

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

Mark Your Calendars . . .

Sunday Worship

10 a.m. on Facebook
Followed by **ZoomForum**

**Holy Week Worship
On Facebook**

Maundy Thursday 7 p.m.
Good Friday 7 p.m.
Easter Sunday 10 a.m.

Pub Theology

Tuesday, April 6 at 7 p.m.
Zoom (call 332-2559 for link)

**Understanding Racism
Workshop**

Friday & Saturday, Apr. 9-10
9 a.m. – 6 p.m. on Zoom

Food Movers

Thursday, Apr. 22 - 4:30 p.m.
Drive thru distribution.

Due to Covid safety protocols, the ULC building remains closed. However, our ministry continues. The ULC number (517-332-2559) is connected to staff cell numbers, please call if there is a need!

Inside . . .

Pastor: Easter	2
Campus Ministry ~ Pronouns	3
Family Faith Formation ~ Library News.....	5
Forum ~ Book Club ~ Juliana.....	6
Music Notes ~ Outreach: Choir Scholarship.....	7
Racial Justice	8
Earthkeeping ~ Food Movers	9
Kids Hope	10
President ~ Council	11
Members Reflect on Pandemic.....	12
Celebrations ~ Archives	14
April Calendar	15
Lux Survey.....	16

Palm Sunday or Passion Sunday?

Sunday, March 28 is what has been known as Palm Sunday. But with the introduction of the Lutheran Book of Worship in 1978, the name of this Sunday was changed to Palm/Passion Sunday and the focus changed. There were multiple reasons for the name and focus change, but the simplest reason is so that the whole scope of Jesus’ passion could be experienced, especially by those who only worship on “Palm Sunday” and Easter and thereby miss Holy Week.



Morgyn Weaver presents a liturgical dance to *Hosanna* as part of Worship Expressions Passion Sunday.

Palm Sunday begins with the Gospel account of Jesus entering Jerusalem riding on a donkey to shouts of “Hosanna” and people spreading palm branches and garments before him. But then as the service continues, we read the whole passion narrative from one of the four Gospels, and the tone of worship moves from joy to solemnness. To celebrate the fullness of Easter, one must experience the pain of the crucifixion.

Continued on page 2.



JOIN US FOR A VIRTUAL

BENEFIT CONCERT

Featuring music videos recorded by:
Scholarship students Divira Pahwa,
Chey Nevins, Zack Sneed & Adam Krause
Senior Choir - Handbell Quartet and more!

FRIDAY, APRIL 23 - 7 PM ET
FACEBOOK LIVE

**SUPPORTING THE SENIOR
CHOIR SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

*An integrated family journeying faithfully together, inspired by God’s grace,
guided by Christ, and empowered and sustained by the Holy Spirit*

We Need Easter!

Easter! The resurrection! The most important day of the church year! The day that we celebrate God raising Jesus to life! The day that we celebrate God bringing life out of death!

We need Easter. Actually, we always need Easter. But we need Easter this year even more!

So often we think of resurrection as a sudden thing. That's probably because it was on only the third day that God raised Jesus from the dead. A pretty quick resurrection. But if I've learned anything in my years of ministry, it's that resurrection often takes much longer than, "on the third day." Yet even though resurrection often takes longer than "on the third day," our God is still a God of resurrection.

I've seen people struggle with mental illness for years, and pray for resurrection and new life for years, hoping for a quick "three days." And even though "three days" turned into three weeks, and then three months, and maybe even three years, somehow, someway, God brought resurrection, healing and new life. Easter! Resurrection!

I've seen people struggle with broken relationships, or painful situations, or devastating loss for

years, and pray for resurrection and new life for years, hoping for a quick "three days." And even though "three days" turned into three weeks, and then three months, and maybe even three years, somehow, someway, God brought resurrection, healing and new life. Easter! Resurrection!



You see, our God has a way of bringing life out of death!

For the past year, we as a people, a nation, and a world, have longed for and prayed for a resurrection from the COVID-19 pandemic. When this all began last March, we all thought we'd be back in our church building, worshipping together to celebrate Easter – a quick three-day resurrection. But three days have turned into three weeks, and then three months, and now more than a year. And here we are at Easter once again, worshipping in our homes instead of our church building.

We've lost more than half a million people to COVID in this country alone, and way more than that around the world. The suffering, isolation, and death are more than we ever imagined. We need Easter.

Yet even though resurrection often takes longer than "on the third day," our God is still a God of resurrection, and resurrection is coming! COVID

infections, hospitalizations and deaths are beginning to decline. More people are being vaccinated and the vaccine is becoming more readily available. Our President has said that he hopes that by July 4 we can have small gatherings to celebrate the 4th. And our Council is beginning to talk about how we will reopen the building and make appropriate plans for when it is safe to do so. It's not a three-day resurrection, but resurrection is coming!

That is what has given me hope during this pandemic – that our God is a God of resurrection! Even in the most difficult days of the pandemic, I held on to the promise that our God is the God who brings life out of death. We may still be in the midst of the "three days," death may still be all around us, but the light is beginning to dawn and God is at work bringing life out of death!

As we celebrate our second Easter in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we celebrate and worship a God who raised Jesus to life, and a God who is in the process of raising us and the world to new life. Our God is the God who brings life out of death! May this God bring you hope and new life this Easter.

Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

Pastor Gary

Palm Sunday continued from page 1.

This year, Palm/Passion Sunday was Worship Expressions – Passion Sunday, and through dance, drama and music we attempted to recreate the wide-ranging emotions of Palm/Passion Sunday and create a worship experience that moved us as worshipers from Palm Sunday through Holy Week so that we could be ready to celebrate Easter. If you missed Worship Expressions – Passion Sunday, you are able to view this worship experience on Facebook or our [YouTube](#) channel.

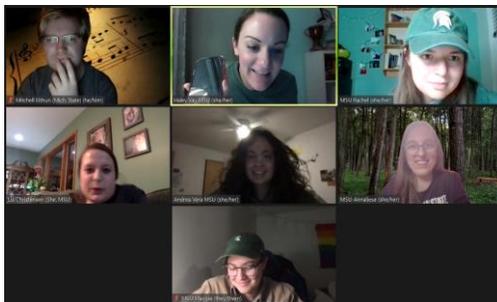
Pastor Gary



Vil Dolorosa – Janine N Smith, Arleigh Savage, Juliana Marks, and John Dale Smith.

Fridays @ Five

Racial Justice Speaker Series - Check out the “Campus Ministry” playlist on our ULC [YouTube](#) channel and join the conversation in racial justice. Our speaker on April 9th is Dr. Kirsi Stjerna, professor at PLTS of California. We’ll share more about her next month.



BIG10 trivia night on Zoom

universities on zoom for a Trivia Night. There were 48 participants from all BIG10 schools/Lutheran campus ministries, and we had a great time meeting Lutherans from around the BIG10! Our team called Sue Kamens for our “phone a friend” and she helped us answer the question, “What ingredients are in a dry martini?”

Trivia Night – On March 19 we joined with Lutheran Campus Ministries from the BIG10

Pastor Haley Vay

Proclaiming the Gospel with Pronouns

ULC Statement of Intentional Welcome

In response to the call to Romans 15:7, "Welcome one another, therefore as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God," we believe that every person has worth as an individual and every person is entitled to dignity and respect. We, therefore, publicly proclaim that:

We welcome people of any race, nationality, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression into the membership of our church, and we encourage everyone to share their faith, gifts and talents in worship, service, study and leadership;

We commit to remove all barriers that exclude people from full and active participation in our church;

We will continually strive to eliminate prejudice from our thoughts and actions and discourage prejudice by others at every opportunity.

Dignity, respect, removing barriers, striving to eliminate prejudice, and welcoming people of any gender identity and gender expression. As a congregation, we have dedicated ourselves to this ministry. Even during a pandemic, we continue to grow in the ways we learn to live out an expansive *theology of welcome*.

I am Pastor Haley Vay and I use she/her pronouns. It was about two years ago that I started sharing my pronouns in conversation, email signature, and more recently on Zoom meetings, after our campus ministry students opened my heart to the impact of this active way to do justice. I have learned that sharing pronouns is an act of gospel proclamation, with the intention to create a more open and courageous space for the faith formation and inclusion of all people.

My hope with this article is that you read it, live with it, revisit it as needed, and gain wisdom and insight into the effectiveness of using pronouns to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. I also hope that when you have questions, you’ll be bold to ask them, while giving thanks to God for the people who are sharing their stories for the sake of the gospel.

– **Pastor Haley Vay Beaman,**
pronouns: she/her/hers

I share my pronouns (he/him/his) in the signature line of my emails at work, and in my “screen name” in Zoom meetings (which now typically comprise 60-80 percent of my work week). My primary reason for doing so has been to “normalize” such sharing, in support of individuals (students, colleagues, and others), so that pronoun sharing seems less like

something that “other people” do, and more like something we all do. It might be noteworthy that I have received several notes from others thanking me for doing so – a positive indicator that I hope I am having some small positive impact on improving a culture of inclusion in my work and classroom environment.

– **Bradley Marks,**
pronouns: he/him/his

Pronouns are essential in the way we communicate with each other. It is important for me to be identified by my pronouns because that is a part of who I am. Using incorrect pronouns could be offensive or harassing, as you are disrespecting one’s identity. Many may be able to assume my pronouns, however, sharing them with others helps normalize the conversation and

Continued on page 4.

Pronouns continued from page 3.

be more inclusive to others who may not identify with the pronouns others would assume.

I have found it helpful to include my pronouns in my email signature, behind my name in virtual meetings, and in introducing myself to a new group of people. In doing so, I hope to (1) be referred to by the pronouns I identify with, and (2) invite others to feel comfortable sharing their pronouns. I hope others join me in sharing their pronouns, as a way to create a more inclusive and compassionate community.

– **Louise Harder, pronouns: she/her/hers**

When people use the correct pronouns for me it shows that I am being accepted for who I am and respected. Pronouns are part of a person's identity and their self-expression, not using the right ones is a rejection of that identity and the person's reality.

Imagine you meet someone and tell them your name is Joe, but they continue to call you Jeff even after you tell them they are not using the correct name. This would be frustrating and invalidating for most people and incorrect pronoun usages can feel the same way. Using the wrong pronouns despite knowing which someone prefer implies that you know the person better than they know themselves.

It is important to me to learn someone's pronouns when I meet them so that I don't unintentionally show disrespect or cause distress. It is important to never assume someone's pronouns or identity based on how they look.

I usually share my pronouns in parentheses after my name in letters or other locations where my name is displayed, such as Zoom. When meeting a new person, I simply ask after learning their name what pronouns they prefer and usually this gives me the opportunity to share mine.

– **Gabriel Aichele, pronouns: he/him, xe/xem**

As an identical twin whose identity was always a mystery for my first 18 years (everyone outside my family always called both me and my twin the same name, Andy, because they had no idea which brother I was) made me more sensitive to people's need to manage their real identity. So, I am more careful to honor someone's request for how they prefer to be called. Like with "preferred pronouns." They are a simple but profound way that someone shares their world. I don't have to understand someone's gender identity or fluidity. Including preferred pronouns signals an authentic welcome to LGBTQ people.

– **Clarke Anderson, pronouns: he/him/his**

Sharing pronouns is about inclusion. More and more people are coming to understand gender has been socially constructed (much like race) as opposites in order to maintain a certain hierarchy and power structure. As my own awareness in this space has grown, I've come to

appreciate gender isn't just one thing or another (often called "binary" - being only two). I no longer see myself as simply female in the traditional sense and so I am most comfortable with a gender-neutral pronoun.

Unfortunately, our language is part of reinforcing the social construct of gender and so there really isn't a natural choice for folks who identify as transgender, gender nonconforming, or gender non-binary like me. You'll notice I list my pronouns as she/they. This means I recognize most people see me as only female, however I really am most myself somewhere in between female and male- and I'm OK with folks using either female or gender-neutral pronouns when referring to me. Much to my surprise, it feels really good when someone refers to me as "they" and I'm learning to lean into that good feeling. As I continue to do my own work, my pronouns may change over time- that's OK! We are all ever-changing and evolving people and as we learn and grow so can our understanding of ourselves and our gender identity.

Incidentally, I also very much appreciate when God is not referred to as either male or female. I am a childhood sexual assault survivor, and I have trouble connecting with God as male because of my past trauma. God as gender-neutral is a God I can trust loves me and I notice right away when someone makes an effort to not gender God (thanks Pastors Gary and Haley Vay!). It is a small, big thing.

I share my pronouns when introducing myself for the first time (or re-introducing myself if it's been a while and my pronouns have changed), wherever I write my name (for example, as I close a letter or on my zoom profile), or if someone asks me. We no longer live in a world (I'd argue we never did) where one can assume someone's gender just by the way they look. Inviting someone to share their pronouns shows respect, even if they prefer not to answer.

By sharing your pronouns, you help make spaces more inclusive and it also is a first step in respecting people's gender identity, creating a more welcoming space for people of all genders, and interrupting the social construct of gender, also called cisnormativity. Providing space and opportunity for people to share their pronouns does not mean that everyone feels comfortable or needs to share their pronouns. Some people may choose not to share for a variety of reasons, e.g., they are questioning or transitioning their pronouns, they don't use or like any pronouns, they don't feel comfortable sharing them at that moment or in that space, or they fear bullying or harassment after sharing. In the case that someone has left pronouns out, please refrain from using pronouns for that person and refer to the person by name (just like with God!).

One of my favorite quotes is attributed to Maya Angelou-" I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better." To me, pronoun usage is about knowing better and doing better.

– **Erin Frisch, pronouns: she/they**

Family Faith Formation

Children's Books on YouTube

Did you know that you can watch Pastor Haley Vay read a special book each month on our ULC YouTube channel? Here are the books for February, March, and those coming in April. You can find these recordings on the ULC YouTube channel under *Virtual Sunday School*.



Black History Month: *Our Children Can Soar*; Reading Month: *When God was a Little Girl*; Easter: *Holy Week*, *The Story of Easter*, *God Gave us Easter*, and *An Easter Gift from Jesus*.

Worship Wednesdays & Confirmation Class

During the pandemic we have held Sunday School virtually on Wednesdays and recorded elements of our time together to include in worship on Sundays. We call it "Worship Wednesday" and meet weekly at 4 p.m. on Zoom.

Resurrection Bags

Children received Resurrection Bags with supplies for the season of Easter in Sunday School. We continue gathering on Zoom for Worship Wednesdays throughout the seasons of Lent and Easter.

Confirmation students made the Resurrection Bag event their service project in March, making sure our youngest kids have all the supplies they need to learn and grow in faith this season of Easter.



Sunday School Bag Delivery

Summer Camps with ULC



Mark your calendars! Beginning July 6 through July 29, Summer Youth Music and Virtual Bible Camps will gather on Zoom. We will meet on Tuesday and Thursday mornings for four weeks. Registration is forthcoming!

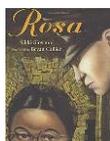
Pastor Haley Vay



ULC Memorial Library

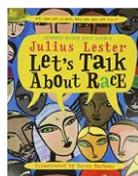
Children's Story Time Continues

Story time continues for the younger members of our congregation. Here are three more YouTube videos of racial justice books in the ULC Library being read. We hope that you will be able to check these books out from the library soon, but for now you are invited to listen to them being read. The books are enjoyable and also offer a great opportunity for discussion. Welcome to story time!



E 323 *Rosa* by Nikki Giovanni - This tribute to Mrs. Rosa Parks is a celebration of her

courageous action and the events that followed. [Rosa - Bing video](#)



E 305.8 *Let's Talk about Race* by Julius Lester - The author shares his own story as he explores what makes each of us special. "This stunning picture book introduces race as just one of many chapters in a person's story" (*School Library Journal*). "Lester's poignant picture book helps children learn, grow, discuss, and begin to create a future that resolves differences" (*Children's*

Literature). [Let's Talk About Race by Julius Lester - Bing video](#)



E Blu *Ron's Big Mission* by Rose Blue - This is an inspiring story, based on Ron McNair's life, of how a little boy, future scientist, and *Challenger* astronaut desegregated his library through peaceful resistance. [Ron's Big Mission - Bing video](#)

The Library Team

Namibia Aid, Kids Hope & Earthkeeping

April 4: Easter — No Forum

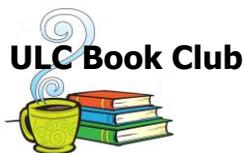
April 11: Auguste Shikongo, founder of the Auguste Community aid Project (ACaP) will talk about her remarkable work in Namibia where ACaP works to “bring lasting change in the lives of children and youth by breaking the community poverty cycle -- through education, employment, empowerment, and psychosocial support.” Auguste attended ULC until completing an MSW at MSU in 2017. For more information, visit www.augustecommunityaidproject.org.



April 18: Barb Kissling: Kids Hope USA is a mentoring ministry with volunteers from churches working weekly with at-risk students. What makes this ministry so special that it has grown in 25 years from southwest Michigan to across the nation?

April 25: Earthkeeping - A special presentation in celebration of the Joint Solar Project between ULC and the Islamic Center.

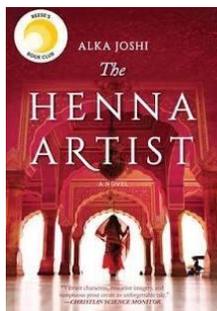
Linda Trevarthen



Discuss *The Henna Artist* on Zoom

The ULC Book Club will meet on Thursday, Apr. 15 at 10 a.m. to discuss *The Henna Artist* by Alka Joshi.

This book follows a young woman, Lakshmi, as she travels alone to the city of Jaipur, the capital of India's Rajasthan state. Once in Jaipur, free from her abusive husband, she becomes a talented henna artist and builds a



clientele of wealthy upper-class women. These women not only want her beautiful designs, but also someone to share their secrets with and give them advice.

We meet the third Thursday of the month, September through May. Currently we meet via Zoom. As we move into spring, if weather permits, we may consider meeting outdoors. We would love to have you

join us. Please reach out to Beth Rahe at bwojan1@gmail.com or Mary Kotnik at mkotnik@comcast.net so we can add you to our email list and keep you updated on the club's book choices as well as any changes in meeting place or time.

Looking ahead, in May we will discuss *The Star-Crossed Sisters of Tuscany* by Lori Nelson Spielman.

Beth Rahe and Mary Kotnik

Change for Change

Time to Submit Your Lenten Collection!

During ULC's March 14th Worship Service sermon and video presentation, we all had a chance to see and hear some of the amazing, life-changing work done by Samaritas, this year's recipient of our Lenten "Change for Change" fund drive. (See previous articles in the February and March editions of Lux.) If you have not already sent in your donation, please do so **no later than April 11**. Be sure to enter "Change for Change" on the memo line of your check or online gift.



ULC Social Action Team

ULC Member Featured in Living Lutheran

Juliana Marks, a junior at the University of Michigan and member of ULC, was featured as one of two students who interned with the Lutheran Campus Ministry (LuMin) Network last summer in the March 2021 issue of Living Lutheran. She shared her thoughts about LCM, the pandemic and her hopes for the future. Click on this [link](#) to read the article "On the Road to 'Adulthood.'"



Amy Wagenknecht

Ancient Lament, Good News for Today

Under Babylonian occupation an ancient Israelite poet lamented, “How could we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?” (Psalm 137:4) During our time of isolation and exile, we might also lack the enthusiasm for some of our traditional songs.

This sort of sadness led British pastor and hymnwriter Brian Wren to write the hymn “Christ is Alive” for Easter 1968, just 10 days after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Wren’s text -- unusual for an Easter hymn -- directly acknowledges the brokenness of the world: “In ev’ry insult, rift, and war, / where color, scorn, or wealth divide, / Christ suffers still, yet loves the more, / and lives, where even hope has died.”

On the other hand, Wren’s words declare the promise of Christ’s resurrection is “good news to this and every age.” He writes, “I tried to



express an Easter hope out of that terrible event, in words which could be more widely applied, and wrote ‘Christ is alive!’ because our available hymns spoke of Easter as a glorious event long ago, far away, and high above.”

Join us for worship on Easter Sunday as the Senior Choir sings “Christ is Alive” (ELW 389), proclaiming that in the midst of the pain of the present the good news of Christ that will continue to reshape the world “till earth and sky and ocean ring with joy, with justice, love and praise.”

Christ is Alive

Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
The cross stands empty to the sky.
Let streets and homes with praises ring.
Love, drowned in death, shall never die.

Christ is alive! No longer bound
to distant years in Palestine,
but saving, healing, here and now,
and touching ev’ry place and time.

In ev’ry insult, rift, and war,
where color, scorn, or wealth divide,
Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,
and lives, where even hope has died.

Women and men in age and youth
can feel the Spirit, hear the call
and find the way, the life, the truth
revealed in Jesus freed for all.

Christ is alive, and comes to bring
good news to this and ev’ry age,
till earth and sky and ocean ring
with joy, with justice, love, and praise.

Mitchell Eithun

April Outreach of the Month ULC Senior Choir Scholarship Program

The Senior Choir Scholarship Program has been an important part of outreach at ULC since 2002. The four college scholarship students, Divera Pahwa, Chey Nevins, Zach Sneed and Adam Krause, share their time and talents by singing with the Senior Choir and New Hope Singers, and providing leadership and special music for worship.

Throughout the pandemic, the ULC music program has continued to move forward in this new normal. We have found new ways to meet, to rehearse, and to sing together. The Choir Scholarship Students have been with us every step of the way and have continued their leadership role at ULC.

The Senior Choir Scholarship Program is not a budgeted item, but rather is supported through donations and



2020-21 scholarship singers.

fundraising events, such as parking cars for MSU sports events, and the yearly Benefit Concert for the Choir Scholarship Program. While the concert will be held virtually later this month, the revenue from parking cars abruptly stopped with the pandemic. Your donations will help us sustain this scholarship program.

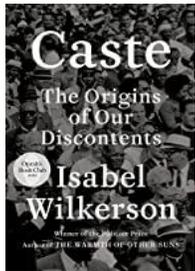
To contribute to the April Outreach, you can use the “Donate” link on our website or send a check directly to the church office. Please designate your offering for the *ULC Senior Choir Scholarship Program*. We thank you for your contribution and for helping us sustain the Senior Choir Scholarship Program, in “such a time as this.”

Janine Novenske Smith
Director of Music

Racial Justice Team

Join us in Reading *Caste*

The Racial Justice Team will moderate a discussion of the book, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson during the Zoom Forums on Sunday, May 2 and May 9.



In her award-winning book, she explains her belief that racism is an insufficient term for the systemic oppression of Blacks in America. Instead, she prefers to refer to America as having a “caste” system. Wilkerson describes caste as an artificial hierarchy that helps determine standing and respect, assumptions of beauty and competence, and even who gets the benefit of the doubt and access to resources.

We believe this book will surprise you as she discusses the historical development of race and how she came to realize that race alone cannot account for our social and economic interactions. She explains how her study of the caste system in India brought her to this understanding and then compares and contrasts the caste system of India to the US model, and incredibly, to that of Nazi Germany. Shockingly, she details how the Nazis studied the Jim Crow laws in America to learn how our legal

system was used to subjugate and control Blacks after the Reconstruction to then develop their policies towards Jews.

The book is lengthy so we will be unable to adequately discuss it in its entirety. Instead, we plan to provide excerpts from the book to promote discussion. We encourage you to read the entire book. However, you can benefit from and add to the discussion even if you have not read the book. Please join us for these Forum discussions in May.

Thom McCurdy, Racial Justice Team

There is still time to [sign up!](#)

ULC members can attend for only \$10 due to a grant from the Endowment Fund.

But what can I do about racism? First step, education.

Understanding Racism

A two-day virtual workshop

Friday - Saturday

April 9-10

on Zoom

Visit www.ulcel.org
to learn more and register!



Offered by the **ULC Racial Justice Team** in partnership with **Lansing Area Congregations Organizing for Racial Reconciliation (CORR)**

A life-changing, church-changing, city-changing event

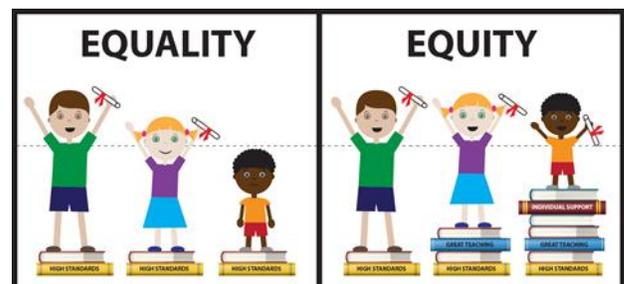
Speaking of Racial Justice



Equality and Equity

“**Equality** is treating everyone the same. But **equity** is taking differences into account, so everyone has a chance to succeed.” *Small Great Things* by Jodie Piccolt p. 427.

For example: it might be a great idea to provide computers and internet to every home in the neighborhood (aka equality), but equity would take into account what is happening in each home—maybe some homes already have working computers and internet access. And maybe some households need access to free Wi-Fi, a communal space to work or even have someone come over to teach them how to navigate a computer. At the end of the day, equity in this venture would mean creating the *opportunity* for everyone to have access to computers and internet in a way that makes sense individually.



Earth Day Theme 2021 Restore the Earth

The theme this year is based on the emerging concept that rejects the idea that our only options to save the planet are to mitigate or adapt to the impacts of climate change and other environmental damage. Scientists, non-governmental organizations, business, and governments worldwide now are



looking at natural system processes and emerging green technologies to restore the world's ecosystems and forests, conserve and rebuild soils, improve farming practices, restore wildlife populations and rid the world's oceans of plastics.

While the world waits for global political and business leaders to take

decisive action to reduce carbon emissions, natural processes including reforestation and soil conservation can store massive amounts of carbon while restoring biodiversity, clean water and air and rebalancing ecological systems. Restoration is pragmatic and necessary to reduce climate change. (From EarthDay.org)

Judy Kindel

Earth Day 2021 Solar Celebration

ULC and the ISLAMIC CENTER will observe Earth Day on **Saturday, Apr. 24** at an outdoor event celebrating our recent solar installations. Over the past few years, our two houses of worship have supported each other in joint efforts to promote care for creation and reduce our carbon footprints. Care for creation has long been a mutual tenet of our faith practices.



The event will take place in the area between our two properties and will follow the state guidelines for outdoor gatherings, with chairs six feet apart and masks required.

The event will be recorded for future viewing. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to Michael Anderson at mikevicki.anderson@gmail.com or Judy Kindel kindelj1@gmail.com.

Judy Kindel

ULC Food Distribution during the Covid Pandemic

The pandemic has made food distribution to those in need more challenging across the nation. As people have lost their jobs, there has been an increased need for food and that increased need must be met in as safe a manner as possible.

For ULC, the food distribution has evolved in response to the pandemic. Our number of shoppers has increased dramatically, and our mode of operation has changed.

We were serving 80 families prior to the pandemic and the distribution took place in the Fellowship Hall in the winter and outside in the church parking lot during the summer. During the pandemic, we reached a peak of 170 families in December

with a drop-off recently in January and February.

The distribution takes place entirely outdoors now. We route the traffic in the north driveway, to the back of the parking lot, and out the south driveway. This pattern is an attempt to keep vehicles from backing up onto Harrison Road.

Food stations are located at the main entrance to the church. We direct a line of cars on either side of the stations centered in the driveway. Shoppers are asked to remain in their vehicles at all times, and volunteers place food into trunks and rear seats.

Shoppers and volunteers are required to wear masks. Mary Kotnik has blessed us with masks she made for

those without, and we thank her for her effort.

The registration process has changed as well. Will Mahoney, a ULC member, worked for a company developing a contactless method of registration. He brought the idea to our attention, and we began testing a pilot program in December. Will continues to help with glitches which use an internet connection and a hotspot in our parking lot.

Individuals with cell phones are asked to text the keyword ULC to an 866 number. They receive a return text containing a link to a registration

Continued on page 10

A Snapshot from a Mentor One year into the Pandemic

The week of Mar. 9, 2020 was a week in which so many of us marked the last time we engaged in an activity that was then a normal part of our lives. For the Kids Hope mentors, it was the last week we saw our children face to face for our mentoring hour at Forest View School.



I remember this last in person meeting with my then kindergarten child very clearly. We played a favorite game, built structures out of magnets, shared a treat, and worked on his reading skills. We had been working our way through the Adventures of Otto series written by David Milgrim and he knew that when he had mastered one of the books, it would become his to keep.

That day my student had earned a new book and I was rewarded by one of his huge happy grins. The last thing we did together was to practice washing hands while singing Happy Birthday at the top of our lungs. We got in a little trouble from the principal for using the office bathroom, but when I explained that I was teaching him about how to stay safe from the emerging virus threat she added her encouragement to our hand washing efforts.

Two days later the WHO declared Covid a pandemic and the world shut down. Our only access to our mentees up to this point had been within the walls of Forrest View school and we had no way of knowing when we would see them again. Barb Kissling, our hard-working director, reached out to the school and was able to get permission for almost all the mentors to reach out directly to their students via parent contact information.

I was able to connect with my young boy on FaceTime for the first time on March 27th. It was a joyful reunion that absolutely made my day. Over the following weeks we connected using Google Hangouts on three occasions and I began to realize the challenges in teaching a child so young in this new virtual world. I also created a

YouTube channel so I could record the Otto books as well as some picture stories for his viewing at home.

My child's only technology was his mother's cell phone for which she had limited data, so over time the burden of keeping up both mentoring and school online became too much for the family and his mom stopped responding to my emails and text messages requesting virtual meetings. I have had monthly contact with the family, however, as Bryan and I take them food from the Food Movers food bank distribution once a month.

These monthly drop offs have also allowed me to deliver a full set of Otto books along with some age-appropriate activities. I have also been able to see my guy briefly with small gifts for his birthday and the holidays. To be greeted with a chorus of "Hi Mrs. Beth!" during these brief exchanges, truly makes my heart sing.

Lately, I have been thinking about how to proceed once we are able to meet in person again. I have heard from my student's first grade teacher that he seldom attends class. His mom has confirmed that learning over the computer does not work for her child. I understand this and know he is not the only child for which this year has paused their educational development.

When we begin to meet again, I want to focus on making sure he knows he is smart and capable of learning. I also appreciate being in direct contact with my child's family, a silver lining of the pandemic which should allow our relationship to grow into a long-term blessing for my child. All of the Kids Hope mentors and mentees have faced different challenges over the last year and all of us continue to need your prayers. Thank you so much for supporting this ministry to build up at risk youth in our Lansing community.

Beth Rahe

Food continued from page 9.

form. They answer 11 questions, before clicking the submit button and showing a volunteer they have completed the form, after which they are directed to the food stations.

For those without cell phones, the same info is gathered via a volunteer and entered on a tablet. One of the nice features



of this system is that when people come a second time, their info from a previous visit automatically populates the registration form. Unless they have changes to make, they can hit the submit button immediately.

The distribution operation requires at least 30 volunteers now, so if anyone

is interested in volunteering, please contact me at 517-485-4864 or bryanrahe@comcast.net. We draw volunteers from ULC, University United Methodist Church, and the Greater Lansing Food Bank. We need volunteers for traffic control, registration, and putting food in vehicles.

Bryan Rahe

From the President

Council Looks Forward with Hope

Thanks to Annaliese Marks for starting our March Council meeting with a devotion focused on hope and the certainty of God's promise - Hebrews 6:19, "We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain."



It was in the spirit of looking forward with hope that we began brainstorming ideas for how we might begin returning to some kind of in-person worship when the

pandemic and Michigan guidelines allow. Council members began the conversation about possibilities, month-by-month we will know more as the pandemic continues to unfold. With love for one another we remain committed to following the state's guidelines and keeping our ULC community safe. At this time, data show that variants pose new threats and that Ingham County cases, hospitalizations and deaths are on the rise. (Visit the [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus) site to see current

information.) We hope that by our next Council meeting in April we will have a better idea of where the pandemic and vaccinations are going.

As spring displays God's promise, we look ahead with hope and give thanks for a God of scripture who is always out ahead of us, leading into the future.

*Nancy Lindman
ULC President*

Mortgage Reduction Matching Campaign

Council has voted to use \$20,000 of the 2020 year-end surplus to prepay the mortgage on the building and is requesting that members consider assisting in prepaying the mortgage with a matching campaign. Council is challenging the Congregation to match dollar for dollar the \$20,000 amount. If members can meet this challenge, we will be able to reduce the mortgage by \$40,000, which will result in the final payment for the mortgage being accelerated to the Fall of 2022. Think of all of the important ministries that can be supported once we have paid off the



mortgage! Please prayerfully consider contribution to this mortgage reduction campaign. If you are able to do so, please mail a check to ULC with a note that it is for the mortgage reduction campaign. If you would like to contribute with an electronic contribution, please notify Gary Carl at the ULC office that the contribution is for the mortgage prepayment campaign.

*Jim Kiefer, Finance Committee
Wilbur Mahoney, Treasurer*



ULC Council met via Zoom on March 18 and the following are some highlights:

- Discussed 2021 council goals and areas of focus

- Allocated excess income from 2020 based on Finance Committee's recommendations
- Appointed voting members for May 2021 Synod Assembly (Jim Lorenz and Emily Uebel)

*Emily Uebel
Council Secretary*

February Attendance

Sunday Worship

Feb. 7: Up to 97 live, 449 views
Feb. 14: Up to 103 live, 470 views
Feb. 21: Up to 107 live, 490 views
Feb. 28: Up to 94 live, 402 views

Midweek Worship

Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17:
Up to 48 live, 163 views
Lenten Worship, Feb. 24: 40 people on Zoom.

Dispatches from Babylon

ULC Members Comment on "Church" in the Time of Plague

To begin work on this article, I sent out an email to a group of members of ULC's congregation. I tried to make the group varied by age and background, and I asked them to comment on what a year in Covid-19 lockdown has meant to them, their worship and faith, and the idea of "Church." One of the very first responses I received was this eloquent statement from Carole Ford:

I have come to a new appreciation of what it meant for Israel to be taken to Babylon, ripped away from their beloved Jerusalem. As Psalm 137 says, "By the rivers of Babylon — there we sat down and there wept when we remembered Zion....How could we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?"

We have lived in this strange world of COVID19 for

a year now. We miss the place where we could gather to sing the Lord's song. Like the Israelites, we have learned that God is with us wherever life takes us. We have learned that we could sing the Lord's song in this foreign land, but we still mourn.

We mourn, and we also lament. ULC's Intern for Digital Ministry, Mitchell Eithun, has reminded us on several occasions of the necessity, the value, of lamentations in our liturgy and in our lives. We are, indeed, in a kind of Babylonian captivity, kept away from the physical home of ULC and the physical presence of each other, and these are causes for lamentation.

One longtime member of the congregation writes: "I miss hugs and chances to check in on folks I ordinarily don't see. I miss the acoustics of being together in a large space, joining as speakers and singers (gifted and not)."

And perhaps most difficult of all, our physical separation prevents us from receiving the sacrament of Holy Communion. It has been a full year now since we have been able to "take and eat" the body and blood given for us and for our salvation.

Carole Ford writes, "I miss in-person worship, especially communion. It has been, and remains for now, a necessity, but I still really miss it, and I also miss that sense of being the church together."

One ULC member, Loran Bieber, sought communion elsewhere. He writes, "I have been attending mass at either St. Martha's in Okemos or St. Thomas in Mason with a Catholic friend but have also been attending

Throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic I have learned that this church is resilient. It comes together in the face of adversity. - Britny Pollard

our Sunday morning Facebook service. A major reason for doing this is my feeling that communion is a vital part of a worship service and virtual 'does not cut it.' Both masses are open tables."

Several of our members lamented the absence of much of the traditional liturgy in our online worship. Being a lover of the liturgy myself, I have greatly missed this as well. But like many of our members, I have appreciated the elements that have been preserved: the Kyrie and recently the Agnus Dei. I realize, too, that much of the traditional liturgy centers around the Eucharist, which we are simply not able to do under these circumstances.

The challenges of the "captivity" have altered, but have not stopped, the many ministries of ULC. There has been a worship service on Facebook every Sunday in the past year of lockdown, and these services have

become ever more sophisticated and satisfying. Sunday School has continued on Zoom, as has Lectio Divina, the Sunday Adult Forum, and Campus Ministry. In fact, the online presence of these ministries has given more people access than "in-person" events would allow.

Our ULC Office Administrator, Britny Pollard, gives us a marvelous summary of how the church has coped and, in many ways, triumphed:

Throughout the Covid-19 Pandemic I have learned that this church is resilient. It comes together in the face of adversity. When the pandemic hit, a lot of things changed, all things became virtual and the people of ULC are thriving. I think for many people, especially those who 'don't do social media or email' this was a huge challenge; however, we are still seeing 1255 people in attendance (viewing live and replay) on average per week.

People who never thought they would be using technology this way are learning new things to make sure they can come together as our church. Families with young children are finding ways to keep their children involved in church even though I know parents must be exhausted. Looking from the outside, someone who does not have children and who is not technologically challenged, this amazes me. I have learned that our church can stay together, and I think in some ways may even come out stronger 'on the other side' of the pandemic.

Longtime pillar of our church, Phyllis Andersland, agrees:

My home church in Moorhead, MN, broadcast services over the radio each Sunday during my childhood. This spread the message much

Continued on page 13.

Babylon continued from page 12.

farther than if confined to attendees only. Of necessity, ULC has been doing the same with modern technology. It has been a ton of work for the talented and dedicated church members who have done it. Hearing and seeing some cathedral choir perform is much less meaningful to me than our choir joining from their homes to sing a hymn - and certainly harder to produce! These are our friends, and it maintains contact. But these productions are also missionary efforts, as people can be reached who otherwise would not be. It is hoped we can continue to broadcast our services even after we are holding services in our church. For me, the sermon which interprets the texts is central to the service, and I hope would not be sidetracked in the process.



Phyllis also reminded us all that, “We cannot forget the importance of *Lux* in keeping us informed and feeling together.” Although the print version of our newsletter is no longer mailed out, each month’s issue of *Lux* is made available on the ULC website.

I mentioned that One Community Campus Ministry has been alive and well during the pandemic. MSU student and ULC choir member, Andrew Earle, shared with me:

I've received several soup meals from Pastor Haley Vay and the members of the congregation through One Community. These always provide a very welcome evening where I don't have to worry about making dinner. I feel the love and support of the congregation, and I usually see a few others and have a socially distanced conversation when I pick up the soup. Thanks to everyone who has made soup over the past year!

One Community has also started holding morning prayer this semester. Every Wednesday morning, we Zoom for about 30 minutes to meditate on a Psalm. As an undergraduate, I'd often go to weekday morning services during Lent. This evokes a similar peace that centers me for the day to come. I am very thankful for this blessing!

The pandemic and the isolation it brought on has had some positive, unanticipated consequences. The always thoughtful Carol Mackin offers these observations:

I had more quiet, reflective time to go deeper with my faith. I did a lot of walking where I felt a close connection to nature and God's presence in creation. I also walked with several members of ULC and was able to develop deeper relationships with them. I stayed connected with Gharbia (Iraq), Vy (Vietnam,) and Ines (Cote d'Ivoire) through email. I had a chance to do a lot of reading and learning. I was able to connect with Sunday worship, Lectio, Adult Forum and midweek services, and loved the

flexibility of weekly worship and the inclusion of new music, artwork, creative projects and guest speakers. Thanks to everyone who made this possible! While live attendance was around 100, views were over 500 on average for Sunday morning worship. Outreach was amazing, not only for worship, but also for children's ministry, which emphasizes the need to carry on with some kind of online presence. I miss seeing everyone each week and the ability to sit and have a conversation with new people. I also miss baptisms and communion.

I asked members of the congregation to indicate when they shared their thoughts if I could use their names or if they would prefer to remain anonymous. Some commented anonymously, but not necessarily because they were critical. In fact, the response across the board was overwhelmingly positive. While most were impressed by the technical expertise that gave us such creative services, one person said they, “appreciate the hard work that’s done in creating the services, though I don’t think it’s all necessary.”

Another commented, “The Zoom worship services for the most part have been very easy to follow and participate in; this is greatly appreciated. Occasionally the focus seems more on entertainment than worship (not meant critically, but my bias).”

It has been a remarkable year. There has been grief and lamentation and loneliness. There has also been worship and song and rejoicing. And gratitude. Britny writes,

Thank you to the tech crew working behind the scenes to make sure everything goes smoothly each Sunday. Thank you to our pastors and staff for being a part of every Sunday worship. I am looking forward to a time when we can all be together again and resume work as normal.

I think we all echo Britny’s gratitude, and, like her, we look forward to the end of the “Covid Captivity,” to a time when we again have some semblance of normalcy, in-person worship, and communion, in several senses of that word. I’ll close with this from Carole Ford,

I am reminded of the finger play from my childhood. “This is the church, this is the steeple, open the doors and see all the people.” These days, remembering our beloved fellowship, we have to say, “This is the church without building or steeple, open your heart and see all the people.” The Church continues because Jesus continues, “the same yesterday, today and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8)

I say, “Amen!”

Bill Trevarthen



Birthdays

- 3 Bill Frysinger
Gary Geisen
Betsy Prince
- 4 Loran Bieber
Erik Dawson-Baglien
- 8 Brenda Stoneburner
Bryan Rahe
- 9 Pam Bartlett
Annette Petersen

- 10 Kyle Saindon
- 12 Beth Hoger
- 13 Lianna Greiter
Marcy Wilmes
- 14 David Wiggert
Karl Fritz

- 15 Maya Bubolz
- 18 Maddie Tracy
- 21 Betsy Booren
Cathy Satterlee
- 22 Lillian Gallagher
David Nussdorfer
- 23 Kellie Klee
- 24 Joseph Anderson
- 25 Chad Waldron
- 27 Chris Frysinger
Elizabeth Reynolds

- 28 Paul Milligan
Bob Schikorra
- 30 Al Booren

Anniversaries

- 13 Lori & Jon Althouse
- 16 Pam & Paul Bartlett
- 29 Dale & Darlene
Romsos
- 30 Jim & Jean Kocher

ULC Archives

Yearning to Return

ULC has always been welcoming and generous with the use of the building which was dedicated in January 1972. From the October 1972 Lux:

LCA Thanks ULC for Use of the "Cathedral"

University Lutheran, which some people are calling the "Lansing Cathedral" was the site of a standing-room-only gathering when Pastor Christensen was installed as President of the Michigan Synod of the Lutheran Church in America on Sept. 17.

The following letter of thanks came from Raymond A. Heine, secretary

of the Michigan Synod:

I am writing to you today on behalf of the Executive Board of the Michigan Synod as directed by official action of the Board at the Meeting of September 22, 1972.



It is my privilege to express to you the sincere gratitude of the Michigan Synod of the Lutheran Church in America for the courtesy extended to our Synod in

the use of the facilities of University Lutheran Church for the Service for the Induction of our new Synod President, the Rev. Howard Christensen, D.D., on Sunday, September 17, 1972.

Your beautiful new church edifice provided an ideal setting for this significant event in the life of our Synod. All of us who were able to be a part of this memorable occasion are deeply appreciative of the hospitality extended by University Lutheran Church. We recognize that every effort was made to accommodate us and to make us feel very welcome.

Please convey our gratitude to the congregation.

Some of you may remember that service; others of us remember many special occasions celebrated at ULC. We all hope that we can begin making more memories very soon beginning with just being able to gather together in God's house.

Connie Lenkowski

A BIG THANK YOU to friends of our ULC family for the many kindnesses shown me during my recovery from surgery. Your thoughtfulness was very much appreciated by my family and me.

LaVon Miller



The deadline for the May Lux is **Friday, Apr. 16.**

E-mail articles to Amy Wagenknecht at amylarryw@comcast.net and Britny Pollard at 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!

April

- | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---|--------|---|----------------------------------|
| 1 | 7:00p | Maundy Thursday Worship-Facebook | 16 | 7:30p | Sr. Choir-Zoom* |
| 2 | 7:00p | Fridays@Five-Zoom* | 16 | 5:00p | Fridays@Five-Zoom* |
| | 7:00p | Good Friday Worship-Facebook | 18 | 10:00a | Worship-Zoom* |
| 4 | Easter Sunday | | 11:00a | Zoom* Coffee Hour/Forum@11:10 (Kids Hope) | |
| | 10:00a | Easter Worship-Facebook | 20 | 7:30a | Tuesday Morning Bible Study-Zoom |
| 5 | Easter Monday – Office Closed | | 12:30p | Staff Meeting-Zoom | |
| 6 | 7:30a | Tuesday Morning Bible Study-Zoom* | 21 | Noon | Lectio Divina-Zoom* |
| | 7:00p | Pub Theology-Zoom* | 4:00p | Worship Wednesday for Kids-Zoom* | |
| 7 | 9:00a | Communication Team-Zoom | 6:30p | ULC Council-Zoom* | |
| | Noon | Lectio Divina-Zoom* | 22 | 10:30a | RJ: Education-Zoom |
| | 4:00p | Worship Wednesday for Kids-Zoom* | 1:00p | RJ: Communication-Zoom | |
| | 4:30p | Lead Management Team-MTeams | 4:30p | Food Movers Distribution-Drive thru | |
| 8 | 7:30p | Sr. Choir-Zoom* | 7:30p | Senior Choir-Zoom | |
| 9 | 9:00a | Understanding Racism Workshop-Zoom | 23 | 5:00p | Fridays@Five-Zoom* |
| | 5:00p | Fridays@Five-Zoom*(Fellowship & Fun) | 7:00p | Sr. Choir Benefit Concert-Facebook | |
| 10 | 9:00a | Understanding Racism Workshop-Zoom | 25 | 10:00a | Worship-Facebook |
| 11 | Change4Change offerings due! | | 11:00a | Zoom* Coffee Hour/Forum@11:10 (Earthkeeping: Solar Project) | |
| | 10:00a | Worship-Facebook Live | 27 | 7:30a | Tuesday Morning Bible Study-Zoom |
| | 11:00a | Zoom* Coffee Hour/Forum@11:10 (Namibia Community aid Project) | 12:30p | Staff Meeting-Zoom | |
| 13 | 7:30a | Tuesday Morning Bible Study-Zoom | 28 | Noon | Lectio Divina-Zoom* |
| | 12:30p | Staff Meeting-Zoom | 4:00p | Worship Wednesday for Kids-Zoom* | |
| 14 | Noon | Lectio Divina-Zoom* | 29 | 7:30p | Senior Choir-Zoom |
| | 1:00p | Rhodon Circle-Zoom* | 30 | 5:00p | Fridays@Five-Zoom* |
| | 4:00p | Worship Wednesday for Kids-Zoom* | | | |
| 15 | 10:00a | Book Club-Zoom* | | | |

* Zoom link contacts: Forum- found in Friday email announcements (contact [Britny](#) to be added to list); Choir - Janine Smith; Friday@Five - Pastor Haley Vay; Tuesday Study - Jim Kiefer; Pub Theology - Britny; Lectio Divina - Britny; Worship Wednesday for Kids – Pastor Haley Vay; Book Club – Beth Rahe; Rhodon Circle – Connie Lenkowski (clenkowski@frontier.com); Council Meeting – Nancy Lindman



Due to Covid safety protocols, the ULC building remains closed. However, our ministry continues. The ULC number (517-332-2559) is connected to staff cell numbers, please call if there is a need!



University Lutheran Church
 One Community Lutheran Campus Ministry at MSU
 1020 S. Harrison Road
 East Lansing, MI 48823
 517-332-2559 ulcsec@ulcel.org www.ulcel.org

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Lansing, MI
 Permit No. 45

Change service requested

Gary A. Bunge
 Lead Pastor

Haley Vay Beaman
 Associate Pastor

Janine Novenske Smith
 Director of Music

Britny Pollard
 Administrative Assistant

Gary Carl
 Financial Administrator

Mary Letvenow
 Event Coordinator

Kristie Wiggert
Julie Baglien
 Organists

Louise Paquette
 Director of Handbells

How Do You Prefer to Read Lux?

Prior to the current pandemic, many ULC members and friends received the Lux newsletter in printed form through the mail. When the ULC building was closed, it was decided to distribute Lux digitally with about 20 copies printed and mailed to non-digital users.

As we begin to see the light at the end of the tunnel and will hopefully be reopening our building, the Communication Team would like your input as to whether to return to printing and mailing the monthly newsletter.

While we know some of you prefer to read Lux on-line, there may be some who would like to return to a printed copy. One consideration is postage. To continue to use bulk mailing rates (which are much less than first class), we must have at least 200 addresses on our mailing list.

We have created a [short on-line survey](#) for you to fill out regarding your newsletter preferences. If you are unable to complete this on-line, please call Britny to register your choice.



Amy Wagenknecht