

# THE ANCHOR

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## Anchor Magazine Staff

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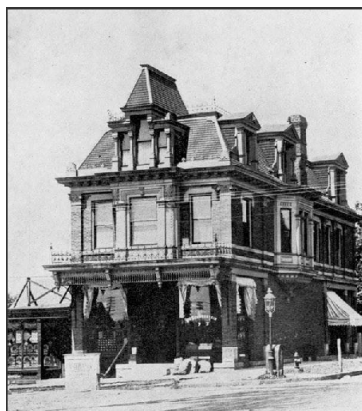
Special thanks to Jessica Bandelin, Madeline Cieslak, David Goudzwaard-Vaught, Scott Jones, Matthew Culloton, Jimmy Hoke, The House of Hope Intercessors Guild, Elsa Kendig, Elizabeth Karre, and you for reading.

## About the Cover

*"Bates Avenue" by Paul Kramer*

Born in North Dakota and raised in Minnesota, Paul Kramer served in the Army Air Corps during World War II before returning to Saint Paul and marrying Mary Allgor in 1946. Encouraged by Mary and noted Minnesota artist Clement Haupers, Kramer studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts on the GI Bill. He went on to become a significant figure in Minnesota's art community—as a painter, teacher, gallery owner, and exhibitions director. From 1957 to 1974, he oversaw the Fine Arts Department at the Minnesota State Fair, helping introduce a new generation of Minnesota artists. In 1965, Paul and Mary opened Kramer Galleries, and in 1968 they joined House of Hope.

Kramer remained committed to realism even as abstraction came to dominate American art. His paintings of Saint Paul streets, Mississippi River towns, landscapes, and everyday life combined careful observation with a quiet, sometimes dreamlike quality. He worked for decades in his Saint Paul studio and became a respected teacher and mentor as well as a prolific painter.



Kramer painted Bates Avenue in 1984, the same year its subject—the historic Schornstein Grocery and Saloon in Dayton's Bluff—was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

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## Staff Corner: Johan C. Wyckoff



**Tell us about yourself and what brought you to House of Hope.**

I live in Como Park with my wife, three dogs, two cats, four chickens, and one fish. I love biking and walking around the lake, cooking, and reading a good book. House of Hope is a unique place, and I'm excited to help tell its story into the future. Nothing excites me more than storytelling and finding the narrative of an organization.

**What do you do at House of Hope, and what do you enjoy most?**

I'm the Communications and Events Coordinator, working on communications both outward to the wider community and inward to House of Hoppers. I especially love the small coffee chats I have with House of Hoppers!

**What might people be surprised—or delighted—to learn about you?**

My entire family is made up of small business owners! My mother is an award-winning food stylist, and my parents-in-law run a vintage store in Red Wing, Minnesota.

October 25, 2026

## Guest Preacher

Rev. Dr. William Yoo



Rev. Dr. William Yoo has previously written about the transnational histories of American Protestant world missions in Korea and Korean American immigrant religious communities as well as the histories of Presbyterianism and Protestant theological education in the United States. His latest book covers the history and legacy of slavery and anti-Black racism in American Presbyterianism. His current research interests include tracing the histories of racial injustice, settler colonialism, and slavery in the United States and examining Indigenous, Black, and Asian American theologies of freedom and resistance.

Also a minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA), he desires to write, teach, and preach honest narratives of the past integrating Reformed understandings of confession and illumination. His conviction is that deeper engagement with history will aid us in more faithful and effective participation in our present ministries exhibiting God's love, justice, grace, and righteousness. When studying the development of Christianity in the antebellum United States, he is motivated to find both beautiful moments of awe-inspiring faith and ugly episodes where it is difficult to discern the divine presence. He began teaching at Columbia Theological Seminary in 2014.

## A Note from Scott

This autumn we mark the 25th anniversary of the attacks on September 11, which has compelled me to reflect upon that day and all that has transpired since.

I remember that day so vividly. The morning was lovely with clear, blue, sunny skies. I had gone to the Farmer's Market in Fayetteville, Arkansas, where I lived at the time, and had arrived at my church office in good spirits. Soon, we would be crowded in the church secretary's office, watching the towers fall on the tiny black and white television behind her desk. I spent the rest of the day checking in with all the youth of the church I served as Associate Pastor.

So many other crises have occurred in the quarter century since. We have lived through wars, the Great Recession, and a global pandemic. Today we face the challenges of a changing climate and whatever future artificial intelligence will bring.

In his recent encyclical on AI, Pope Leo tells us, "We must lovingly safeguard the grandeur of humanity bestowed upon us and revealed in its fullness in Christ, the splendor of which no machine can ever replace."

That has been a core challenge of this entire era—to safeguard our humanity. Our faith in God, our spiritual practices, and our relationships with one another have been vital to living well, with resilience, hope, and joy.

When I think back to September 2001, what most sticks in my memory is the music I listened to. Such as U2's album *All That You Can't Leave Behind*, with tracks like "New York" and "Peace on Earth" and "Beautiful Day." The next summer, Bruce Springsteen released *The Rising*, which was full of songs like "Lonesome Day," "My City of Ruins," and "Into the Fire" written in response to the attack. Songs full of pain and sorrow.

It was the title track, "The Rising" which became for me a worship song. The song begins, "Can't see nothing in front of me, Can't see nothing coming up behind, Make my way through this darkness." Which evokes those



brave rescuers who went into the towers, while also expressing the feelings of uncertainty and anxiety we were all experiencing.

As we continue to face the uncertainties and anxieties of our time, I recall the inspiring and hopeful turn that song makes. Springsteen's chorus is

***Come on up for the rising  
Come on up, lay your hands in mine  
Come on up for the rising  
Come on up for the rising tonight***

That's an Easter song. A resurrection song.

This autumn let's gather for worship, special events, small groups, service projects, and classes, in order to strengthen our bonds, grow our faith, and celebrate God's grace. Together, we can safeguard our humanity and renew our hope.

Peace,

## Fall Worship Theme: A Life of Grace

The Gospel of Matthew presents various parables that Jesus told. Parables are tricky things, often containing layers and opening up possibilities far beyond the initial simple reading. This autumn our worship will use these parables to explore current

questions of the human condition. With the rapid growth of artificial intelligence, the 25th anniversary of 9/11, war, climate change, and polarized politics dominating our thoughts, what can we learn from these ancient stories Jesus told to apply to our concerns today?



## IN THE HOUSE

### Events at-a-Glance

September - November 2026

Rally Sunday and Picnic—Sept. 13

Children & Family Weekend—Sept. 19

Sunday Series: Kwame Alexander—Sept. 20  
(Part of Hope Arts Youth weekend)

Carnival of the Animals—Sept. 26

Installation service for Phil Romine—Sept. 27

First Friday Jazz—Oct. 2

World Communion Sunday & Offering—Oct. 4

Twin Cities Marathon Cheering Squad—Oct. 4

The Singers Concert—Oct. 10

Sunday Series: Dacher Keltner—Oct. 11

Formation Series—Wednesdays  
(Oct. 21 and 28, and Nov. 4, 11, and 18)

Rev. Dr. William Yoo, Guest Preacher—Oct. 25  
(Reformation Sunday)

Halloween Party—Oct. 30

Pipes and Frights—Oct. 30

Music Sunday and All Saints—Nov. 1

Clearwater Congregational Retreat—Nov. 6-8

Stewardship Sunday—Nov. 15

Thanksgiving Eve Worship—Nov. 25

### Rally Sunday

September 13

Rally Sunday is here—time to come together and kick off a wonderful new program year! Join us as our beloved Motet Choir returns, followed by an all-church picnic featuring burgers, hot dogs, veggie burgers, and all the fixings. Sweet Fruci's Ice Cream Truck will be back too, serving up delicious treats for everyone!

All members, friends, and neighbors are warmly welcome. Kids will love the inflatables and lawn games, so bring the whole family for a fun-filled day.



### Children and Family Weekend

September 19-20

Join families and friends at House of Hope for a weekend of creativity and exploration of the intersection of arts and parenting. More on Pages 14-15.

### Sunday Series: Dacher Keltner



Sunday, October 11, 2026 2pm

Dacher Keltner is a Professor of Psychology at UC Berkeley, Director of the Berkeley Social Interaction Lab, and Faculty Director of the Greater Good Science Center. A leading expert on emotions, awe, power, and inequality, he has authored more than 190 scientific publications and several bestselling books, including *Awe: The New Science of Everyday Wonder and How It Can Transform Your Life* and *The Power Paradox*. Keltner served as scientific consultant for Pixar's *Inside Out* films, hosts *The Science of Happiness* podcast, and received the 2025 William James Fellow Award for lifetime achievement from the Association for Psychological Science. For free tickets, register here: [www.hohchurch.org/tickets](http://www.hohchurch.org/tickets).





# Twin Cities Marathon

October 4, immediately after the service

Join us in cheering on the runners at the Twin Cities Marathon!

We're looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help cheer on participants near the finish line.

Feel free to bring your friends, family, neighbors, and anyone else who wants to help create an unforgettable experience for the runners. Register to volunteer and receive a cool event t-shirt at: <https://hoh.s.gy/marathon>.

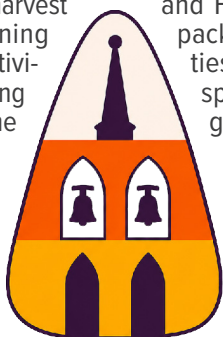


# Halloween Party

October 30, 5:30–7 pm

House of Hope's Halloween Party is a joyful evening where neighbors, friends, and families can celebrate the season together in a welcoming, laughter-filled atmosphere. See House of Hope transformed with playful harvest and Halloween decorations, and enjoy an evening packed with games, arts & crafts, hands-on activities, prizes, and plenty of spooky, try your hand at goodies, and join in the festivities.

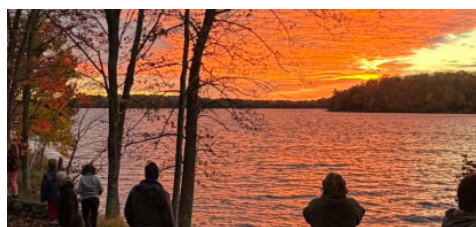
It's a wonderful opportunity with young friends and neighbors, and share the warmth and welcome of House of Hope community. Costumes are encouraged, smiles are guaranteed, and everyone is welcome as we celebrate the fun and joy of the season together!



portunity to make memories with children, connect with neighbors, and share the joy of House of Hope community. Costumes are encouraged, smiles are guaranteed, and everyone is welcome as we celebrate the fun and joy of the season together!

# Congregational Retreat November 6-8

Join your House of Hope community for a fall weekend at beautiful Clearwater Forest! Set amid more than 1,000 acres of woods and lakeshore near Deerwood, Minnesota, Clearwater is the perfect place to slow down, recharge, enjoy the outdoors, and spend time together.



Enjoy fellowship, shared meals, worship and reflection, hiking, games, arts and crafts, campfires, and time to relax. All ages are welcome, as are friends—come on your own or bring the whole family.

Cost and registration information coming soon.

# Carnival of the Animals

September 26, 10 am–12 pm

Join us for the inaugural Carnival of the Animals, a brand-new community celebration honoring the special role animals play in our lives! Meet local animal rescues and adoption agencies, therapy animal programs, wildlife and environmental organizations, and more. Enjoy a festive morning of family-friendly activities, adorable animal ambassadors, and opportunities to connect with organizations dedicated to animal care, welfare, and protection.

Whether you're an animal lover, a family looking for a fun morning out, or someone interested in volunteering or adopting, there's something for everyone.

Bring your own pets, too! A special blessing of the animals will be part of the celebration, so leash up your dog, bring your cat carrier, or introduce us to whatever furry, feathered, or scaled companion you call family. Bring the whole family—pets included—and join us for a joyful morning celebrating animals, community, and our shared care for all creation.



# Pipes & Frights

October 30, 7:30 pm

Step into the sanctuary for a haunting evening of silent cinema and live organ music as organist Aaron Miller accompanies the classic silent film, *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. Surrounded by soaring architecture and the dramatic power of the organ, this immersive Halloween-season experience brings one of cinema's most iconic legends thrillingly to life.



# Journeys from the Journey

## Kip Beardsley Weaves Stories of Freedom, Resilience, and Witness

For Kip Beardsley, weaving began as a deliberate departure from a life built around numbers, data, and precision.

With a background in accounting and public health, Beardsley spent much of his career in a world of evaluation, science, and linear thinking. About five years ago, looking for a counterbalance, he took a self-funded sabbatical and enrolled in a weaving class. What was intended as a six-to-twelve-month creative interlude became a new life.

"Weaving speaks to my linear mind," he says, "but it's also an opportunity for expression."

Eventually, Beardsley and his husband left New York and returned to Minnesota, where he committed himself fully to his art. Today, through his studio, *The Gentleman Weaver*, he creates handwoven garments, household textiles, commissioned pieces and larger installations.

His work has generally been meticulous—structured, detailed and technically precise. This newest project, however, has asked him to relinquish some of that control.

*Journeys from the Journey*, an immersive textile installation coming to House of Hope this September, grew out of an eight-week journey retracing and honoring the history of the Underground Railroad. Beardsley is careful about the distinction: the work is inspired by that history, but it is not an exhibition about the Underground Railroad. Instead, it honors both the freedom seekers and abolitionists of the past and the journeys toward freedom and liberation that continue today.

At base camps along the route, Beardsley invited people to tell him their stories—of resilience, loss, struggle, transformation and liberation. His starting principle was simple: "Every story is sacred."

Then came the challenge of translating those stories into textiles.

"Once you tell your story, now we need to translate that into the language of fiber and texture and color and pattern," Beardsley explains. A memory might suggest a color; another experience might feel rough or smooth. Sometimes the connection is less literal, with the weaving intended to evoke an emotional response rather than illustrate a narrative.

The resulting panels form the heart of the House of Hope installation. Large woven col-

umns resembling trees create a landscape through which visitors move, loosely evoking the wooded landscapes traversed by freedom seekers. The trees incorporate Nchin Chin, a West African symbol representing resilience through life's trials. They also traveled with Beardsley and were erected at stops along his journey, becoming witnesses themselves.



A poem by Beardsley captures the larger idea behind the installation:

*I am Truth.  
Humans often call me absolute.  
Carved in stone on the mountaintop, pure,  
unchangeable.  
But my real beauty lives in the gray, the  
nuance, the quiet contradiction, and the messy,  
beautiful facets of the human experience.  
And then, you outsourced me.  
You removed the gift of sacred struggle. You  
stopped letting me change my mind.  
You forbade two rights. You required a "wrong".  
You stripped away my textures. You bleached  
my gradients.  
You turned my beautiful grey into a weapon  
of stark black and white.  
Now, I no longer heal; I divide.*

That resistance to easy judgment connects directly to another idea at the heart of the installation: witness.

Beardsley hopes visitors will slow down

enough to encounter another person's experience without immediately categorizing or judging it—to be present with another person's story and allow its complexity and contradictions to remain.

"I want to hear your story instead of just judging you or instead of talking at you," he says. "I want to see you."

For Beardsley, sharing stories creates something deeper than understanding. It can change both storyteller and listener.

"When you share your story, and I share my story, now we have our story."

The journey also changed his relationship with his art. The looser, more improvisational weaving required for the installation challenged the perfectionism that had served him in traditional work. Instead of correcting every irregularity, he has learned to allow the work to become what it needs to be—to be "okay with imperfection."

Listening to others also changed the way he thought about freedom. Again and again, he heard from people whose familiar sources of security or validation had disappeared—a family, a job, a faith, a relationship—and who discovered that the strength to continue had to come from within. That realization became part of Beardsley's own journey as an artist.

At House of Hope, *Journeys from the Journey* invites visitors into that same process: to enter a landscape of fiber and story, to pause, to witness, and to encounter another person's journey without measuring it against their own.

"My hope," Beardsley says, "is that people can stop and be present with the stories and also get a sense of what it's like to be in a space of witness and holding."

And then, most importantly, to take that practice "out into the world."

The installation will open on September 13 and run through November 8. There will be an artist's reception on Thursday, October 1 at 5:30–7:30 pm.

*The weave detail opposite exemplifies the power of being heard. At the heart of its story is a woman who was not believed when she sought help and safety. The installation honors her story by believing it—and gives her a voice by weaving the piece exactly as she imagined it.*









Map for Hippo Park!  
Draw a path to the hippo park!

## Loaves & Fishes

Since 1988, House of Hope members have gathered for the Loaves & Fishes Project, offering warm meals and a welcoming table to our neighbors in need. Today, 15–20 volunteers cook, serve, and package food at St. Matthew's Catholic Church on Saint Paul's west side, preparing 300–400 meals, six nights a year.

Volunteers often speak of the friendships formed in the kitchen, admiring one another's steady hard work and faithfulness to the project, year after year. Others have come to know the program's regular guests over nearly four decades, watching families grow and change across generations.

But the program has never really been just about the food. One House of Hope remembers a woman who came through the line and suddenly grew quiet. She began to share the story of her mother's illness: how her mother had tried to get herself to the hospital alone, became confused along the way, and was killed in an accident. She had been carrying that grief alone and, in that moment, chose to share it with a volunteer, a



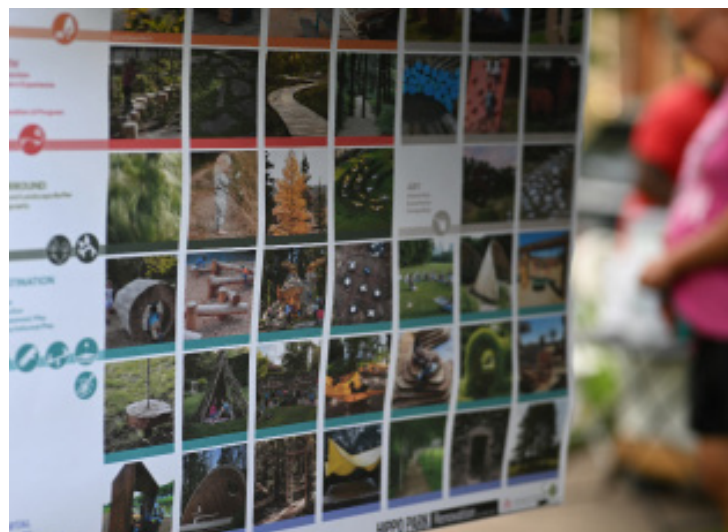
near-stranger, while simply asking for a meal. She was overwhelmed by loneliness, guilt, and the need to be heard. It's a reminder of what Loaves & Fishes has always been at its heart: a place where everyone is welcome, and where, alongside a warm

meal, people find a little more room to be human. New volunteers are always welcome! The crew serves on the third Monday of even months; please contact Norma Herther ([normaherther@msn.com](mailto:normaherther@msn.com)) for more information.

## “Hippo Park” Design Session

This fun-filled evening brought families together for art activities, yoga, play dough, hands-on crafts, 2 Scoops ice cream, and elote. The event introduced the Little Yellow Journal, part of a national tour sponsored by our partner Nature Sacred, an organization that helps urban communities create healing green spaces. These journals—now available in the parks—invite people to record their thoughts and feelings.

Children and parents shared what they love about the park and their vision for its future, responding directly to the architect's concept designs with their own ideas. Beyond gathering community input, the event created valuable time for relationship-building among neighbors, House of Hope/Hope Arts Center, Nature Sacred, and the park design team, TLAL-LI Collaborative.





## IN THE COMMUNITY

# National Night Out

### *Brings Our Neighborhood Together*

House of Hope once again welcomed our neighbors for National Night Out, continuing a tradition that has become a much-loved part of our community life. An estimated 350 people joined us throughout the evening, with neighbors of all ages gathering for food, music, activities, conversation, and connection.

The event was made possible by a remarkable team of volunteers, along with generous community sponsors—some of whom have supported the gathering faithfully for years. For longtime supporters attending for the first time, seeing hundreds of neighbors enjoying the evening offered a vivid reminder of what their generosity has helped make possible.

More than simply a neighborhood party, National Night Out reflects an important part of House of Hope's calling: providing a welcoming place where our neighbors can gather, build relationships, find belonging, and experience the simple joy of being together.







## Anthems

September 13

*I Will Praise Thee*: Nysted

*Kyrie & Gloria* (Kleine Orgelmesse): Haydn

September 20

*Cantate Domino*: Hassler

*Happy are They*: Newswick

September 27

*Rejoice in the Lord Alway*: Anonymous

*The Heavens are Telling*: Haydn

October 4

*Ubi Caritas*: Duruflé

*Ave Verum*: Fauré

October 11

*If Ye Love Me*: Tallis

*Der Herr segne euch*: Bach

October 18

*Let Peace then Still the Strife*: Wilberg

*Ubi duo*: Monteverdi

October 25

*Non nobis, Domine*: Doyle/Collins

*Exsultate Deo*: Scarlatti

November 1

*Te Deum*: Purcell

*Burial Sentences*: Morley

November 8

*Grant Us Thy Peace*: Mendelssohn

*Hide Not Thou Thy Face*: Farrant

November 15

*Be Unto Me*: Byrd

*I Will Not Leave You Comfortless*: Titcomb

November 22

*A Hymn for St. Cecilia*: Howells

*Let Their Celestial Concerts all Unite*:

Handel

November 25

*Sing to the Lord of Harvest*: Willan

*Christ in the Stranger's Guise*: White

November 29

*A Glorious Day is Dawning*: Miller

*Christ in the Stranger's Guise*: White

## Music Sunday

**Motet Choir to Share Works of Praise and Remembrance**

**Matthew Culloten**

The Motet Choir will present two English masterpieces by Henry Purcell (1659-1695) and Thomas Morley (1557-1602) that couldn't be more opposite of each other. Purcell's *Te Deum* plays an important historical role as the first setting of this ancient hymn to include orchestra with the chorus. Purcell was at his very best, late in his very short life, showcasing pomp and circumstance alongside intimate solo arias. This work was, for a long time, the standard music for state and church celebrations throughout England.

Thomas Morley is today remembered mostly for his madrigals and music for the court. But he was a stirring writer who could compose

with restraint and simplicity, as he does with his *Burial Sentences*—with words from the Anglican funeral service. His musical settings allow the beauty of these now-familiar texts to poignantly create an atmosphere of quiet remembrance.

The Motet Choir will be joined by the House of Hope Chamber Orchestra for the performance of Purcell's *Te Deum*, and then pare down the musical forces for Morley's *Burial Sentences* as our All Saints service turns to remembering those our church community lost this past year. This will be the first performance of both works at the House of Hope.

## Choir School

### More than Music

Since 1982, The House of Hope Choir School has nurtured generations of young people as they developed a love of music, deepened their faith, and found a lasting connection to our church community.

The Choir School offers well-rounded music education for all—we have vocal ensembles from age 3 through high school, as well as individual instruction in piano and voice for all ages and levels.

### Schedule

Rehearsals run September through May. Choristers grade 1 through 12 meet on Wednesday afternoons starting at 4:30 pm, and singers ages 3 through Kindergarten meet on Sundays from 11:15 am–12:00 pm

### Ensembles

Alleluia Choir: Ages 3–Kindergarten

Saint Cecilia Choir: Grades 1–3

Saint Nicholas Choir: Grades 4–12

Cantamus: Small advanced ensemble

Tuition is free for all.

Register at:

[www.hohchurch.org/choir-school](http://www.hohchurch.org/choir-school)

**Registration is open now!**

**Rehearsals begin on September 16, 2026**









# Kwame Alexander

Newbery Medal–Winning  
Author | Poet



# Erin Walsh

Author | Speaker |  
Child Development  
Expert



Designed for parents, children, grandparents, educators, caregivers, mentors, health professionals, and those interested in the intersection of arts and health.

## SATURDAY

1:30-2:00 self-guided art gallery tours, book sales  
with Red Balloon



2-3:30 The Loft Literary Center Youth Poetry Workshop  
“For the Love of the Game” (\$15)



2-3:30 Erin Walsh Special Presentation: *Raising Resilient Kids in the Digital Age* (\$15)

3:30-4:30 Community Reception, book sales & youth performances







# Children & Family Weekend

*Creativity, Resilience, & Your Unique Voice*

**September 19–20, 2026**

## SUNDAY

12:30–1:45 self-guided art gallery tours, book sales with Red Balloon, performances from Hope Arts music students 



12:30–1:45 Heart of the Beast Drop-in All-Ages  
Puppet-Making Workshop (Free)



12:30–1:45 Young Dance All-Ages Drop-in Workshop “Dancing Through History” (Free)



1:50 Parade & Opening Ceremony

2:00 Kwame Alexander Keynote (\$20 adults, free under 18)

3:30–4:30 Community Celebration: Poetry Slam, Dance Party









# A Notice of Sunday School Changes

*Dr. Jimmy Hoke*

Starting on Rally Sunday, we will introduce an expanded schedule of programs on Sunday morning. Our children's Sunday School program will move before the service so it no longer conflicts with worship. This allows us to offer education programs for youth, parents, and other adults. This also means we will start offering children opportunities to worship during our main service. The schedule shift better aligns Faith Formation opportunities for our children and youth and expands opportunities for growing in faith and building community among parents, families, and the whole congregation.

Breakfast Time will be an informal, drop-in time for folks to grab some simple breakfast food and coffee in the Kirk Parlour before programs start. There will be space for folks to chat and build community as they eat.

Education Time will host our traditional children's Sunday School program (led by Jimmy and congregational volunteers in Rooms 2 and 4) as well as a Youth Ed Hour (led by Elsa in the Youth Room upstairs) and an Adult Sunday School class (led by a rotation of Phil,

Jim, Elsa, Jimmy, and Scott) that allows parents and other adults to dig deeper into some of the Bible stories being taught with our children and youth.

Worship Time remains the same—with our youngest children (up to third grade) leaving the service after the Children's Message for a Children's Service in the chapel, where Jimmy and the pastoral team will lead children in a storytelling liturgy that helps children learn to participate in worship. Fourth and fifth graders will stay in the service, with the option to sit together at the children's table. Volunteers will help them to engage in the service.

Enrichment and Community Time is the same Enrichment hour programming and coffee and cookies in the Kirk for fellowship.

We are excited about how this new schedule will offer children, youth, families, and the whole congregation an aligned experience for worship, education, and community-building, and we are eager to watch House of Hope continue to grow together in faith and love.

# House of Hope Youth Summer Mission Trip

*Elsa Kendig*

The House of Hope youth mission trip this year was full of firsts! Not only did the youth experience a new kind of mission trip—one shared with another church in our presbytery—but they also helped pioneer Camp Clearwater's first camp-hosted mission trip.

While mission trips are a great opportunity for youth to deepen friendships, they're also a chance to build a larger community of young people serving together—something that's becoming harder for a single church to provide. This year, House of Hope partnered with Oak Grove Presbyterian in Bloomington. Although combining two youth groups can be a challenge, the students quickly connected, creating a wonderful shared-group dynamic and even renaming themselves the "House of Oak."

These connections are especially meaningful for youth who may not know other young Presbyterians outside House of Hope. Discovering they are part of a larger church family—and experiencing our connectional church through shared service—is an encouragement we hope will strengthen their faith for years to come.

Together with Camp Clearwater, we helped launch a new mission trip model by staying in camp cabins while serving at community sites during the day. Throughout the week, the youth completed projects at camp, landscaped a housing-first nonprofit in Brainerd, and transformed a memorial garden at the local Presbyterian Homes memory care unit. Evenings included games with campers, Clearwater's worship services, our own

devotionals and group activities, and, of course, campfires with s'mores behind Eagle Lodge. During our devotionals, we reflected on what it means to live with Christ's peace in a world that often feels anything but peaceful. The week offered a wonderful balance of service, worship, fun, and fellowship.

Following the trip, Clearwater hopes to continue offering this experience throughout our presbytery and the wider Synod, providing an especially valuable option for smaller youth groups, volunteer-led ministries, and youth who benefit from greater structure and predictability. House of Hope also hopes to travel again with Oak Grove—and perhaps one or two additional churches—next year, continuing to build the relationships that bring vitality to our faith, both here at House of Hope and across the Presbytery.

## Sunday School Schedule

8:30–9:10 am:

Breakfast Time

9:10–9:50 am:

Education Time

10:00–11:00 am:

Worship Time

11:15 am–12:00 p.m.:

Enrichment and  
Community Time









Tickets & Details:



**Hope Arts Center Music lessons**

Violin, Piano, Ukulele, Voice.

All ages. Ongoing.

Contact [madelinec@hohchurch.org](mailto:madelinec@hohchurch.org)

**Giving Voice Chorus**

**rehearsal every Tuesday 1-2:30pm**

Creating joyful choral communities for people living with dementia & their care partners. New singers always welcome. [givingvoicechorus.org](http://givingvoicechorus.org)

**September 19-20**

**Children & Family Weekend**

**October 2, 6pm**

**First Friday Jazz**

**October 4, 3pm**

**Mississippi Valley Orchestra Concert**

"Fiesta" a vibrant, dance-themed program featuring Márquez, Bizet, and Price.

[mississippivalleyorchestra.com](http://mississippivalleyorchestra.com)

**October 30, 7pm**

**Pipes & Frights**

Silent Film with Live Organ featuring Aaron David Miller

**November 7th, 7pm**

**Loft Literary Center presents poet Patricia Smith**

[loft.org](http://loft.org)

**December 5, 7pm**

**Monroe Crossing A Bluegrass Christmas**

A festive holiday concert with the award-winning Minnesota bluegrass band.



Giving Voice



First Friday Jazz



Mississippi Valley Orchestra



Patricia Smith



Monroe Crossing



Erin Walsh



Aaron David Miller



Kwame Alexander



## Rev. Phil Romine

*Installation as Associate Pastor for Spiritual and Community Care  
Sunday, September 27, 10:00 am Worship Service*

**You've got history with House of Hope way before your "transitional pastor" title showed up. Take us back—what do you remember about your early days here, especially your choir days?**

It was 2008. I was a little over a year out of college and had just ended a long-term relationship. I realized I missed singing in a choir—I had sung in ensembles at St. Olaf College—and I wanted a community beyond work colleagues and roommates. I emailed the choir director about auditions, and he replied that none were needed. Rehearsals were at 7:00 pm on Wednesdays, and I was welcome anytime.

I walked in, Dave Pearson greeted me warmly, showed me where my choir folder belonged, pointed out his own folder (home to the choir's communal stash of cough drops), and the rest is history.

I also remember the striking contrast between the church where I grew up in Indiana and House of Hope. Here, I never felt like my beliefs were being constantly scrutinized. When I met individually with pastors, I felt genuinely known and engaged.

One conversation with Rev. Tom Forster-Smith especially stayed with me. I shared some frustration about the support I hadn't experienced in my childhood church. With great warmth, he extended grace both to me and to that congregation, reminding me that no church is perfect or capable of meeting every need. Since then, I've discovered how much more life-giving church community becomes when I soften my expectations and lean into what we can create together.

**You served in ministry at churches, nonprofits, and a seminary while you attended House of Hope. What are some moments or experiences along the way that really shaped who you are as a pastor?**

Just before joining the staff at House of Hope, I worked in congregational organizing at Interfaith Action. Much of my work involved listening to the needs, exhaustion, hopes, and concerns of fellow religious leaders.

Shortly before my ordination in 2019, I preached at one of House of Hope's Holy Week services. Afterward, Marjorie Douse approached me and gave me her late husband Richard's clergy robe. I later learned that Richard had made it his ministry to care for the ministers at House of Hope. That gesture has stayed with me.

Ever since, I've felt a similar calling: to care for colleagues who often carry burdens they have few places to set down. None of us is meant to carry life alone. The good, the bad, and the ugly are all things God invites us to share together.

Looking back on the many roles I held between my choir days and joining the House of Hope staff, I've noticed one consistent lesson: healthy leadership and healthy community depend on whether people with institutional power choose to share it or hoard it.

I've also come to understand that my vocation as a pastor is to be an accompanier. I journey alongside others. Sometimes the path is narrow and it makes sense for me to lead or follow. Sometimes I need to be pulled or carried; at other times I'm the one doing the pulling and carrying. But throughout it all, I'm walking at the same pace as my fellow sojourners. While that calling might feel limiting to some, I've found it deeply freeing.

**We know you as "Pastor," but we'd love to meet the rest of your family! What do you, your spouse, and your two kids love doing together?**

I think we're still figuring that out! But we do travel pretty well together. In October we're heading to Rocky Mountain National Park, thanks to Hugo's free access to the National Park System during his 4th grade school year.

We also love watching movies together; Fridays recently became pizza and movie night at our house. Current favorites are *Zootopia 2*, *K-Pop Demon Hunters*, *The Mitchells vs. The Machines*, *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, and the 1970s Disney version of *Robin Hood*.

And while we enjoy doing different things in/on the water, we all love time at lakes and beaches.

**Every family's got its quirks—little traditions, running jokes, weird rituals that somehow stuck. What are some of yours?**

The weekend after Thanksgiving is house-trimming time: getting the Christmas tree, putting up lights and decorations, and generally decking the halls.

Whenever we see dogs, regardless of their age or their coat: they are all puppies, and they are all fluffy. Also, without fail, each of our voices miraculously changes to match what would surely be the dog's voice if it spoke English.



Hugo, R

Each member of our family stresses about being late, but for quite different reasons.

Jimmy John's is our default fast-food destination.

**Coming back to a church you once sat in the pews of has to be a little surreal. What's surprised you or made you smile since returning to House of Hope in this new role?**

Rather than the pews, most of my pre-pastor hours logged in worship were spent in the choir/organ loft. I remember reflect-





go, Rev. Phil Romine, Elizabeth Stoneburg, and Georgiana

ing on the fact that I find it most helpful to be in worship when I have a job to do, a role to play, rather than being an “audience member” or “passive” listener. What makes me smile is that I am now unable to sit in worship anywhere, in any context, in any kind of passive way. Listening actively requires mental focus, as well as at least a rudimentary level of physical awareness. I now understand (not just intellectually but physiologically) that worship begins only when we submit our attention voluntarily to God, who invites us with every breath to listen actively for love in our midst.

**Being a transitional pastor isn’t quite the same gig as a settled pastor. What do you want the congregation to know about this season, and what are you excited about for House of Hope’s future?**

My experience of this congregation has been that we have identified ourselves primarily in relation to two of our characteristics: pastoral leadership and aesthetics. Both are important aspects of religious community, and in my opinion we would be dishonest if we weren’t open about our history of prioritizing these aspects of congregational life.

I am excited about House of Hope’s present—and I hear God calling me to walk with this congregation—because we are actively investing ourselves in more aspects of our identity. In addition to the “how” of our public worship and the “who” of our public leadership, we are recognizing the “what” of relationships: among ourselves, with community partners, and the necessity and benefit of using our building beyond worship times. We are also constructively debating what it means to “own” property as stewards of place. Intentionally or unintentionally, these new ways of understanding who we are and what we care about arose in fits and starts over the past generation. Saplings bearing first fruits have begun to blossom, so it will be deeply fulfilling to be part of stewarding these ongoing harvests and tending the soil of this community.

**When you’re not doing ministry stuff, what fills your cup? Favorite hobbies, books, music, or your ideal day off?**

I love fly-fishing, and hope to begin doing more of that in the coming years. Hugo has recently become enamored with fishing, and we just got a canoe, so I’m excited to explore the breadth and depth of many waters with him.

I have reconnected—on a much smaller scale—to my homebrewing days. Beer and cider are fun, and recently I have experimented with naturally-fermented fruit sodas and lacto-fermenting vegetables (a form of pickling).

I have developed a practice of posting quotes (mostly from J.R.R. Tolkien’s literature) on my Facebook page, which means I have been listening to his works almost non-stop while doing housework the past few years. This has gotten me back into reading regularly, as I find audiobooks a beautiful way to experience literature and learn new things.

I’m also dabbling with basic woodworking, and am always open to unsolicited advice about easy projects to undertake!

**As we get ready to celebrate your installation, what’s one hope and one prayer you’re carrying for House of Hope as we head into this next chapter together?**

My hope for us is to keep along this path of discovery and discernment about who we are. My prayer is that we explore what it looks like to be stewards of a place where the Gospel is proclaimed—and when necessary, using words.

# Community Food Shelf Garden

**Elizabeth Karre**

House of Hope's Community Food Shelf Garden is a sacred space where congregants and community members come together to grow fresh produce for our neighbors who use the Neighborhood House and Hallie Q. Brown food shelves. The garden is seen (and admired!) by people using Summit Avenue, raising awareness of the need in our community for food access, especially fruits and vegetables.

Reflections from our volunteers:

*"The garden is the literal embodiment of 'give us this day our daily bread.'"*

*"The camaraderie of working for a joint purpose is infectious. I have volunteered before at food shelves and it was rewarding, but supplying fresh produce that we have grown ourselves is ten times more so."*

*"The garden allows us to share with our hands God's bounty and beauty with neighbors."*

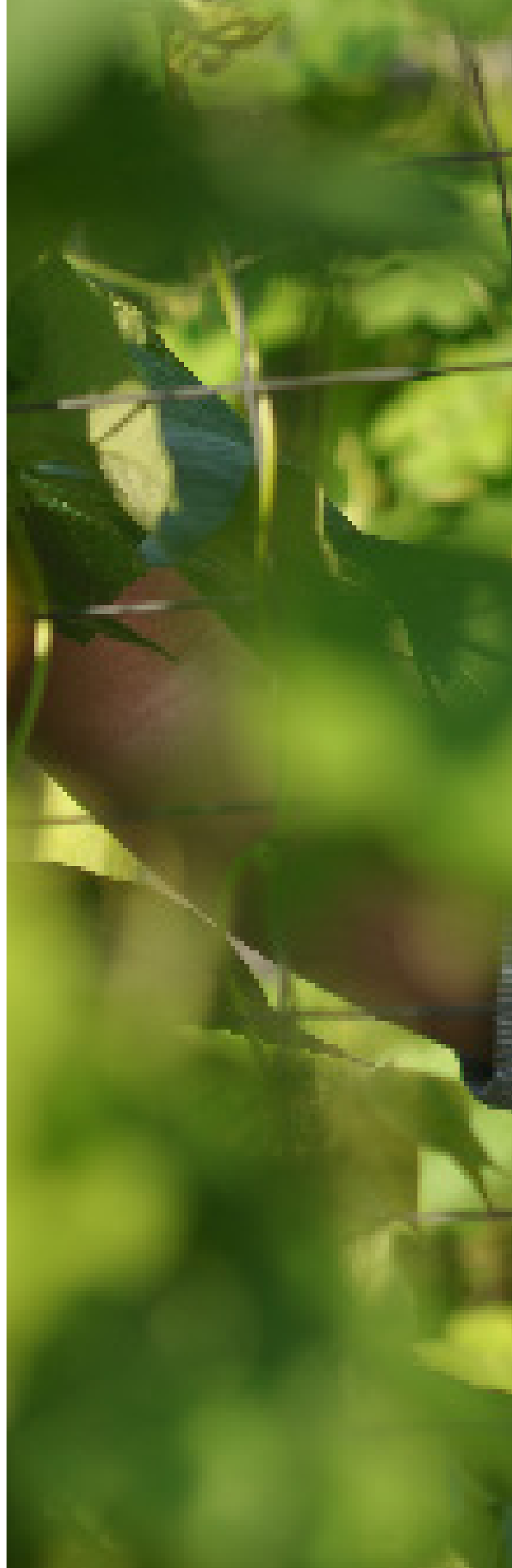
*"Over many years there has been faithful tending of the garden by volunteers who are committed to providing healthy food to those that might not be able to partake of fresh produce otherwise, and the fellowship of the gardeners has grown over the years. The garden is truly a gift of God for all to receive."*

*"I was raised on a farm part of my childhood and now that I've gotten older I realize being in a garden for me is being close to God so I've come back to what I know. The garden is therapeutic, it truly helped me to cope with the loss of two really good friends. I love the smell of the fresh vegetables—picking, cleaning, just knowing I planted something and it grew."*

*"The garden is special because it creates a community of people who want to help with those who lack food. It is rewarding to see progress as little plants mature into big plants which bear produce. Working in the garden is calming and connects me with the earth and the other gardeners."*

*"Gardens are full of miracles. Being able to participate with fellow gardeners, watching the plants grow and the vegetables mature, harvesting and delivering nutritious food, all within the context of community, is a special blessing."*

Together, these reflections speak to something deeper than gardening alone. What began as an effort to grow food for our neighbors has grown into a place of prayer, healing, and belonging—where hands in the soil become an act of faith, and community is cultivated alongside every harvest. The House of Hope garden reminds us that feeding our neighbors and nourishing our own spirits are not separate acts, but one and the same.







# PCUSA General Assembly

**Elsa Kendig**

At this summer's 227th General Assembly, hosted in nearby Milwaukee, WI, there was much vital work done by delegates from all across the country—including progress on some issues that would have been unthinkable to touch even five years ago. Notable discussions included:

A faithful condemnation of white Christian Nationalism—naming it an urgent social concern of our time, the assembly voted overwhelmingly in favor of action to provide moral clarity and guidance for the PC(USA) and its membership, and to prepare us to engage with other Christian denominations in preventing further harm by this false belief.

In the language of the amendment: “The church rejects any ideology that seeks to establish Christianity as a privileged or dominant force through the power of the state, or that conflates religious identity with national, racial, or ethnic supremacy. Such ideologies, in all their forms, are incompatible with the example and teachings of Jesus Christ, constitute a theological error, undermine the church’s faithful witness, and are contrary to the church.”

Declaring a Genocide in Palestine - The body heard from both Palestinians and Israelis, including an emotional testimony from Fahed Abu-Akel, moderator of the PC(USA)'s 214th General Assembly (2002-03), who recalled

fleeing his home as a child. Commissioners then voted by an overwhelming majority (454-15) to approve the measure. Besides officially naming what is occurring in Palestine as genocide, it instructs the denomination's Office of Public Witness to advocate against U.S. military sales to and purchases from Israel. Simultaneously, this amendment also condemns both antisemitism and Islamophobia, while also naming clearly that criticism of the Israeli government is not inherently antisemitic.

Commissioning a report regarding Technology and AI from the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy, due at the next GA.

Creation of a commission to investigate the manner of the closing of World Mission as it was reformulated and sized down into the new office of Global Ecumenical Partnerships. In over five intense hours of deliberation on this topic, many issues were raised, both theological and procedural, including possible intimidation or silencing of staff who were being made redundant. Even at the conclusion of discussion this topic brought forth strong opinions, with some feeling the measure had not gone far enough to bring accountability, while others worried that it was an act of “vindictive[ness]” aimed at punishing errors rather than intentional harm. The final report and recommendations of this commission

will occur over the next four years at GA228 and GA229.

The naming of the location of the next General Assembly (228th) as San Juan, Puerto Rico and electing the co-moderators who will moderate that Assembly. This will be the first time a General Assembly will be hosted outside the continental U.S., and co-moderators Rev. Marta Pumroy-Cordero (of Puerto Rican descent serving in border ministry with the Synod of the Sun) and Rev. Kristopher D. Schondelmeyer (pastor of First Presbyterian in Davenport, Iowa) will serve for the next two years, getting to meet many folks from our denomination and preparing to moderate GA228.

Beyond the stated business of the assembly (and mirroring other parts of our society), dynamics emerged amongst the body that prompted much discussion about the ways we must get more clear in our theology and practices regarding welcome, inclusion, justice, and diversity. As a microcosm of the tensions and the opportunities that come from having important conversations, this year's General Assembly left participants and observers alike with much food for thought as well as many opportunities for follow-up with in our presbyteries and congregations.

## Intercessors' Half-Day Prayer Retreat

**Saturday, October 3, 2026**

**8:30–11:45 am**

**Room 1**

House of Hope's Intercessors are members who provide an important commitment to upholding needs of our members and community in daily prayer. The House of Hope Intercessors' Guild prays every day for church members, their families and friends, our community and the world. They bring private prayers for needs and concerns, as well as prayers of gratitude and rejoicing, before our loving God. Our prayer volunteers also commit to a chosen day of each month to ensure that daily prayer never ceases each and every day of the year. This is quiet but powerful work which is grounded in unwavering faith that God hears our prayers.

This Fall Retreat morning will be led by Norma

Strommen, a longtime Spiritual Director and leader of prayer workshops and prayer circles. With Norma's guidance, we will experience a Saturday morning to refresh and deepen our understanding and ways of prayer.

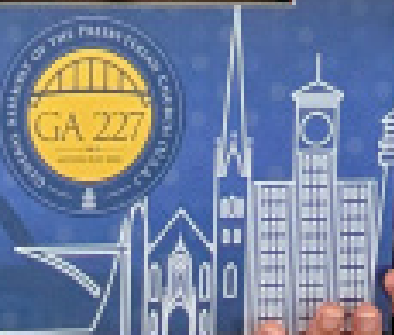
We welcome all who are interested. Come, learn more about the strength of prayer, and consider if you might be an Intercessor, too. And it is free!

To register, please call the church office by September 30. If you have questions about Intercessors or the retreat, please contact Rev. Dix Brachlow at [DBrachlow@gmail.com](mailto:DBrachlow@gmail.com) or Emily Brenengen at [brenengenemily@hotmail.com](mailto:brenengenemily@hotmail.com).





# I'm in Milwaukee! GA 227



# One House of Hope Member in the Early Days of Statehood

Readers of The Anchor No. 347 may recall the 1855 image of First Presbyterian Church, sketched by a young artist named Robert Ormsby Sweeny. What they may not know is that the hand behind that drawing would go on to leave a far deeper mark on Minnesota itself. Sweeny joined our congregation in 1858 (the very year Minnesota became a state) according to the 1876 History of the House of Hope Presbyterian Church. In the years that followed, this unassuming Saint Paul pharmacist would help design the state's original seal, ride with Union forces as a hospital steward, paddle the wilderness rivers of the St. Croix, and sketch some of the only surviving visual records of early Dakota and Ojibwe life in our region. His story is a reminder of just how closely House of Hope's own roots are entangled with the founding of Minnesota.

Sweeny was a remarkable character. Born in Philadelphia in 1831, he settled in St. Paul in 1852, building his livelihood as a pharmacist. Alongside his pharmacy career, he was a prolific amateur illustrator, known for a body of some 60 pencil drawings depicting Indigenous peoples intersecting with frontier Saint Paul during a period of rapid change. That same eye for detail found a very different outlet during the Civil War.

Sweeny was involved with the United States Sanitary Commission, the civilian relief orga-



nization that supported Union soldiers by providing medical supplies, hospital equipment, nursing assistance, food and clothing, and aid to wounded soldiers and their families. In 1861–62, he accompanied his brother-in-law, Dr. Jacob Henry Stewart (also a member of House of Hope) to the trans-Mississippi theater of the Civil War as an unpaid hospital steward and pharmacist, where he continued to sketch, leaving behind a number of interesting and often whimsical illustrations of army life. Sweeny's travels weren't limited to wartime.

He left a narrative of his "Birch Canoe Voyage to Ka-Ka-Beeka or The Dalles of the St. Croix,"

and it appears likely that the painting below depicts this very journey, with Sweeny seated in the middle of the canoe, ferried by native boatmen.

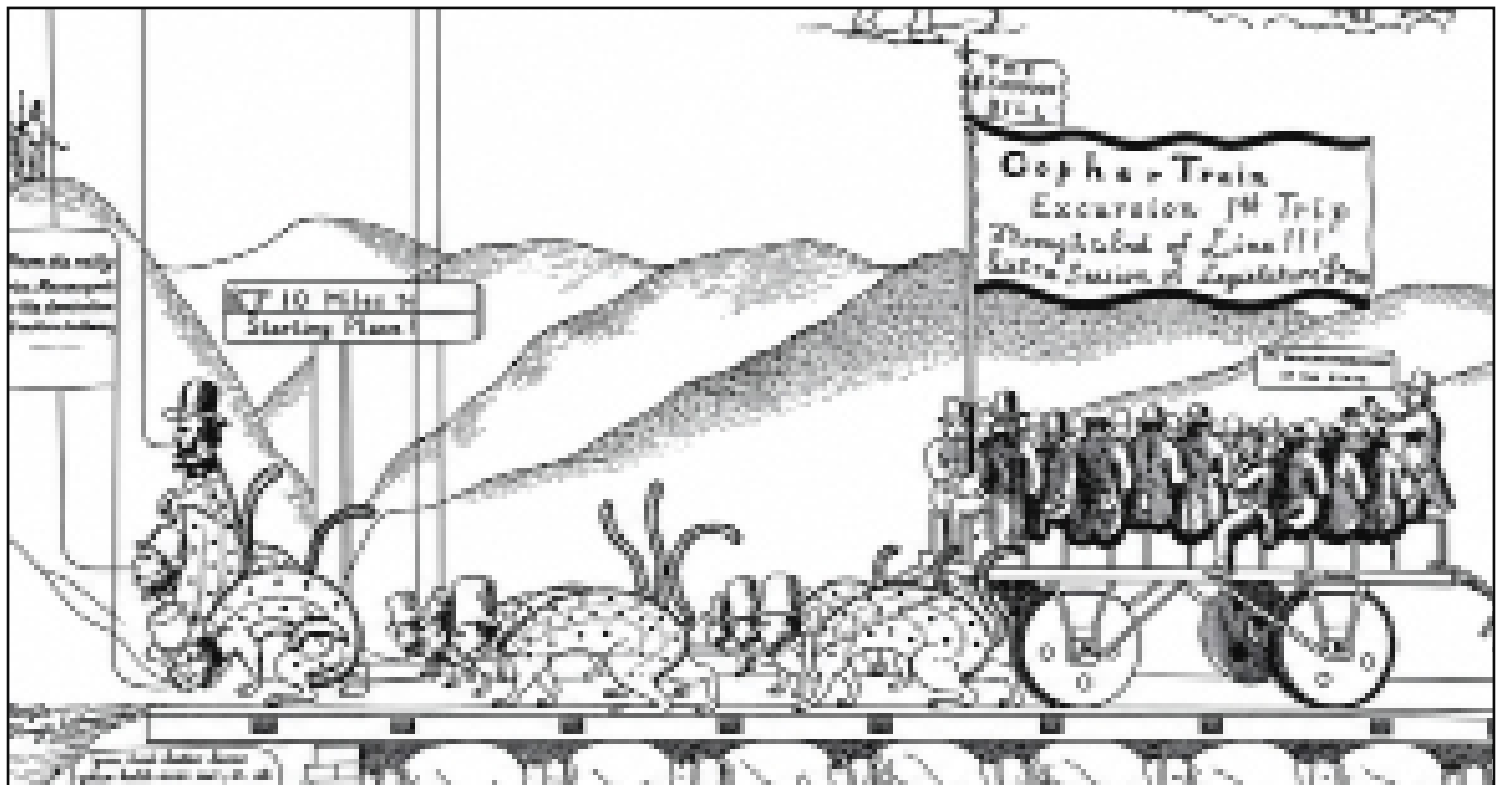
His most lasting civic contribution, though, came in 1858, when the Minnesota legislature adopted his design for the new state seal. Unlike the territorial seal it was meant to replace, Sweeny's version was notably restrained: no rifle or other prominent weapons appear, and the Native and settler figures are depicted more as co-participants sharing a landscape than as symbols of one replacing the other. Governor Henry





Sibley, however, had other plans. Rather than adopt the legislature's chosen design, he quietly substituted his own modified version of the old territorial seal (the one featuring a Native rider giving way before an advancing white farmer) and the legislature only formally ratified Sibley's seal after the fact, in 1861. That design, in modified form, remained Minnesota's official seal for over a century and a half, until it was finally replaced in 2024. Sweeny's more hopeful vision, chosen first by Minnesota's elected representatives, quietly faded from public memory.

Perhaps his most famous single work, though, was a political cartoon from 1857, lampooning the territorial legislature's unpopular loan of \$5 million to subsidize railroad construction. The loan was popularly believed to have been secured through the bribery of legislators, and Sweeny's satirical cartoon depicted its supporters as striped rodents, labeled "gophers." The cartoon is widely credited with giving Minnesota its enduring nickname: the "Gopher State."



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Hope Art Center's Summer in the Park series presented a performance of *Tucker's Robot* by Open Eye Theater.