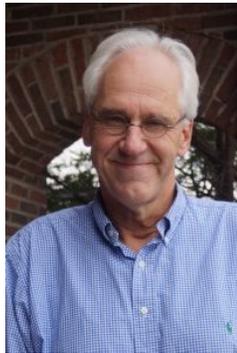


# Park Avenue United Methodist Church

## 2016 Annual Report

**2 Corinthians 5:18** “All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.”

In paging through my calendar, I was quickly reminded of what a challenging year 2016 was in our community, nation and world. In addition to profoundly disturbing acts of violence, racial unrest, and as acrimonious a presidential election as has taken place in our nation's history, many in our own church family have experienced loss and significant challenges, both in their workplace and families. All of which serves as a reminder of how grateful I am to be a part of a faith community here at Park Avenue--a place where people have again stepped up to give of time, abilities and resources to bring spiritual and relational healing, to advocate for children and young people, to listen to and find ways of supporting our neighbors (many of whom live at-risk lives), to further the cause of racial reconciliation, to meet physical needs, and to spread the love of Jesus, both here in South Minneapolis and around the world. I believe God is still on the move at Park, using our various gifts and ideas—our hands, feet and hearts—to accomplish kingdom work.



With gratitude for being on the journey with you,  
Dr. Will Healy, Senior Pastor

### OUTREACH AND SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ This was our third year of sharing food and fun on the blacktop with our neighbors through **Park in the Neighborhood** during the month of July. Despite an uncooperative weather pattern, attendance increased each week, culminating in over 300 the final night!
- ◆ **32** cars opened their trunks to more than **350** children from our neighborhood in providing a safe, community-building alternative to trick or treating at our Eighth Annual **Trunk or Treat**. The Minneapolis Fire Department brought a truck for the children to explore!
- ◆ Our **Cornerstone Store** expanded by being open more frequently to accommodate both Sunday morning worshippers, special event attendees, Joyce Preschool parents and more! Thanks to our Coordinator Ann Bauer and all our faithful volunteers for this effort.
- ◆ **Cornerstone** also partnered with Union Gospel Mission to hand out food bags for Thanksgiving.
- ◆ We again hosted a **Caroling & Chili Supper Night** and welcomed a number of our neighbors in for a great meal provided by Park's United Methodist Men.
- ◆ The **Mission Team** took the lead in coordinating Park Ave's support of the summer produce fair at Simpson. In addition to financial donations, youth and adults volunteered to distribute produce to more than 100 families.

**Our Park Avenue Vision:** *We will be a vibrantly Christ-centered, multiracial, multiethnic, intergenerational instrument of transformation, actively engaged with our urban neighborhood and our world.*

### Staffing Updates:

**We welcomed Rev. Alanna Tyler as our new Associate Pastor!!**



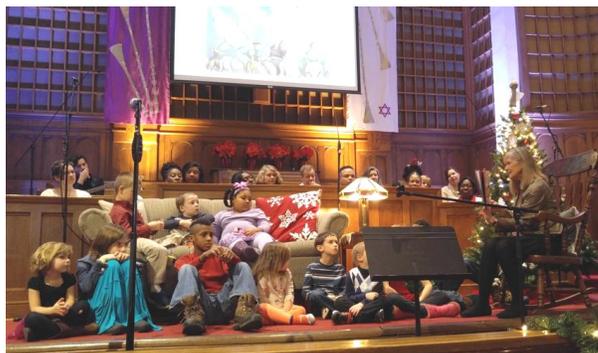
We also said farewell to a number of Park Ave staff. Our deep thanks and best wishes to: Rev. Cynthia Williams (now serving as District Superintendent in the Minnesota Annual Conference River Valley District), Katie Matson-Daley (now serving on staff at the Woodbury Peaceful Grove UMC), Jill Meents (who completed her service as our Pastoral Intern), and Terry Nickel & Brigitte Blesi of our custodial team.

At the same time, we have been blessed with several new additions to our staff:

- Ann Bauer as our Cornerstone Coordinator
- Danny Lebre to our custodial team
- Adaobi Nduka, Interim Minister of Children
- Steven Belton, who transitioned from serving as our Minister of Youth (to assume his new role as President of the Minneapolis Urban League), accepted our invitation to continue ministry as a member of our Preaching Team.

## WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ We welcomed **25 New Members** and celebrated **12 Baptisms** in the past year.
- ◆ **Children's Church** again welcomed a wonderful throng of **Pre K—5th graders** on Sunday mornings. Our numbers of little ones continues to grow in both Children's Church and the **Nursery** and we are grateful for Adaobi Nduka as our **Interim Minister of Children** and **Kelly Kahle** as our **Early Childhood Specialist**.
- ◆ Our Children's and Youth Choirs (**Glory Bes** and **Spirit of David**) shared their gifts at the Midtown Global Market and other places in the Twin Cities.
- ◆ **The-Month-That-Was**, a pictorial glance back each month as a way of celebrating what God has done in and through Park Avenue continues to be a much-anticipated highlight of our Sunday morning worship service.
- ◆ Work was completed on a new **recording studio** in our Choir Room area.
- ◆ Our Annual **Good Friday Seven Last Words Service** with powerful guest preaching.
- ◆ **Fall Choir Concert** with our friends from First Covenant Church in Minneapolis and special guest Robert Robinson.
- ◆ Our Gospel Choir performed with Philip Brunelle at the Women of Color Expo.



## CHURCH BUILDING:

- ◆ Our Trustees hosted two Work Days that enabled us to get some much-needed decluttering and clean-up done.
- ◆ We installed new LED lighting in the Sanctuary and parking lot.
- ◆ Upgrades were performed on the boiler and the A/C in the Sanctuary.



## PROGRAMMING AND SPECIAL EVENTS

- ◆ **Wednesday Night Prayer** and **Bible Studies** for **Adults** and **Youth** continued to provide times for spiritual growth and fellowship each week.
- ◆ Our 4th Annual Fall **Sunday Suppers** gave the Park Ave family opportunities to break bread and deepen connections.
- ◆ The Adult Spiritual Formation Team organized a third annual **All Church Bowling Night**.
- ◆ 60 people participated in a **Passover Seder Service** during Lent.
- ◆ Our 3rd Annual **Thanksgiving Eve Service & Pie Social** was enjoyed by nearly 250 people.
- ◆ 70 children and youth experienced fun and spiritual growth through **Summer Ministries** offerings of Vacation Bible School, Overnight Camp and Camp MSP (Mission Service Purpose) Day Camp.
- ◆ This was our 5th year of Park Avenue's **CDF Freedom Schools Program!** Once again, our site received perfect ratings from the Children's Defense Fund for program quality and our scholar reading scores were 12% higher than the national Freedom School average!
- ◆ The **UMM Retreat** brought together approximately 50 men in our congregation for a weekend of fun, fellowship and prayer.
- ◆ The **Women's Retreat** was held at a beautiful new location, drawing more than 80 attendees....more than in the last 5 years!
- ◆ **Congregational Care** continued to serve our congregation through prayer shawls, home visits, grief workshops, funeral support and more.
- ◆ We hosted a **Children and Families Candidate Forum** in partnership with Joyce Preschool and the Children's Defense Fund.
- ◆ At the **7<sup>th</sup> Annual Advent Festival** we welcomed 37 family groups, nine of whom were first-timers. It was a wonderfully intergenerational event with many adults assisting our children in arts and crafts projects. We concluded the afternoon with a short worship service with special music from the combined Glory Bes and Spirit of David choirs.



## Giving Highlights

Our giving and the careful management of our resources allowed us to transfer some \$58K to our reserve fund in 2016, something we've been unable to do for several years.

Change-4-Change giving was over double that of a year ago with \$23K given to our church and community partners.

Capital Campaign contributions continue to come in and we rejoice that we have seen our mortgage of \$700K reduced to less than \$170K. The end is in sight!

Apportionment giving was again increased in 2016 with another scheduled increase for the coming year.

We gained some 50 new giving participants in 2016.

Thanks to our Finance Committee, ministry leaders, staff and Nancy Birth (our amazing bookkeeper!) for their faithful attention to the stewarding of our resources!



## PARTNERS IN “ENGAGING WITH OUR URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD & WORLD”

We are thankful for our ongoing partnerships with organizations that reach out and serve our community, both here on our campus and beyond: African American Registry, Banyan, Christ’s Children, Dinomights, Families Moving Forward, Joyce Preschool, Matter, Midwest Teen Challenge, Peace & Hope International, Sabathani Food Shelf, St. Mary’s Health Clinic, Shelter Care for Kids, Solid Starts Program, Union Gospel Mission, Urban Homeworks, Venture Expeditions, Volunteer Lawyers Network, and the Water Protectors at Standing Rock.



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