

The newsletter of University Lutheran Church and One Community Lutheran Campus Ministry at Michigan State University

**Mark Your Calendars . . .**

**Advent Luncheon**  
Sunday, Dec. 7 at 11:30 a.m.

**P & S Craft Sale**  
Sunday, Dec. 7 & 14

**Blue Christmas Worship**  
Wednesday, Dec. 17  
6:30 p.m. in Sanctuary

**Food Movers**  
Thursday, Dec. 18 & Jan. 22  
Drive-thru distribution  
3:30 - 5 p.m.

**Elves Decoration Removal**  
Friday, Jan. 9 at 5 p.m.

**Sunday Funday**  
Jan. 11 at 11:30 a.m.



**Inside . . .**

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**Core Workshop Well Attended**

Over the weekend of Nov. 7, ULC hosted an *Understanding Racism Workshop* led by CORE (Communities Organizing for Racial Equality). ULC members were well represented among the 41 registrants, and attendance included members from several other congregations as well as individuals with no church affiliation. Central United Methodist, Grace Lutheran, and Red Cedar Friends Meeting also contributed to underwriting the cost of the workshop. Although ULC has sponsored several such workshops in the past, this was the first in-person (non-Zoom) event, which many noted as especially powerful.



Victoria Gibbs, one of the CORE presenters.

Key workshop goals were:

- To see and learn about racism in a new and redemptive way
- To gain insights into systemic racism through the eyes of faith and Scripture

Continued on page 8.



*An intentionally inclusive community trusting in God's grace,  
strengthened by the Holy Spirit, living and loving like Jesus.*

## Resurrection Means the Worst Thing is Never the Last Thing

I am confident that God is faithful, gracious, loving. God is not fickle nor cruel. God will – God *does* – grant us what we need in the present moment.

We have faced some hard days as a congregation. Those serving on council and finance, staff, those passionate about music, those tired and in need of support, those holding sickness and death and shattered relationships. Those plagued by fear. There is much we have been holding together.

And: We serve a God who invites us to lay all the things down at the feet of One who is perfect in love, faithful and true, enduring and overcoming in *all* the hardest of things. Frederick Buechner said of resurrection: **Resurrection means the worst thing is never the last thing.**

We all have moments of “worst thing” in our lives. “Worst thing”



takes many forms over the course of our days. Some of our worst things are related, some opposing. I believe God works in them all. God is *capable* of working in and through even the worst of things.

So, whether you find yourself in the midst of the worst, or in the midst of resurrection: *know that there is hope.* We do not know what tomorrow holds. And: we *know* that God is good. God is loving. God is faithful and true and endures and overcomes. God can work – and God *is* working – ***even in this.*** Whatever “this” might be for you.

As we turn to December and January, as we journey Advent and a new church year, a new calendar year, a new day in the midst of so many complicated, big and small things, we do so with a new mission and vision for University Lutheran Church: **An intentionally inclusive community trusting in God’s grace, strengthened by the Holy**

**Spirit, living and loving like Jesus. As a campus and community ministry, we follow Jesus with courage and love by: Building caring relationships through presence, connection, and compassion; Engaging hearts, bodies, and minds in worship, service, and study; Encouraging ministry and witness in our daily lives; and Pursuing justice throughout all creation.**

Though it is hard at times, may we lean in and place our hope and trust in the Resurrection, and walk this journey together. Along the way, may you know you are held and loved by God. May God fill you with hope for tomorrow, whatever form that may take. May the baptismal promise of each day being new be known in your inner depths. May God hold you, carry you, guide you, in whatever is ahead.

Courage and peace to you, dear ones.  
And grace upon grace,

*Pastor Emily*

## Advent and Christmas Schedule



### 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent - Nov. 30

10 a.m. Sunday Worship

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent - Dec. 7

10 a.m. Sunday Worship with special music by the Senior Choir and Handbell Ensemble followed by Advent Luncheon and activities.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent - Dec. 14

10 a.m. Worship Expressions, Jazz

### Blue Christmas Worship - Wednesday, Dec. 17

6:30 p.m. in Sanctuary

### 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent – Dec. 21

10 a.m. Sunday Worship

### Christmas Eve – Tuesday, Dec. 24

6:00 p.m. Special Music

6:30 p.m. Candlelight Service

### Lessons & Carols – Sunday, Dec. 28

10 a.m. Sunday Worship

## Fall Fun with Campus Ministry Friends

On Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>, we joined with Peoples Campus Ministry and Canterbury Episcopal Campus Ministry for a trip to Uncle John's Cider Mill. We gathered at Peoples Church for lunch (thanks Peoples Church for putting that together!!!). From there, we travelled to Uncle John's.

There were a total of 14 people who attended. We enjoyed the corn maze, the



pumpkin patch, cider and donuts, and one another's company. There were even some who enjoyed rolling down a large hill and doing cartwheels. Overall, it was a joyous fall day in which we were able to build community across denominations. I am grateful for all who attended and helped organize this event!

*Pastor Zachariah*

## Campus Ministry Cookbook

I remember my college days well: all-nighters cramming for an exam the next day; days spent in the library completing ten-page research papers; meals spent in the cafeteria sharing the news of the day with friends. The moments spent pouring over endless textbooks fade more each year while the moments spent with friends over a meal remain steadfastly planted in my mind.



laughter that ensued as we chided each other for mistakes we made while cooking something for the first time. Those moments became core memories. As a church focused on campus ministry, I believe it's important we take an active role in helping to foster those core memories for the students who choose to be a part of ULC's Campus Ministry program.

We would love to have you submit those recipes! Not only will this cookbook provide an opportunity for the college students to practice these recipes with friends and make memories, but it will also be something that they can carry with them after college as a memory of their time with ULC. They'll have an easily accessible cookbook filled with recipes that they can refer to no matter where they're at in life.

If you have a recipe you would like to submit, email the recipe to me at [jaytopham@gmail.com](mailto:jaytopham@gmail.com). We would like to give this completed cookbook to the college students in March. If you're particularly excited about teaching the college students to cook a meal you submitted to the cookbook, reach out to Pastor Zach about the Activity Nights for Fridays at Five in the Spring Semester.

*Jay DuBois-Jones*

There were times when we grew tired of cafeteria food and decided to cook a meal in the common area of someone's dorm. Among all of us we had enough kitchen supplies to cook a meal: I brought a pan, another friend brought measuring cups, someone else brought plates and silverware, and we all chipped in to purchase an easy, cheap meal that would feed us all.

I still fondly recall the smell of the wonderful food we made and the

Beginning now and continuing through the end of February, the Campus Ministry Team is asking the congregation to think about easy, cheap recipes to compile into a Campus Ministry Cookbook. Is there a quick pasta recipe that you make that's unlike anything else? Do you know a way to cook chicken that's divine? Are you a gluten-free guru who specializes in making allergy-free recipes that anyone can eat?

## Introducing Our New Mission & Vision Statements

**Mission:** An intentionally inclusive community trusting in God's grace, strengthened by the Holy Spirit, living and loving like Jesus.

**Vision:** As a campus and community ministry, we follow Jesus with courage and love by: Building caring relationships through presence, connection, and compassion; Engaging hearts, bodies, and minds in worship, service, and study; Encouraging ministry and witness in our daily lives; and Pursuing justice throughout all creation.

## Sunday Funday



On Nov. 16, ten kids and 12 adults ate lunch (grilled cheese and fresh fruit) and then baked cookies after church. This was a wonderful time of learning, fellowship, and fun! Thank you to Marge Mahoney, Ann Booren, and Sheila Nicolas and to all who participated!

## Confirmation Lock-in



The Confirmation students will have a lock-in Saturday, Dec. 13 at 6:30 p.m. 14 until church starts. The hope is to make space to build relationships, learn, and have fun together! Please note that the date has changed!

*Pastor Zachariah*

## A Plea from Our Friendship House Neighbors

As we prepare for our spring semester, we are in desperate need for new individuals to come here (or teach via Zoom from home) and lead classroom activities at the Friendship House.

If you would be so kind, please use the attached plea (and logo, if space allows) to promote our request in bulletins, newsletters, and on bulletin boards and wherever it will get the attention of potential teachers/classroom leaders.

As always, I am available to answer any questions and always open to greeting people here to show them our



wonderful facility and introduce them to members of our community.

Below is information describing this opportunity. If you have any questions, please contact me. God Bless and I pray you all have a wonderful Christmas season and a very

Happy New Year!

*Dan Winter, Executive Director  
Friendship House MSU*

517-657-7778 or [friendshiphousemsu@gmail.com](mailto:friendshiphousemsu@gmail.com)

## International Ministry Teaching Opportunity

Have you recently retired from a full-time career and are looking for a volunteer opportunity for a couple of hours per week? Are you a stay-at-home parent whose children are now in school, and you find yourself with time during the week and would enjoy adult engagement? Do you work from home, and your employer encourages you to get out for an hour or two each week to broaden your horizons (and not your hips)?

The **Friendship House** is seeking, nay I say desperate for volunteers to teach our International Students, beginning in **mid-January** for our spring semester. The teaching positions provide amazing opportunities to minister to people

from around the globe, whether they are here in East Lansing or attending from somewhere else in the world.

And we at the Friendship House are very willing to assist our volunteer teachers, if necessary, in developing a curriculum to work with our International Students and provide whatever other help may be needed. We greatly appreciate all of those who graciously volunteer their time and effort to teach those who come to the house seeking our assistance.

### What you need to know:

- Our core curriculum is English as a Second Language (ESL), which can be taught in many forms, from Bible studies and conversational English to

cooking and sewing.

- Our next semester begins on **Jan. 12 and finishes on Apr. 24.**
- Our volunteers teach one class per week for up to an hour and a half per class within the window of the semester timeframe (the number of weeks is determined by the curriculum and your availability).
- Classes are presented in a hybrid (in-person and virtual via Zoom) format, which allows both teachers and students to attend either in-person or from a remote location.
- Classes are held on weekdays between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.

# Varied Topics in Upcoming Forums

As we head into December, we want to start by offering a huge thank you to everyone who offered their time and voice leading up to and at our recent Annual Meeting. Your active participation is invaluable; please remember that each member is important to leading this congregation into the next year. In early November, Pastor Emily led a Pop-Up Forum focused on the sensitive and important topic of funeral planning.



- Dec. 7 – Donor Advised Funds and IRA Distributions with a Financial Planner
- Dec. 14 – Creating vision boards with Louise Montag
- Dec. 21 and 28 – No Forum (Christmas Break)
- Jan. 4 – Justice League of Greater Lansing
- Jan. 11 – Building Tours with the Maintenance Team
- Jan. 18 – RJT Movie: True Believer
- Jan. 25 – No Forum

We are truly excited about the lineup we have planned for the coming months! These Forums are a wonderful opportunity to learn, discuss, and grow together:

Please keep an eye on the weekly bulletin and your email for updates. We look forward to seeing you at Forum!



## ULC Memorial Library

### Used Book Sale is Being Retired

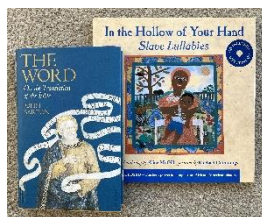
The Library Team has decided that it will no longer host a “used book sale.” We thank you for supporting this event over the years by donating books and by buying books. It was a great source of funds for purchasing library materials for many years.



Even though we will not request books to sell, we know that you still have books you want to dispose of. First, do you know that Schuler’s buys used books that are current and in good condition? Often there were books that were donated that did not fit the library collection or didn’t sell that we took to

last month, we received four such books.

Schuler’s and thus earned money for the library. You can call Schuler’s to make an appointment. You can also recycle books at your local library.



Finally, you can recycle books at the MSU recycling center. We hope these suggestions help you in discarding unwanted materials.

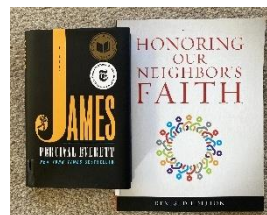
- *The Word: On the Translation of the Bible* by John Barton (220.5 Bar) – Description from book jacket: “This book examines how saints, scholars, and interpreters from ancient times down to the present have produced versions of the Bible in the language of their day while remaining true to the original.”

**However**, we are happy to still accept books that fit the mission of the library and support topics of interest to the congregation. In the

- *In the Hollow of Your Hand: Slave Lullabies* by Alice, McGill (E 811 McG) – Amazon: “Slave lullabies, created from the African American experience, were sung

to give hope for a better time to come... Here the lullabies are preserved along with vibrant quilt collages and a CD recording of each song.”

- *James* by Percival Everett (FIC Eve) – Amazon: “A brilliant, action-packed reimagining of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, both harrowing and ferociously funny, told from the enslaved Jim’s point of view.”
- *Honoring Our Neighbor’s Faith: A Lutheran Perspective on Faith Traditions in America* published by Augsburg Fortress (200 Hon) – Book: “Use this book to explore thirty-two faith traditions that represent a wide spectrum of beliefs or stand out due to their size or public profile in America.” In reviews, many called this their “go to” book about various faiths.



Read. Learn. Serve. Visit the library anytime.

*Library Team*

## Looking Forward to Advent & Christmas Special Music

### Advent Special Music

Sunday, Dec. 7 (Advent 2) - 10 a.m. service  
Featuring the Senior Choir & Handbell Choir

### Worship Expressions, Jazz

Sunday, Dec. 14 (Advent 3) - 10 a.m. worship service



### Children's Choir

Sunday, Dec. 21 (Advent 4) – 10 a.m. worship service

### Lessons and Carols

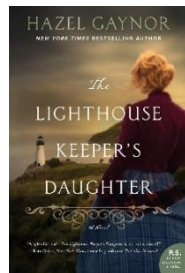
Sunday, Dec. 28 – 10 a.m. worship service

*Janine Novenske Smith, Director of Worship & the Arts*

## ULC Book Club

### Join us in January for *The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter*

ULC Book Club does not meet during December. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, Jan. 15, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. We will discuss *The Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter* by Hazel Gaynor. When a deadly hurricane approaches, two women, living a century apart, will be forever linked by their instinctive acts of bravery and love. This sweeping



historical novel explores how our past shapes our present, and what it truly means to be courageous.

We offer three ways to participate. You can join us in person at ULC in the Fireside room, join us via Zoom or we can send you a recording of the discussion.

We depend on email to keep those wishing to attend informed of any

changes in meeting time or location as well as the books we choose for our discussions. If you would like to join us, please reach out to Beth Rahe [bwojan1@gmail.com](mailto:bwojan1@gmail.com) or Mary Kotnik at [mkotnik@comcast.net](mailto:mkotnik@comcast.net) so we can add you to our email list.

Looking ahead, in February we will read *The Gilded Cage of Woman* by Jayne Catherine Conway.

*Beth Rahe and Mary Kotnik*

## Coffee Connections Christmas Party

The Christmas season is a time for families to get together and celebrate the holiday together by exchanging gifts, sharing food, and celebrating the birth of Jesus. Not everyone has that opportunity. Some people don't live near family, and some people aren't always welcome back home.

In keeping with the welcoming and compassionate spirit of ULC, Coffee Connections will be holding a Christmas party on Saturday, Dec. 20 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Fireside Room. There will be coffee and snacks in the kitchen area just outside the Fireside Room, and we will be playing board games throughout the morning. Anyone is welcome to come.

If you would like to join in the fun and celebrate the Christmas holiday with some amazing LGBTQ people, contact me at [jaytopham@gmail.com](mailto:jaytopham@gmail.com).



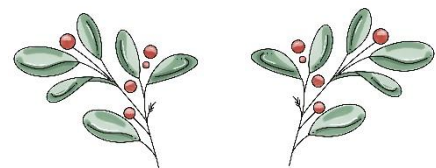
*Jay DuBois-Jones*

## BASKETBALL PARKING @ ULC

BASKETBALL PARKING IS AVAILABLE ON A FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED BASIS

PROCEEDS SUPPORT ULC'S CAMPUS MINISTRY AND OUR SENIOR CHOIR SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

**\$10 PER VEHICLE**  
**1.5 HOURS BEFORE GAME TIME**





## Prayers & Squares Chapter 163

# Nearly 3400 Quilts Given Over 22 Years!

November marked the 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of Chapter 163 at University Lutheran Church. In that time, we are blessed to have provided almost 3,400 prayer quilts.

**ULC high school students** who will be graduating in 2026, please inform the office. This will be the 25<sup>th</sup> year our congregation celebrates their accomplishment with a special quilt.

Nov. 13<sup>th</sup> a **Quilt of Valor** was awarded to Loren Titus, a veteran of the Vietnam War. If you have a family member or friend that you would like to nominate for a Quilt of Valor, please contact Ann or Bobbie.

Saturday, Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> found the Fellowship Hall buzzing with participants busy making **Christmas Tote Bags** and special Christmas ornaments. Lunch was provided.

**Christmas Craft Sale Returns!** We have some great things available. Please bring your Christmas list and check out the sale tables on the first two Sundays in December. The purchase of these items made from the scraps created when making prayer quilts, allows us to buy necessary supplies, refurbish sewing machines for the refugees, and pay shipping costs when sending quilts to people not in the Lansing area.



Christmas Tote workshop participants.

Please join us on Saturday, Jan. 31<sup>st</sup> for **National Quilts of Valor Sewing Day**. We will be putting together quilt tops, backing fabric and batting for our longarm machine quilters. Included in the day's activities will be an award ceremony at 11 a.m. Veterans and their family members are invited to the ceremony. There are activities for both sewers and non-sewers. Lunch will be provided.

A dedicated group continues to **meet each Tuesday** morning in the Fellowship Hall from 10 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. to make prayer quilts as well as bed size quilts for the refugees. In the last two months we have added five new members to our group, three of whom are not members of ULC. Invite a friend and come join us!

If you know someone who needs our prayers with a quilt, please contact Ann Booren ([boorena@msu.edu](mailto:boorena@msu.edu)), Bobbie Davis ([bobbieanddavis80@gmail.com](mailto:bobbieanddavis80@gmail.com)) or one of the pastors.

### Special dates:

Sunday, Dec. 7 and 14 – Prayers & Squares Craft Sale  
Tuesdays, Dec. 23 and 30 – no sewing days  
Tuesday, Jan. 6 – resume regular sewing day  
Saturday, Jan. 31 – National Quilts of Valor Sewing Day



There are two groups of special people at ULC. The first group is the Kids Hope USA mentors who volunteer their time for one hour each week to mentor a Forest View Elementary School student. These people are dedicated to helping their students in any way needed. The help can range from quizzing a student with multiplication cards to talking about a problem with another student or to assist in making slime.

Since January is National Mentoring Month, we honor the following people for the time and effort they spend working with a student: Cindy Ramsey, Sheila Nicholas, Jerry Lindman, Bob Smith, Beth Rahe,

## Special People



Mentors and prayer partners share lunch and stories, Jan. 2025.

Kay Meints, Mary Werkman, Gavin Witter, Kathy Sweat, Thom McCurdy, Debbie Heidrich, and Barb Kissling.

The second group of special people are the prayer partners who support each mentor/ student relationship. These people are dedicated to communicating with one mentor on a

weekly basis, so they know how the mentoring is going and whether prayers are needed. Prayers could be that a student will be healthy and safe, or have a clear mind to learn, or for a student's family. We honor these prayer partners:

Nancy Lindman, Anne Smith, Wei Dong, Carol Mackin, Bill Trevarthen, Cindy Jenks, Deanna Milligan, Clarke Anderson, Paulette Piirainen, Tom Kissling, Connie Lenkowski, Darra Haase, Terrie Reinoehl, Bruce Callen, and Kris Callen.

*Barbara Kissling,*  
[barbkissling@gmail.com](mailto:barbkissling@gmail.com)  
*Debbie Heidrich,*  
[debbie.heidrich@gmail.com](mailto:debbie.heidrich@gmail.com)

## Encore Presentation of *True Believer*

Encore Presentation! Lunch and a movie: *True Believer* at Forum, Sunday Jan. 18th

Over 30 people attended the Oct. 3 *Dinner & a Movie* showing of *True Believer*, a documentary by Kristen Irving. A powerful discussion followed, with a desire by some to view the film again, and to provide an opportunity for more people to see it. Ms. Irving has graciously granted us permission to screen her film again, and the Racial



Justice team invites you to join us for this showing at Forum on Jan. 18. Lunch will be provided!

Here's a brief description from October's *Lux: True Believer* (106 min) follows the story of Irving, then an evangelical filmmaker, as she

explores the origin of the "pro-life" movement. While disbelief initiates her investigation into a veiled history of white supremacy, betrayal forces a deeply personal examination of her own family and identity, neither of which can be disentangled from the other.

We'll have a short discussion following the film. Hope to see you there!

*Bruce Callen*

## *Open Our Hearts*

by Kathy Protsman, arr. By Jeff Kressler

Kathy Protsman, a member of the Racial Justice team, was inspired to write these verses following a racial justice workshop. Jeff Kressler helped with the arrangement and this song has been sung during worship at ULC.

1. Open our hearts Lord. Open our hearts.  
Where we find hatred help us take it apart.  
Where there's injustice help us make all things new.  
For oppressed and oppressor.  
For me and for you.

2. Open our eyes Lord. So we can see.  
The peace and joy that surely will be



Kathy Protsman and soloist Nick Perkins.

In your beloved community.  
Open our eyes Lord.  
Help us to see.

3. There needs to be sadness, repentance and tears.  
For death, stolen land and people living in fear.  
We need to sow seeds of change and repair.  
Where all in your image, find everything fair.

4. We're looking for freedom. We need to be free.  
From our enslavement history.  
Forgive us for sins of white supremacy.  
And the skewed institutions that feed misery.

5. Open our hearts Lord. Let love come in.  
Open our eyes Lord and let love win.  
So every ones on solid ground.  
Where harmony, love, and justice are found.

### CORE Workshop Goals continued from page 1.



Hannah DeVries, a CORE workshop facilitator.

- To see more of the connections between history and contemporary race relations
- To identify opportunities to eliminate racism within the body of believers and beyond
- To create a community of faithful anti-racists in Lansing.

In their closing comments, many attendees expressed gratefulness for the opportunity to deepen their

awareness and understanding of racism, to connect with others committed to remedying the effects of systemic racism, and to move more strongly towards the loving community God calls us to be.

Stay tuned for additional opportunities for learning and connection.

*Bruce Callen*

# Introducing Dr. Jo Ann Mundy and ERACCE

My name is Dr. Jo Ann Mundy, and I'm grateful for the chance to introduce myself as both a new member of University Lutheran Church and as a trainer/organizer with ERACCE—Eliminating Racism & Claiming/ Celebrating Equity. My spouse, Andy Mather, and I are thankful to have found a spiritual home here.



Dr. Jo Ann Mundy

For more than twenty years, I have worked as an antiracism educator, organizer, and trainer, helping individuals and institutions understand how racism operates structurally—and what it takes to build systems rooted in equity and accountability. Through ERACCE, and in partnership with Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training, I have supported congregations, nonprofits, schools, and state agencies across Michigan and the U.S. in developing long-term strategies for transformational change.

Like many people, the pandemic years brought significant shifts to my life and ministry. After leaving a long-term pastoral role and spending time in healing and reflection, I eventually moved to Lansing, married Andy, and began discerning what new beginnings might look like. One constant was my commitment to antiracism work, and with ERACCE's growing partnerships in mid-Michigan, it soon became clear that this region would be the center of much of my organizing.

I first learned about ULC when I met Pastor Emily at a community justice event. As we talked, I sensed a congregation deeply committed to the intersection of faith and justice. When I visited, I noticed right away the

welcome extended to children, the thoughtful accessibility supports, and the lively ministries rooted in community care. I also learned about ULC's Racial Justice Team, which was building momentum through racial-identity caucusing, planning an Understanding Racism workshop, and cultivating a shared language for transformation. All of this resonated strongly with both my values and ERACCE's mission.

As the relationship grew, your pastors and leaders invited me to consider establishing a Lansing-based ERACCE office here at ULC, in the former choir room. This arrangement allows ERACCE to support the congregation's ongoing equity work while anchoring our organizing efforts in a community already committed to growth and accountability. It also gives me the joy of integrating my professional life more closely with my church home.

What has made ULC feel like home is the way this congregation embodies welcome—not just in word, but in practice. I have seen people make space for children with different needs, show up for one another in times of struggle, and pursue justice with humility and courage. I feel grateful to be among people who believe faith calls us to examine the systems we are part of and to work together to repair what is broken.

I look forward to worshiping, learning, and serving alongside you as both a member of this congregation and a partner in the work of building a more equitable and loving world.

*Jo Ann Mundy*

## What is ERACCE?

ERACCE stands for Eliminating Racism & Claiming/Celebrating Equity. Founded in 2000, ERACCE is a Michigan-based nonprofit dedicated to helping individuals and institutions understand the root causes of systemic racism and develop practical, long-term strategies for building equitable structures.

## What ERACCE Does

- Provides Understanding & Analyzing Systemic Racism workshops
- Trains and supports antiracism teams within congregations, schools, nonprofits, and government agencies

- Offers racial-identity caucus spaces for deeper learning
- Partners with organizations long-term to assess policies, culture, and structures
- Provides antiracism and Anti-oppression Organizational Development Coaching services
- Works collaboratively with Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training, a national partner in developing and sustaining antiracist institutions

## Why It Matters

ERACCE's work helps communities build a shared language, develop honest analysis, and create the conditions for true structural change—not just interpersonal good intentions.

Their approach emphasizes accountability, compassion, and institutional transformation.

## Why ERACCE is at ULC

ERACCE is establishing a Lansing-based office in the former choir room at ULC. This partnership supports:

- ULC's ongoing racial-justice commitments
- ERACCE's expanding work across mid-Michigan
- Deeper collaboration between organizers and faith-based communities doing antiracist work

Having ERACCE in our building strengthens both our congregation's mission and the broader movement for justice in our region.

## From the President

# As I Conclude My Year as President

As I wrap up my term as president, I would like to thank both council members and the congregation for support and input throughout the year. I have had thoughtful and insightful conversations with many of you about aspects of ULC that are important to you and these discussions have guided my work with the council, the pastors, and the congregation. This has been a challenging year for ULC council as we have navigated limited finances to try to put the church on a more tenable financial footing. Many difficult conversations have been had with church teams, members, and council to arrive at a budget that puts ULC on a path to sustaining our many ministries for years to come.

ULC has seen positive growth in membership in 2025 and with your continued support I believe that ULC is on a path for future positive growth. As I step aside and Lynn Kriser assumes the presidency for 2026, I want to thank her for her support during a time of loss for my family, and to encourage you to fully support Lynn as she helps move our ministry forward. As in life, there will be changes to who is on council this year, and I encourage

you to get to know each council member and to provide them with honest, thoughtful feedback, as necessary.

I also would like to thank Nato Faliarizao who served as our student representative. This has been a challenging year for Nato and his family, yet he has faithfully taken part in council activities despite being a graduate student, getting married, and facing uncertainty about being in the US as a foreign national during these challenging political times.



Finally, although we may not all agree about everything that ULC attempts to take on, please know that every member of council takes their responsibilities seriously and is trying to do their best to represent each member of the congregation. Please continue to reach out to us to let us know what is on your mind so that we can do our best to represent you and continue to make ULC the loving, welcoming place we all want it to be. Thank you.

*Mike Sweat*  
ULC President

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## How will God Work Exceedingly Abundantly in 2026?

<sup>20</sup> Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine,<sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. -Ephesians 3:20-21

When I learned these verses, almost 50 years ago, I learned “do exceedingly abundantly,” which somehow sticks with me in a way that “accomplish abundantly far more” does not. The picture here is of over and above. I like to think about these

verses this way: No matter what I might ask or could even imagine, God through the Holy Spirit in me is able to accomplish over and above in an exceedingly abundant way. To God be the Glory forever!

I share these verses with you because they are a couple of a few verses that have at different times in my life been very meaningful to me. When I chose a verse to go with my bio as a Synod Attorney, these are the verses I chose.

Do you have a “life verse” or verses? Is there a passage of scripture that is especially meaningful to you? I’d love for you to share with me. Talk to me; come up and hand me a paper your name and your verses on it; email me ([knitterlynn@gmail.com](mailto:knitterlynn@gmail.com)).

I’m looking forward to seeing how God will work exceedingly abundantly in each of us this coming year.

*Lynn Kriser*  
2026 Council President

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ULC Council met on Nov. 13. The meeting was in-person at church and on Zoom.

The following are some highlights:

- Much of the meeting was dedicated to discussions on the annual meeting and budget. Thank you to all who have



participated in this congregation-wide conversation. Please see the president and treasurer updates.

- Council reviewed/ approved a building use request by the Sistrum Chorus, a women’s choir from Lansing.

Council will re-convene in January.

*Emily Kirkpatrick*  
ULC Secretary

# How shall I GIVE?

## 4 aids to discern my giving

### 1 GIVE

Giving generously is a faithful response to being created in the image of our good and generous God. All that we have is a gift from God, who calls us to be loving and generous stewards.

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." - Luke 12:34

### 2 STEP UP

Identify your current giving and what it would look like to "step up" your giving. Imagine the impact if we stepped up together!



### 3 RECURRING

Make giving generously a healthy and easy habit: Recurring giving can be set up by direct transfer to MSUFCU or through PayPal. To receive offering envelopes for weekly giving sign up in the church office.

### 4 10%

The practice of giving 10% is found in the Bible in the book of Leviticus, ch. 27. The community was asked to set aside 10% of their resources (including land, grain, fruit, etc.) as "holy to the Lord." This was referred to as a "tithe," and "offering" was additional generosity beyond the 10%. Today, some continue to use 10% as a guide to their generosity, according to the needs and resources of the family. (Example of giving 10%: For an annual family income of \$60,000, a 10% contribution would be \$500 per month or \$115 per week. An annual income of \$100,000 would equal \$834 per month or \$192 per week.)

Giving statements are mailed after September and December of each year, for tax and record purposes, or are available by contacting the office.

## ULC Financials as of Oct. 31, 2025

In an effort of greater transparency, Council has decided to share a financial update with the congregation monthly. Please contact the Treasurer if you have any questions or need further information. As of Oct 31, we are 83 percent of the way through the year:

|                 |               |               |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Envelope Giving | \$436,202.99  | 83% of budget |
| Other Income    | \$23,604.20   | 82% of budget |
| Total Income    | \$459,807.19  | 80% of budget |
| Expenses        | \$500,546.53* | 84% of budget |
| Net Income      | -\$40,739.34  |               |

\* There were three payrolls in the month of October. Also, the annual insurance premium was due in Oct., reflecting higher than normal expenses for the month.

## December Outreach of the Month ELCA Good Gifts

God is calling us to be a good neighbor. This past summer I heard a familiar scripture passage. A man asks Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus answers the man by telling him a story, a story we all know, The Good Samaritan. We need to understand that our neighbor is anyone and everyone who needs us.



or email if you are purchasing for a friend or loved one. We will also have a small Christmas tree set up in the church where you can pick up ornaments to accompany your gift.

The ELCA World Hunger Appeal program, **Good Gifts** is one answer that provides specific opportunities to serve our worldwide or across-the-street neighbors who need us. You may give by visiting <https://goodgifts.elca.org/> where you can select specific gifts at varying giving levels. There you can also select a card to mail, print

You may also donate in the usual way by placing a check in the offering plate or using the donate button on the ULC website. If you use either of these methods, please include *Good Gifts* on the memo line. The money we give goes toward providing our neighbors help in a real way. Ninety percent of the money goes directly to the work. The gifts support work in 86 countries. Please give generously.

*Michael Anderson*

## January Outreach of the Month Interfaith Power and Light

Interfaith Power & Light’s mission is to inspire and equip people of faith to exercise stewardship of and love for all Creation. It offers practical ways to put faith into action by promoting energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other sustainable practices that lead to a cleaner, healthier, and more just world.



The Capital Area Chapter of [Interfaith Power & Light](#) (IP&L) brings twelve Christian, Muslim and Jewish houses of worship together to

carry out this mission. ULC is an active member collaborating on projects that care for God’s creation in our community. Dale Romsos points to their current project putting

solar panels on nonprofit [LINC’S](#) three houses which provide adults with disabilities the opportunity to live independently. January’s Outreach of the Month provides a way for us to respond, as people of faith, to the challenges of climate change and racial injustice. Thanks to Interfaith Power & Light for highlighting a path to a renewable future by connecting faith, sustainability and justice.

*Nancy Lindman*

## Stewardship Thanks

Thank you, members and friends of ULC, for your response to God’s love through the fall stewardship campaign. Sixty-nine households responded with \$332,480 pledged in support for what God is calling us to do in 2026. Thanks to all faithful supporters who once again made giving commitments and to 19 new households pledging for the first time! We can all work together better though pledging – our 2026 giving

commitments help the Finance Team and Council plan and carry out ULC’s mission. If you have not had a chance to make your pledge for 2026, you can still do so below. Stewardship is our response to a God who gives us everything we have and everything we are. Thanks for all you do at ULC to love God love your neighbor.

*The Stew Crew*



**It's NOT  
Too Late  
to Pledge!**

You can still pledge to support ministry at ULC!

Submit your paper pledge card to the office or pledge [on-line](http://www.ulcel.org) on our website, [www.ulcel.org](http://www.ulcel.org).

Please make your pledge as soon as possible so we can develop the 2026 operating budget. Thanks!

## Welcome a New Member at ULC

Heidi Tobash was among the new members welcomed at the November 2nd worship service, but her bio and photo were not able to be included in the November Lux.



**Heidi Tobash:**

I was born in San Angelo, Texas, moved to Pennsylvania when I was four, and lived in PA until January 2020, when I

moved to the East Lansing area. I graduated from Kutztown Area High School in 1976, and attended Michigan State University, majoring in Audiology and Speech Science, and Education, graduating in 1981.

I worked as a school Speech and Language Therapist, met my husband on a blind date, and was married June 21, 1985. I continued

teaching for another three years before starting a family. I have four children - two girls and two boys currently ages 29 - 37. When my children were young, I was a teacher at the daycare at our church. After I had my last child, I opened a preschool at my church and was the lead teacher for four years. Due to unfortunate life circumstances, I became a widow at much too young an age with four children ages 4 - 13. Thankfully, I was able to return to full-time teaching in my field, where I worked for another 18 years before retiring in 2019. At that time all my children had successfully completed their college studies and were safely established in careers.

My decision to return to Michigan was made so I could be near my oldest daughter who had moved to Michigan five years prior, living in Byron Center and who had recently had a baby making it a blended family of seven. I knew she could

use some extra help. My oldest son and best friend (former college roommate) were also here in the East Lansing area. I was happy to return to the Great Lakes State. My other daughter and two grandsons live in Selingsgrove, Penn. and my youngest son resides in Washington, D.C.

I currently work in the retail store at the Okemos Cracker Barrel. In my free time I attend as many Spartan athletic events as possible, cheering on my beloved Spartans, and I try to keep up with activities of all my grandchildren both here and in Pennsylvania. My family, my best friend, and my Spartans are the joys of my life. I attended ULC when I was a student at MSU (many moons ago) and decided to start here when I finally made the decision to leave the comfort of my home and online church service throughout and after the pandemic. I found ULC to be very welcoming and enjoyable.

## Riders and Drivers

We have received some requests for rides to and from Sunday services. I have volunteered to coordinate this new community service.



If you are willing to be included in the driver pool, need a ride, or know someone who does, please contact me at [andymather@comcast.net](mailto:andymather@comcast.net). Please include your name, address, and phone number so I can match drivers with riders who are close to each other. If applicable, please include any specific dates you wish to participate.

Ride requests received before 5 p.m. on Saturday will have the best chance of being matched for Sunday rides.

Thank you all for helping the church be as inclusive as we can!

*Andy MundyMather*

***Congratulations to our recently selected officers & committee members . . .***



**Officers**

Pres. Elect: Louise Montag  
Treasurer: Matthew Uebel

**Council**

Claretta Freeman  
Debbie Heidrich  
Student: Santiago Saucedo

**Finance Committee**

Emmett Braselton  
Larry Wagenknecht

**Endowment Committee**

Bruce Callen  
Ralph Frisch  
Brandon DuBois-Jones  
Student: Anna Korecki

**Members in Ministry**

Jo Ann Mundy  
Judy Thompson

***Thank you to all who served last year!***

## Dec. Birthdays

- 3 Marge Mahoney  
Deanna Milligan
- 4 Kimberly Melton  
Diane Wanagat
- 5 Gerry Erickson  
Jerry Lindman
- 6 Hannah Oslund
- 7 Rachel Morin
- 9 Susan Zimmerman  
Paul Bartlett
- 10 Ross Clyma  
Cynthia Ramsey
- 11 Libby Baswell  
Russell Fitzgerald  
Lois Mumshaw
- 12 Bruce Reinoehl  
Heather Stanley  
Steven Viele
- 13 Paul Guilfoyle  
Ross Lazar
- 14 Andrea Vera



- 15 Michael Sweat
- 16 Larry Cross
- 17 Gregory Hagbom
- 19 Andrew Hagman
- 20 Lynn Kriser
- 21 Cheryl Kruger  
Brie McPhall
- 22 Kathy Sweat
- 24 Catherine Ernst
- 28 Johanna Karcher

## Dec. Anniversaries

- 6 Art & Carolyn Lohr
- 14 Al & Ann Booren
- 20 Ralph & Peg Frisch  
Dan & Lindsay Sadler
- 22 Anthony & Chad  
Waldron

- 29 Todd & Barb Helser
- 30 Bruce & Kris Callen
- 31 John & Bonnie V'Soske

## Jan. Birthdays

- 1 Craig Lazar
- 2 Keith Harder
- 3 Darra Haase
- 5 Lisa Mitchell-Parker
- 7 Andy MundyMather
- 6 Craig Kohn
- 8 Aaron Brooks
- 9 Everly Horne  
Elizabeth Sype
- 11 Mary Kotnik
- 13 Megan Kotnik
- 15 Charles Hathaway  
Michael Uebel
- 16 Emily Baswell,
- 17 Kloie Lasley  
Larry Wagenknecht
- 19 Mary Letvenow

- 20 Barbara Fensel
- 22 Erik Bubolz  
Judy Kindel
- 23 Bryan McPhall, Jr.  
Jeff Williams
- 24 Lynne Clyma
- 25 Caleb Fisher  
Mary Toll
- 26 Taylor Zagata
- 27 Linda Trevarthen
- 28 Darrin Karcher  
Amy Wagenknecht
- 29 Erin Frisch  
James Shaw
- 30 Wanda Ophaug
- 31 Nathan Gennette

## Jan. Anniversaries

- 3 Jean & Kit Christensen
- 28 Michael & Connie  
Lenkowski
- 29 Mike & Mary Toll

## ULC Archives

The next time you are in the ULC office, check out the Conference Room. The space has been repainted, and the picture frames have been repurposed and rehung. Instead of displaying portraits of lead pastors, the wall now features a picture timeline titled "University Lutheran Church Through the Ages."

The display begins with a picture of the first campus group and ends with the drone picture of the 2024 picnic. We hope this display will remind you of activities that are

## ULC Through the Ages



New photo display in the ULC Conference Room.

important to the ULC congregation and helped form who we are today.

Sue Kamens voiced the idea for the display and worked with Connie Lenkowski to see the project through. Along the way, we had guidance from Mandy O'Neil.

Dale Ramsos helped with the framing, and Claire Ward and Steve Viele

hung the pictures. The archives and ULC media website offered a wonderful selection of pictures. Thank you to everyone who made this display happen. Enjoy!

*Connie Lenkowski*



The deadline for the February Lux is **Friday, Jan. 16.**

E-mail articles to Amy Wagenknecht at [amylarryw@comcast.net](mailto:amylarryw@comcast.net) and Mandy O'Neil at [ulcsec@ulcel.org](mailto:ulcsec@ulcel.org) or place them in the Lux mailbox in the ULC office. Articles may be edited for size or readability, but you will be contacted if significant changes are made. Keep those wonderful photos and articles coming! Thanks!

# December

- |    |                  |  |       |                                   |  |
|----|------------------|--|-------|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1  | 6:00p            | Handbell Rehearsal-Sanctuary                   | 6:30p | Racial Justice Team-Zoom          |  |
|    | 6:30p            | Racial Justice Team-Zoom                       | 7:00p | MSU Basketball Parking (v. USC)   |  |
| 2  | 5:30p            | MSU Basketball Parking (v. Iowa)               | 7     | 9:30a                             | Lux/Communications-Zoom                              |
| 3  | 9:30a            | Communications Team-Zoom                       |       | 4:30p                             | Lead Management Team-Zoom                            |
|    | 4:30p            | Lead Management Team-Zoom*                     | 8     | 8:00a                             | Mushers-IHOP, EL                                     |
| 5  | 5:00p            | Fridays@Five Campus Ministry                   |       | 9:30a                             | Brunch Bunch-IHOP, EL                                |
| 6  | 10:30a           | MSU Basketball Parking (v. Duke)               |       | 5:00p                             | MSU Basketball Parking (v. Northwestern)             |
| 7  | 10:00a           | Sunday Worship (Advent Music)-Sanct/YouTube    | 9     | 5:00p                             | ULC Elves  |
|    | 10:00a           | P & S Craft Sale-Narthex                       | 11    | 10:00a                            | Sunday Worship-Sanctuary/YouTube                     |
|    | 11:30a           | Advent Lunch-Fellowship Hall                   |       | 11:30a                            | Sunday Funday-Fellowship                             |
|    | 5:00p            | HS Youth Group-ULC                             | 12    | 6:00p                             | Handbell Choir Rehearsal-Sanctuary                   |
| 8  | 6:00p            | Handbell Choir Rehearsal-Sanctuary             | 13    | 6:30p                             | MSU Basketball Parking (v. Indiana)                  |
| 9  | 1:00p            | ULC Bridge Group-Fireside                      |       | 6:30p                             | Racial Justice Caucusing-Fellowship                  |
|    | 6:30p            | Racial Justice Caucus-Fellowship               | 14    | 6:00p                             | Finance Committee-Zoom                               |
|    | 7:00p            | Home-Brewed Theology-Baswell Home              | 15    | 1:30p                             | ULC Book Club-Fireside                               |
| 10 | 6:00p            | Finance Committee-Zoom                         |       | 7:00p                             | Sr. Choir Rehearsal-Sanctuary                        |
| 11 | 9:30a            | Brunch Bunch-IHOP, EL                          | 16    | 5:00p                             | Fridays@Five Campus Ministry                         |
| 12 | 7:30p            | Ten Pound Fiddle Concert-Sanctuary             | 18    | 10:00a                            | Sunday Worship-Sanctuary/YouTube                     |
| 14 | 10:00a           | Sunday Worship (WE Jazz)-Sanctuary/YouTube     |       | 11:30a                            | Sunday Forum-Fireside (Movie: <i>True Believer</i> ) |
|    | 10:00a           | P & S Craft Sale-Narthex                       |       | 5:00p                             | HS Youth Group-Faith Lutheran, Okemos                |
| 16 | 5:00p            | MSU Basketball Parking (v. Toledo)             | 19    | <b>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</b> |  |
| 17 | 9:30a            | Amnos-Burcham Hills                            |       | 6:00p                             | Handbell Choir Rehearsal-Sanctuary                   |
|    | 11:30a           | Rhodon-Joe's on Jolly, Okemos                  | 20    | 6:30p                             | Council Meeting-Conference/Zoom*                     |
|    | 6:30p            | Blue Christmas Service                         | 21    | 9:30a                             | Amnos-Burcham Hills                                  |
| 18 | 3:30p            | Food Movers Distribution-Drive-thru            |       | 1:00p                             | Rhodon-Fireside                                      |
| 19 | 1:30p            | Accessibility Team-Fellowship                  | 22    | 8:00a                             | Mushers-IHOP, EL                                     |
| 20 | 9:00a            | Coffee Connections Holiday Party-Fireside      |       | 3:30p                             | Food Movers Distribution-Drive thru                  |
| 21 | 10:00a           | Sunday Worship-Sanctuary/Facebook              | 23    | 1:00p                             | Fourth Friday Friends-Delhi Café-Holt                |
|    | 5:00p            | HS Youth Group-Faith Lutheran, Okemos          |       | 5:00p                             | Fridays@Five (Community Cooking Event)               |
| 23 | 7:00p            | FAN (Face Addiction Now)-Fellowship            |       | 7:30p                             | Ten Pound Fiddle Concert                             |
| 24 | 6:00p            | Christmas Eve Special Music-Sanctuary          | 24    | 10:30a                            | MSU Basketball Parking (v. Maryland)                 |
|    | 6:30p            | Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship-Sanc/YouTube | 25    | 10:00a                            | Sunday Worship-Sanctuary/YouTube                     |
| 25 | <b>Christmas</b> |  |       | 11:30a                            | No Forum-Fireside (Kids Hope Mentors)                |
| 28 | 10:00a           | Sunday Worship (Lessons & Carols)-Sanc/YouTube | 26    | 6:00p                             | Handbell Choir Rehearsal-Sanctuary                   |
| 29 | 5:30p            | Basketball Parking (MSU v. Cornell)            | 27    | 10:00a                            | Prayers & Squares-Fellowship Hall                    |
|    |                  |  |       | 1:00p                             | ULC Bridge Group-Fellowship                          |
|    |                  |  |       | 7:00p                             | FAN (Face Addiction Now)-Fellowship                  |
|    |                  |  |       | 7:00p                             | Home-Brewed Theology-Viele Home                      |
|    |                  |  | 30    | 6:30p                             | MSU Basketball Parking (v. Michigan)                 |
|    |                  |  |       | 7:30p                             | Ten Pound Fiddle Concert-Sanctuary                   |
|    |                  |  | 31    | 9:00a                             | Quilts of Valor Work Day-Fellowship                  |
|    |                  |  |       | 10:00a                            | Coffee Connections-Strange Matter, Lansing           |

# January

- |   |        |   |
|---|--------|---|
| 4 | 10:00a | Sunday Worship-Sanctuary/YouTube                  |
|   | 11:30a | Forum-Fireside (Justic League of Greater Lansing) |
|   | 5:00p  | High School Youth Group-ULC                       |
| 5 | 6:00p  | Handbell Choir Rehearsal-Sanctuary                |

## Weekly Meetings

### Mondays:

4p Tight Knit

### Tuesdays:

7:30a Tues. Morning Bible Study – Zoom

10a P & S Sewing - Fellowship

1:00p Staff Meeting – Conference

2:45p Faith, Writing & Reflection – Zoom

7p Young Adults Group - Moka & Co.

### Wednesdays:

Noon Lectio Bible Reflection – Zoom

### Thursdays:

8a Mushers – EL IHOP

7:30p Sr. Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary

### Saturdays:

10:45a Sat. AM - Fireside Bible Study - Library

### ULC Office Hours

Tuesday - Thursday

9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Closed Monday & Friday

**Reminder:** Please let the office know when ULC meetings and events are scheduled, even if they're happening virtually. We would like to keep the calendar current. Thanks!

\*Zoom link contacts: Lectio Divina – Bill Trevarthen; Faith, Writing & Reflection, Carole Ford [cfordllp@yahoo.com](mailto:cfordllp@yahoo.com); Tuesday morning study, [larry.wagenknecht@gmail.com](mailto:larry.wagenknecht@gmail.com); Pub Theology, [ulcsec@ulcel.org](mailto:ulcsec@ulcel.org)



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**Emily Shipman**  
Lead Pastor

**Zachariah Shipman**  
Associate Pastor

**Janine Novenske Smith**  
Director of Worship & the Arts

**Mandy O'Neil**  
Office Administrator

**Gary Carl**  
Financial Administrator

**Mary Letvenow**  
Event Coordinator

**Kristie Wiggert**  
Organist

**John Dale Smith**  
Pianist

**Louise Paquette**  
Director of Handbells

BLUE  
CHRISTMAS  
WORSHIP SERVICE

**DECEMBER 17**  
**6:30 PM**

Join us for a service  
of contemplation  
and healing for  
those who struggle  
with grief during the  
Christmas season.  
All are welcome!

