

River Table Meeting
Tuesday, March 17, 2026, 5pm - Zoom

1. Highs/Lows/Opening Devotion Pastor Hans – 5mns
2. A reminder of the Principles and Group Norms – 3mn

God's purpose for River of Hope

We go out to transform lives through Jesus Christ.

Guiding Principles

God is God and we are not.

We are called to grow together as disciples: to forgive, to teach, to love

Disciples are inspired by the Holy Spirit to take risks.

Disciples work for God's justice.

Disciples serve with no strings attached.

Disciples invite and welcome through loving acceptance.

We meet you where you are.

3. **GROUP NORMS**
Show grace to each other.
Participate with honesty and respect.
Ask for clarification.
Assume the best intentions of others.
Offer own thoughts honestly and listen carefully to others.
4. Discussion/Approval of minutes from last month's River Table Meeting – 5 mns
5. Financial Report – 5 mns
6. Table Reports/Pastor Report – 10 mns
7. Continuing Business/New Business using IDS (Identify/Discuss/Solve) model from the following – 35 minutes
 - IDS How are we keeping track of Action Items? Who updates?
 - Who is backup treasurer for Arlyn?
 - Anything from Tables/Pastor Report
 - Delegates for Synod Assembly June 5-6
 - River of Hope Goals for 2026: Increased Visibility. Increased Member and Targeted Group Participation
8. Next regular meeting: Tuesday, April 14th 5pm at the Event Center
9. Closing – Lord's prayer – 2 mn

River Table Meeting Minutes
2-10-26 5pm

In attendance: Hans, Jim S, Ron, Geoff, Arlyn, Sara, Nate

Jim moved to approve River Table Minutes, Arlyn 2nd, Approved

Jim moved to change the "Global Refuge" line item on the Budget to "Immigrant Support.
Sara 2nd, Approved

Finance Report

Of note, Checking account is lower than last month due to insurance coverage.

The new software is coming along nicely. RoH needs to train in a back-up for Arlyn (Treasurer).

A couple of ideas are Andy Evenson & Brian Tillmann

Jim S. will contact the Stewardship to find a back-up treasurer

Jim moved to accept the Finance report. Geoff 2nd, Approved

Gathering Table Minutes Concern- How are Lent meal providers & servers selected? How are they being informed?

Sara will contact Portia to inquire.

Unfortunately, there does not seem to be concern of the current procedure & I foresee future difficulties when servers are unaware of the expectations and simply do not show up. As for me, I will do my best to find someone to serve in my place.

Geoff moved to approve Gathering table minutes. Jim 2nd Approved

WAM table

The River Table reviewed the Congregation Use Resources Document. No final decisions were made. The River Table requests that the WAM Table create an EVENT Policy for A/V Usage.

Jim will contact Jim Nelson to allot 2-3 minutes during the service to describe the worship roles in hopes that more people will volunteer.

In response to the Retreat, Jim will contact the Hutch Station & the State Theater to find the cost of advertising.

Jim & Hans will find members for a Marketing Folding Table to implement a marketing strategy in response to the Retreat.

Youth Bible Study will begin again in March.

The next River Table Meeting is scheduled for March 17th to accommodate many of the members of Spring Break.

Parish Personnel Table Meeting Minutes –February 3, 2026

3:30 p.m. – Event Center

Reforming Still – Transforming Always

Our purpose: We go out to transform lives through Jesus Christ.

Guiding Principles

[disciple = learn]

+God is God and we are not.

+We are called to grow together as disciples: to forgive, to teach, to love.

+Disciples are inspired by the Holy Spirit to take risks.

+Disciples work for God's justice.

+Disciples serve with no strings attached

+Disciples invite and welcome through loving acceptance.

+We meet you where you are.

- Share highs and lows
- Prayer or reflection
- Pastor Hans General Update
 - Pastor Hans requesting off and approved for the following dates:
 - March 7 & 8 for vacation time - Linda Pederson will preach
 - February 17th-22nd- for medical leave- Andy Evenson will preach
 - March 31st and April 1st for vacation time
 - Thank you to staff for all their help with Agape concert We appreciate the dedication of our staff.
 - Lisa and Pastor Hans are working on a “Red Book”, which is an organized book that will include a large amount of church records (baptisms, confirmations, weddings, past pastors, funerals, etc). This is standard operating procedure at many churches.
 - New record keeping software for church-Icon Payroll -financial record keeping, event record keeping (in tandem with Red Book), congregation information
- Brian Pollman has communicated his intent to step back from the Personnel Table after 10 years of service. We will discuss at future meetings recruiting a new member to the table.
- Review Paid Leave decisions made at ROH
 - 8.10 **Minnesota Paid Leave**
Minnesota Paid Leave is a state government program that offers payments and job protections when people take time off work to care for themselves or loved ones. It became law in January 2026.

- We are working to find out if ordained clergy are exempt from the Minnesota Paid Leave Tax and benefits. We have heard several different things from different sources.
 - Hourly church employees qualify for this program and may take time off work for an extended period for defined medical and family leave.
 - As voted by the River Table, River of Hope Lutheran Church will cover all the employees entire tax payment toward Minnesota Paid Leave, equally 0.66% of pay.
 - Time may be taken in hourly increments by hourly employees and in one day increments by salaried employees. The Paid Leave benefit may not be “topped off” by salaried employees. The Paid Leave benefit may be “topped off” by hourly employees using any earned PTO.
 - The qualifying event (such as a serious health condition) must be expected to last at least **seven calendar days** to qualify.
 - Employees will be provided with information regarding the Minnesota Paid Leave Law upon hire at River of Hope Lutheran Church.
 - Requests for leave will be reviewed by the Personnel Table, which will make a recommendation to the River Table. The River Table will then vote on the validity of the request and one of the paid leave administrators will enter that decision into the state system.
 - Please see the MN Paid Leave website (paidleave.mn.gov) for the most current information on how to apply, tax rates, types of approved leave and covered leave durations. Employees should bring questions and concerns about the program to the Lead Pastor and one of River of Hope’s MN Paid Leave administrators:
 - Arlyn DeBruyckere
 - Dan Watts
 - Angie Pfeiffer Bedard
 - The personnel table voted to allow hourly employees to top off their Paid Leave with PTO.
 - Time may be taken in hourly increments by hourly employees and in one day increments by salaried employees. The Paid Leave benefit may not be “topped off” by salaried employees. The Paid Leave benefit may be “topped off” by hourly employees using any earned PTO.
- Review Employee Handbook Updates:
 - The employee handbook has not been updated for some time. We will work on a section each meeting until the entire handbook has been updated.
 - In addition to the agenda for our next meeting, we will review sections 1-3.
 - Plan for staff reviews

- Jim's staff review was completed in October 2025 and has been put in his employee file.
- Reviews for Lisa, Emily, and Katie will be done in February and March.
- Compile and Review of Job Descriptions -Each employee will be given a copy of their job description. They will be given a chance to suggest changes and job descriptions will be updated by the assigned person below. The suggested changes will be brought back to the Personnel Table for final approval.
 - Angie – Lisa and Emily
 - Nancy- Katie
 - Jeannette – Jim
- It was discussed that none of the current members of the Personnel Table know if the Earned Safe and Sick Time law (Went into effect in MN in January 2025) has been implemented at ROH
 - Hans will reach out to fellow clergy to see what other churches are doing.
 - Discuss with Nan and Dan Watts to see if this has been implemented into our payroll system.
 - We will need to update the paid leave policy in our employee manual to reflect the new law.
- Next Meeting –at the Event Center: March 24th, 2:00 PM

We Go Out, February 9th, 2026

Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Allen G, Leslie K, Phyllis L, Jerry L, Lisa Tschimperle

Meeting at Dunn Bros in the meeting room at 10:30am

Discussion items.

Leslie led with prayer.

1. Allen sent us a video by Jane Elliot Interview on Race to be discussed at our next meeting.
2. Allen is interested in leading Adult Education some Sunday's at 9:30am. He is interested in helping people have conversations with family, friends and neighbors to be more comfortable in our church talking about our faith. As well as informing and teaching others how to handle tough conversations.
3. Lisa started to talk about the Saturday Workshop. She sent her notes to the team to go over. More discussion to follow.
4. Lisa typed up all of the post notes Allen typed up to put into the Worship Bulletin and to put on the Welcome table. We thought about 10 copies to start with.
5. Our next meeting is March 9th, at 10:30am, Dunn Bros.

Our meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer.

Minutes submitted by Lisa T

WAM Minutes

February 17, 2026

Portia Brandsoy, Ruth Hamlow, Linda Remucal, Sara Nelson and Jim Nelson shared Highs and Lows and had supper together.

How do you all think Music and Worship have been going at ROH, and what are places that you feel we could improve?

Members commented on Good music, great singers, and enjoyed the occasional Special Music Opportunities. Also people enjoyed people of all ages participating!

River Team Switcheroo...how's it going so far?

In an effort to get more people to sign up to be Ushers and Greeters, etc., we have decided to NOT use River Tables for a time, and instead, invite all ROH members to consider signing up to help in whatever capacity they are able and in whatever month they are available. Ruth mentioned that having a paid subscription to Sign Up Genius could help in this endeavor. The cost would be \$22.49 per month and would allow us to have 10 administrators instead of only Ruth. Jim will bring this up at the next Staff Meeting.

We also had been doing a better job getting confirmation age students involved in helping. Again, Jim will bring this up to staff.

Having the Sign Up Genius part of the E-news has been a great help...please continue.

We continue to find it a challenge to staff the streaming / PowerPoint / Sound Board positions.

Sometimes the volume is very low at home. We continue to try and improve.

We will again be leaving tables up in one section during Lent. (Soup suppers)

5th Sunday Traditional Worship Services

March 29, May 31, August 30, November 29

Thoughts? This was discussed at our meeting and overwhelmingly supported. We will try this for 2026 and re-assess.

Lenten Prayer Quiet Time

Meditative music, candle lighting, labyrinth

Thoughts? This was discussed at our meeting and overwhelmingly supported. We will try this on Wednesdays from Noon – 1:00 PM for 2026 and re-assess.

Maundy Thursday question

Combine with VUM, BUM, NJUCC or have our own service?

We discussed and decided to again participate with the other 3 churches at Vineyard for this year.

We are enjoying featuring our different music groups in worship including the Voices of Hope Choir, Ringers of Hope Chime Choir, River of Horns group, Synod Youth Band, and the Headwaters Children's Choir...see schedule below:

2026 Winter / Spring Schedule

Music at River of Hope

January

28 - Headwater's Children's Choir practice at 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

February

18 - Headwater's Children's Choir practice at 9:30 AM, sing during Worship

March

1 – Voices of Hope Choir practice at 9:45AM, perform during worship

18 - Ringers of Hope Chime Choir practice at 5:30 PM – 6:15 PM

22 – Ringers of Hope Chime Choir practice at 9:30AM, perform during worship

April

8 – River of Horns Wednesday rehearsal –5:30 PM – 6:15 PM

12 – River of Horns practice at 9:45 AM - perform during worship.

15 - Ringers of Hope Chime Choir practice at 5:30 PM – 6:15 PM

19 – Ringers of Hope Chime Choir practice at 9:30AM, perform during worship

May

3 – Voices of Hope Choir practice at 9:45AM, perform during worship

10 - Headwater's Children's Choir practice at 9:45AM, perform during worship

Planning for Lent / Holy Week / Easter 2026

Ash Wednesday - February 18 – 6:00 PM at New Journey UCC

combined with *VUM, BUM, NJUCC

Lenten Sundays – February 22, March 1, 8, 15, 22

Wednesdays in Lent – Soup Suppers / Worship on Feb 25; March 4, 11, 18, 25

Palm Sunday – March 29 – Worship at HEC

Maundy Thursday – April 2 combined with VUM, BUM, NJUCC at:

Vineyard – 6:00 PM

Good Friday – April 3 - ROH hosts worship at 6:00 PM,

combined with VUM, BUM, NJUCC

Easter - April 5 Brass instruments and Alleluia Ribbons

*VUM = Vineyard United Methodist Church

BUM = Bethlehem United Methodist Church

NJUCC = New Journey United Church of Christ

Pastor's Report March 2026

Synod Assembly Delegate Needed

The SW MN Synod Assembly will take place June 5-6. Based on the size of River of Hope we send 2 delegates. The cost of registration is \$225 per person (early registration is \$175 if done by April 10). River of Hope will pay this cost. Many churches elect representatives to attend at their annual meeting (Riverpalooza). However, the River Table can vote to approve our delegates.

June 28 - Mark Charles to Speak

The primary author of *Unsettling Truths: The Ongoing, Dehumanizing Legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery*, Mark Charles is tentatively scheduled to speak in Hutchinson in June. Mark is an author, activist, Reformed pastor. He is the son of an American woman of Dutch heritage and a Navajo man. Mark is a founding partner of a national conference for Native students called "Would Jesus Eat Frybread?" The tentative schedule is to have Mark Charles at New Journey for worship the morning of Sunday, June 28 and then speak at the Event Center perhaps shortly after worship. We are seeking someone to donate a Thrivent card to help provide a light lunch. Here's a link to a Ted Talks by Charles titled '*We the People*' - the three most misunderstood words in US history: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HOKtqY5wY4A>

Constitution Changes

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America amends the model constitution for churches each time it meets (every 3 years) at the Churchwide Assembly. There are few edits yet to be ironed out so that our constitution is in line with this model of all ELCA churches. Our constitution team will meet next Wednesday, March 18 5pm to look at needed changes. They will bring changes back to the River Table for approval and then to the whole congregation for 2 different votes – the second of which will be in November at Riverpalooza. People on that team are Linda Pedersen, Jim Schaefer, Ruth Hamlo, me, and Rachel Stearns (not yet back from Texas).

Publicity Folding Table

One of our goals as a church this year is to have our church be more visible in the community. I have reached out to a few people about being on a temporary ("folding") Publicity Table. Our meeting date is scheduled for Wed, April 15 at 5pm. If you know of people who you think would be a good fit for this table please let me know ASAP.

Increasing Worship Helper Participation

Another one of ROH goals for 2026 was to increase member participation – in all aspects – including worship helpers. We in the office just sent out a letter to encourage confirmation students to assist in worship with some incentives like an ice cream (3 times helping) or \$25 credit toward a summer youth trip (5 times helping). I have also been in touch with one of the River Guides about potentially purchasing a paid version of Signup Genius (about \$20 month) which would allow for easier/better communication with the whole church community.