our densely populated part of the United States, within a 150-mile radius around Living Hope, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) has only 14 other churches. We're the only one within 50 miles! Many in our congregation drive more than 30 minutes to reach us. We each represent towns and cities that need to hear the unadulterated Gospel message.

There are many churches around us. Many of our members drive by dozens of churches to reach us. Why? Certainly, it's because they belong and are loved. It's true that a sense of belonging is increasingly rare in our society—but it's not impossible to find other places to belong. Most often, people drive such distances past other churches because of the preaching and teaching at Living Hope. Because we are committed to God's Word. Because we do not bend our teaching to the surrounding culture. We don't follow fads and whims.

Every Sunday, we hear the same message. Grace alone. Faith alone. Scripture alone. Christ alone. Christ crucified for me for the forgiveness of all my sins. Salvation received by faith in the waters of baptism. Forgiveness conveyed by the body and blood of Christ at the Lord's Supper and in the absolution spoken as if by Jesus himself.

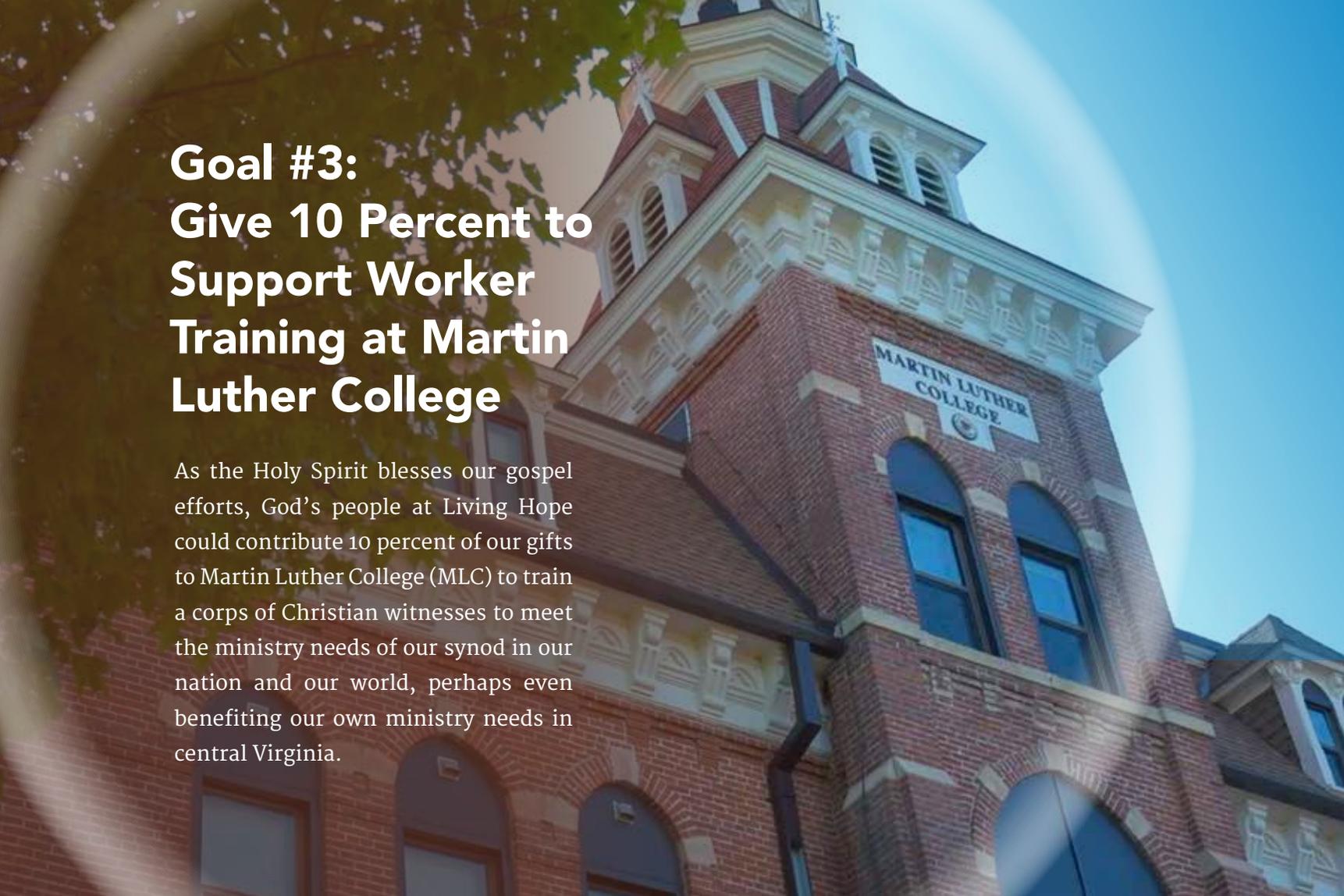
That reliable message that has transformed our lives comes from the Bible and is summarized in the Lutheran Confessions. God doesn't make us guess what the truth is. He tells us in his Word. The Small Catechism distills the content of Scripture into memorable teachings we can use to educate our children and grandchildren. They gather together the truths of God's Word into a confession that we speak in our hearts and proclaim with our mouths.

At our confirmations, we promised we would hold onto the Lutheran Confessions until we die! Do you remember when you said that? We were willing to make that radical commitment when we stood before the whole church. And we believe that everyone else would also experience great joy and purpose in life if they were to live by that same confession of the Christian faith.

And so we pray and give not only that God would triple the number of fellow believers who experience such joy and meaning in life, as we do. We pray and labor also that our joy and purpose would overflow into new churches that teach the same Lutheran confession.

Starting new churches certainly requires money. But it also requires lay leaders. As we have the opportunity to participate in the growth of Living Hope as lay leaders in the congregation, we may be preparing to provide leadership in brand new WELS congregations someday.

Imagine if we gave so abundantly and served so generously that Living Hope couldn't contain the gifts and the service! Imagine if the dollars and the hours had to seek out out new recipients who would hear the soul-saving, life-giving message of Christ who is for us.



Goal #3: Give 10 Percent to Support Worker Training at Martin Luther College

As the Holy Spirit blesses our gospel efforts, God's people at Living Hope could contribute 10 percent of our gifts to Martin Luther College (MLC) to train a corps of Christian witnesses to meet the ministry needs of our synod in our nation and our world, perhaps even benefiting our own ministry needs in central Virginia.

The faithful preaching and teaching that we enjoy requires a multi-generational commitment to preparing workers for the harvest field. In WELS, we have two preparatory schools, a college, and a seminary that train nearly all of the pastors and teachers who serve in our churches. Our Pastor, Michael Seifert, is a product of one of our 304 elementary schools, one of the prep schools, Martin Luther College, and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

With 730 students, MLC trains almost every pastor and teacher who will serve in our church body. “Equipping Christian Witnesses” is a two-year, silver anniversary capital campaign that will help MLC increase its enrollment to 1,000 students to train for the Gospel ministry, provide matching funds to reduce student costs, and offer adequate facilities for their programs.

Why would we participate in a campaign for our college in New Ulm, Minnesota? Don’t we have other needs closer to home? Certainly, we do. Consider these reasons.

- We teach that we give generously of the “firstfruits” of our income. Why wouldn’t we do the same as a church?
- Our church body provides a training system for called workers that has served us well for more than a century. Together as a synod, we supported the preparation of thousands of pastors and teachers who serve in established churches, start home missions like Living Hope, and serve in the mission fields around the world. With our offerings and campaign gifts, we can participate in bringing the Gospel to 42 world mission fields.

- In addition, we serve as a “Macedonian encouragement.” In 2 Corinthians 8-9, Paul writes to the Corinthians about the offering he is collecting for the Jerusalem churches. Trying to encourage them to give super-generously, he urges them to imitate the Macedonians. The Macedonian churches apparently did not have much to give because they gave even more than they had! And though they had little, they were a huge encouragement to Paul and to their fellow Christians in wealthier places to give sacrificially. We are currently a small church compared to many WELS congregations in the Midwest. But we together could serve as an example in our sacrificial giving, not looking out for ourselves first, but looking out for the needs of others first.
- And we can be confident that those gifts will come back to us, to benefit Living Hope when we need another pastor, a teacher, an early childhood director, or a staff minister.

Campaign Plan

The NUU Campaign will publicly launch in the Fall of 2020 with a financial goal of \$450,000. This will provide a down payment of \$400,000 on a mortgage for a \$1.6 million facility, as well as a \$50,000 offering, a gift of about 10 percent of the total NUU goal toward Martin Luther College’s Equipping Christian Witnesses Campaign.

Beginning now, pledges will be welcomed through 2021 and would be fully contributed by the end of 2023. In 2024, we would break ground on a new facility. The Capital Campaign Committee will communicate with the Council, with donors, and with all members of the congregation our progress toward our goal.



For Greater Richmond, Central Virginia, Our Nation & Our World

In his Large Catechism, Martin Luther taught about the Apostle's Creed. Many of us say it every day of our lives and nearly every Sunday. "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth." Those twelve words of the "first article" tell us who our Father in Heaven is and what kind of God he is. He made all the things we see and can't see, and he made them for us. He gives them to us: our eyes, ears, children, vehicles, home, retirement account, and savings balance. What a comfort it is to recognize all that God has given us in the most prosperous nation in the world at the richest time in human history.

But, Luther says, this first article "ought to humble and terrify us all, if we believed it. For we sin daily with eyes, ears, hands, body and soul, money and possessions, and with everything we have." But if we would "sense and see his fatherly heart and his surpassing love toward us.... the heart would be warmed and kindled to be thankful, and to use all such good things to honor and praise God."

God has given you many vocations in your life. Perhaps you are a parent or grandparent, a son or daughter to

living parents, an employee or an employer, a citizen, and the like. To live out these many vocations, God calls you to use the possessions and money he has given you.

One vocation that we share is as members of Living Hope. By God's grace, we have the opportunity to do a project together that, with the Holy Spirit's blessing, could triple the number of souls God can reach through us in *greater Richmond*, daughter new congregations in *central Virginia*, and provide an offering to Martin Luther College to equip the next generation of Christian witnesses in *our country and around our world*.

And doing so will help *us*, but it's *not for us!* It's *for our neighbors*. And it's *not for our glory*, but *for God's!* And we do it *not with our wealth*, but *with God's!* We are merely returning it to him in gratitude for what he has done for us in Christ.

Please consider how you can give sacrificially over the next four years to the Not Unto Us campaign for the growth of God's Kingdom and the spread of his name.

Pledge Form

Name: _____

In addition to our regular giving, we will give offerings for the Not Unto Us Campaign in the following total amount:

- \$80,000 (\$20,000 per year)
- \$40,000 (\$10,000 per year)
- \$20,000 (\$5,000 per year)
- \$10,000 (\$2,500 per year)
- \$5,000 (\$1,250 per year)
- \$2,500 (\$625 per year)
- \$1,000 (\$500 per year)
- Other:

I will give that amount in the form of:

- Cash Stocks
- IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution
- Other:

I will give that amount:

- In a one-time gift
- In an annual gift each year
- In semi-annual gifts
- In quarterly gifts
- In monthly gifts

If in multiple gifts, I would like to be reminded of my promise:

- By email (include address):

- By phone (include number):

- By mail (include address):

I will:

- Write a check (designate for NUU Campaign)
- Set up an automatic bank draft from my checking account (include voided check)
- Transfer assets to WELS Foundation in the name of Living Hope's NUU Campaign
- Other:

Please note these special instructions:



cut or tear along the dotted line

Thank you for prayerfully considering a gift to Living Hope's Not Unto Us Campaign.



livinghopewels.com

