

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

Mark Your Calendars . . .

Pub Theology

Tuesday, Dec. 1 at 7 p.m.
Zoom (call 332-2559 for link)

Midweek Advent Worship

Wednesday Dec. 2, 9, 16
7 p.m. on Facebook

Annual Meeting

Sunday, Dec. 6 at 11 a.m.
Zoom (link in weekly email)

Food Movers

Thursday, Dec. 17 - 4:30 p.m.
Drive thru distribution

Christmas Program

Sunday, Dec. 20 during
10 a.m. Worship - Facebook

Christmas Eve Worship

7 p.m. on Facebook

Christmas Day Fellowship

10 a.m. Zoom (link in email)

Lessons & Carols – Dec. 27

10 a.m. on Facebook

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Advent, Covid-style

In a typical year, the season of Advent at ULC would begin with a soulful Worship Expressions, Jazz service, followed by good food, fellowship and carols during the Advent dinner. Worship would include beautiful music provided by the newly updated organ, the choirs and the bell choir. The youth would dress in costumes and present their version of the Christmas story. Everyone would look forward to the beautiful Christmas Eve candlelight service.



Pastor Haley Vay gives an Advent Box to a Sunday School family on a blustery Sunday afternoon.

This year Advent will look a little different. On Nov. 22, boxes full of activities, snacks and lessons that will be used throughout the coming weeks of Sunday School were distributed to families during a drive-thru event. Members also used this event to deliver gift cards for the Giving Tree.

Continued on page 2.

**Special Music for
the Season of Advent
Sunday, Dec. 6**

With musical offerings by the Senior Choir,
Handbell Choir, and Scholarship Quartet

Worship Expressions, Jazz

Sunday, Dec. 13

A service of readings and music in the jazz style reflecting the mystery, wonder, awe and joy of the Advent and Christmas season, and the birth of Jesus.



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

O Come, O Come Emmanuel!

This year, we enter one of the most unusual Advent and Christmas seasons that any of us have ever experienced. No decorations at church. No elves decorating party. No in-person Advent services. No caroling to homebound members. We won't be gathering for worship in the sanctuary on Christmas Eve to hear the Christmas story and to light candles as we sing Silent Night. We'll also simply have to rely on recordings of our favorite carols rather than singing them together with our new organ.

Family gatherings that bring so much joy will be extremely limited because of a pandemic that is raging. Most of our Christmas shopping will be online this year. Back in the summer I suspected that this was coming but I really didn't want to admit it.

And it's not just Advent and Christmas that are so different. As I write this, the country's death toll from the virus is 247,000 and by the time you read it, the death toll will probably be 260,000 or higher. Yes, a vaccine is in sight, but it will still be months before everyone can be vaccinated. And our deeply polarized Congress can't even get a much needed COVID-19 stimulus package together.

For the first time in US history, we have a President who won't accept the results of an election, and a peaceful transition of power in January is not simply a given right now. We wonder about violence in the wake of the election and our



Governor had a kidnapping plot against her. Even something as simple as wearing a mask for the sake of others has been politicized.

This will indeed be a very unusual Advent and Christmas season. Probably the most unusual one any of us has experienced.

But what will not be unusual is that we will hear the same promises we always hear at Advent and Christmas! It is the promise of the birth of Jesus -- Emmanuel -- God with us! Right in the first chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, as Matthew tells the story of the birth of Jesus, he quotes the prophet Isaiah and says: *"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emanuel, which means, 'God is with us.'"* At the very end of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus says, *"And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* God is with us is central to Matthew's understanding of life and the world. And it's central to Christmas.

The powerful Advent hymn that we know and love says it so well, *"O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here...."* It reflects a

time when the people of Israel were in exile in the land of Babylon, far away from home and anything that seemed remotely normal. And their prayer was that Emmanuel -- God with us -- would indeed come and be with them in the midst of their dislocation and exile.

What we celebrate and hang onto in this most unusual Advent and Christmas when we're experiencing dislocation and exile, is the promise that Jesus is Emmanuel -- God with us. And what we pray for in this most unusual Advent and Christmas seasons is for Emmanuel to come and ransom us, for Emmanuel to come and save us from this pandemic, and for Emmanuel to come and release us from all the political turmoil that we're experiencing.

What gives me hope in this most unusual Advent and Christmas, is that the baby Jesus is Emmanuel -- God with us -- today, tomorrow, always and forever. What gives me hope is that even in the midst of a pandemic, even in the midst of political turmoil, God has not and will not abandon us. It is precisely for times like this that we celebrate Christmas.

O come, O come Emmanuel, and ransom us from our captivity.

May Emmanuel, God with us, give you strength, hope, and courage this Advent and Christmas, and always.

Pastor Gary

Advent, Covid-Style continued from page 1.

Mid-week Advent worship, where readings from Luke and Old Testament texts will be read, begins Dec. 2. Beautiful Advent music will be offered during the Dec. 6 virtual worship service. Worship Expressions, Jazz will be held during the Dec. 13 virtual service and the

Worship Team is planning a beautiful Christmas Eve service that will be seen on Facebook Live. Advent will be different, but it will still move us toward the celebration of Christ's birth!

Amy Wagenknecht

Soup & Snacks

We continue to deliver soup and snacks at a safe distance to our students in campus ministry who are living locally to feed their souls. If you would like to join me in providing soup and/or sandwich items and cookies to students this winter email me at haley.vay@gmail.com or call my cell phone listed in the church directory.



Top left, clockwise: Loren Bieber with cooked squash that Pastor Haley Vay turned into delicious soup that was delivered (along with brownies baked by Sue Kamens) to Narindra and Mitchell.

Congratulations Eric!

Congratulations to Eric Podolsky as he receives a bachelor's degree in computer science from MSU this month. Eric served as a student associate at ULC for two years. After graduation, he will be working at Ally Financial as a software developer. Eric says, "I'll be working out of the Detroit area, so hopefully I'll find an opportunity to come back and visit from time to time."



Celebration of Dia de los Muertos



Pan de Muerto made by Sue Kamens.

Students celebrated "Dia de los Muertos" with supplies they received to create a table of remembrance of loved ones who have died. On Oct. 31 they shared memories, pictures and foods celebrating the loved ones. Sue Kamens made Pan de Muerto (left).



Join us for Worship!

Advent – Holden Evening Prayer

Wednesdays, Dec. 2, 9, & 16 – 7 pm on Facebook

Worship - Special Advent Music – Dec. 6 at 10 am

Worship Expressions: Jazz – Dec. 13 at 10 am

Worship - Christmas Program – Dec. 20 at 10 am

Christmas Eve – 7 pm

Christmas Day Fellowship – 10 am on Zoom

(Link included in Friday email)

Dec. 27 Lessons & Carols – 10 am

(All services on ULC Facebook Live except Dec. 25)

Jesus Loves Me



The ULC Youth Choir offers a beautiful virtual performance during the Nov. 15 worship service.



A Christmas to Remember!

A Virtual Christmas Play
Sunday, Dec. 20

During 10 a.m. worship on Facebook Live.

Advent Box Activities



Stickers on wood blocks (cut by Pastor Gary) form a nativity



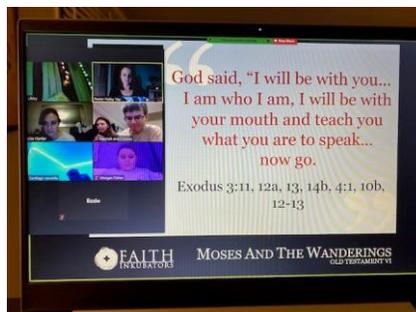
Advent Wreath



Family Advent devotions

Confirmation

We are nearing the end of an interesting year. Confirmation classes started virtually this Fall. In addition to meeting every other Wednesday for class, we assembled school kits for Lutheran World Relief, played Jackbox games (group games that are played virtually), and, most recently, made cookies and cards for members of our congregation this Thanksgiving.



Confirmation on Zoom

weeks before Thanksgiving and set off to bake/decorate their own creative cookies for 22 lucky members at ULC. The best part was hearing mid-week updates from youth that following Wednesday and seeing the photos come in. This was a fun way to break up the Zoom fatigue and bring some cheer to others.

Louise Harder

Youth picked up their supplies – cookie dough, frosting, mini-M&Ms, and candy corn – two



Baking Thanksgiving cookies and happy recipients!

ZoomForum on Sundays!

On Sundays, the hour following ULC's Facebook Live Church Service is devoted to ZoomForum. Grab a cup of coffee and enter the zoom link (provided in the weekly ULC Announcements Email) immediately after the service to enjoy a few minutes of informal conversation before the program begins! Forum generally starts at 11:10 a.m. and ends at noon.



Dec. 20: ULC Racial Justice Team: Part 2 of 4 — Beyond White Privilege — The Societal Manifestations of Racism The Education Sub-team is moderating a compelling multi-part discussion about White Privilege using a study guide available at the ELCA website [here](#). This discussion covers Exercises 3 & 4. If you haven't already done so, you may find it helpful to print the study guide in advance of the forums.

Dec. 6: ULC Annual Meeting

Dec. 13: Mitchell Eithun: In his new role as Seminary Intern at ULC, Mitchell will talk about the theology of digital ministry, the many ways it can be realized, and what this might mean as we look to the future.

Dec. 27: Christmas weekend - NO FORUM - Christmas Coffee Hour

Jan 3: New Year's weekend - NO FORUM - New Year Coffee Hour

Linda Trevarthen



ULC Memorial Library

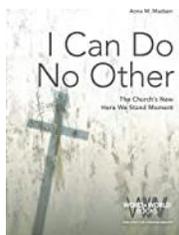
New Books and DVD Series Available

The ULC Library has the DVD series *How Lutherans Interpret the Bible*. In this seven session video series Dr. Mark Allan Powell, Bible professor at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, explores seven important questions about Lutherans and the Bible. Dr. Powell presents a variety of Lutheran perspectives for interpreting the Bible. Pastor Gary led a discussion of this series during Sunday Forum recently. If you missed it or would like to refresh your memory this series is available to check-out.

We have also had very positive comments about Anna Madsen's *I Can Do No Other*. This is not a book about racial justice but rather the need for social justice. She makes the

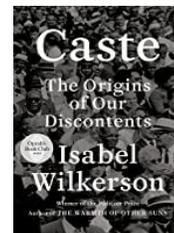
case that justice, anchored in justification, is our new Reformation moment, one not inconsistent with Luther's theology, but weighted differently to address the different weighty concerns of our day.

Last, a new book is available, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson. An Amazon review states, "In this brilliant book, Isabel Wilkerson gives us a masterful portrait of an unseen phenomenon in America as she explores, through an immersive, deeply researched narrative and stories about real



people, how America today and throughout its history has been shaped by a hidden caste system, a rigid hierarchy of human rankings." This is an Oprah Book Club selection which she describes as "required reading for all humanity."

While the ULC building and library are currently closed, you can still get materials. To check-out a book or the DVD series contact me at 517-655-5939 or clenkowski@frontier.com.



Connie Lenkowski

The Giving Tree

You did it! You came through in a fabulous way to support the young adult clients of Samaritas and seniors at Tri-County Office on Aging. Without services at ULC, there was no smooth way to distribute tags and collect the usual items the young people need to start independent living. So, we thought of gift cards and a drive through collection of those cards. While



some wrote checks, other members of ULC showed up on blustery Nov. 15 to turn in gift cards and household items altogether totaling over \$1,000 to give to the two organizations. Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity to make this event a success!

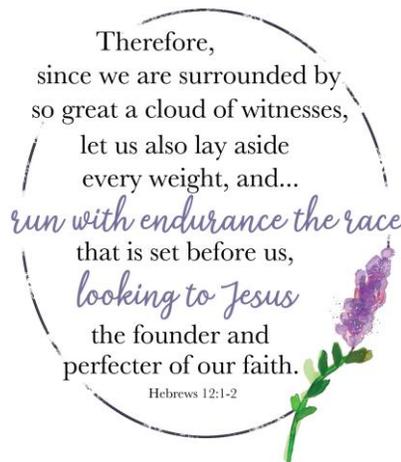
Sherry Corwin

Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us” (Heb. 12:1)

This fall we continue to produce meaningful music videos for online worship. After creating “back-tracks” to guide the recording process, our instrumentalists, singers and narrators submit video clips on Google Drive. You could say that we are surrounded by so great a *cloud of virtual witnesses!*

This verse from Hebrews takes new meaning in our time. Much of our life has been moved to the cloud, the vast computer architecture that holds up the internet. It’s a strange place to live and it has been a *race*. I am inspired by the way our church (and many others) has adapted to an online format, but it is also exhausting. We have a new phrase for it: “Zoom fatigue.”



One of our most beloved songs for this season begins: *O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.* The Old Testament tells the story of how the political and religious structures of Israel came crashing down. A foreign nation invaded and led the people into slavery. Their traditions, culture and history were destroyed. “How lonely sits the city that once was full of people! How

like a widow she has become, she that was great among the nations!” (Lam 1:1) The scriptures attest to the human reality of deep pain and loss. Like the Israelites, we mourn in *our* lonely exile, lamenting sickness and political upheaval.

And yet, the Son of God will appear! God comes into a broken and divided world and offers his life for us! God comes to bring good news to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners. *Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you O, Israel!* I hope you can join us for worship during Advent and Christmas as we rejoice in the coming of our God.

Suggested reading: Psalm 137, Lamentations 1, Isaiah 61

*Mitchel Eithun
Seminary Intern*

Earthkeeping News

Earthkeeping Fundraiser for Islamic Center Solar Panels

Earlier this year, the Islamic Center gifted us \$25,000 in recognition of our strong relationship as neighbors. We used the money for our solar power project. The Islamic Center is currently raising funds to add 32 additional solar panels to their current solar array. The panels cost about \$800 per panel installed.



The ULC Earthkeeping Team decided that we would like to show our appreciation to the Islamic Center as our good neighbors and for their large gift to us. The

individual members of Earthkeeping are funding one panel and we would like to give all ULC members an opportunity to join us in saying thank you to the Islamic Center.

If you wish to contribute any amount to this cause, please send a check made out to ULC with “Earthkeeping Panels” on the memo line. You can also use the Donate button on the ULC website at www.ulcel.org and please note that your contribution is for Earthkeeping Islamic Center Solar Panels.

Bryan Rahe



Back to Sewing at Home

The prayers and squares quilters have been safely meeting on a weekly basis the last three months. With the new Covid-19 restrictions, we have suspended meeting until at least the middle of December.

We have completed 25 Lutheran World Relief quilts, several prayer Quilts, and other miscellaneous projects during our sewing time.

We are in the process of presenting nine Quilts of Valor to veterans. They were presented at the Nov. 29 online Church service. The national Quilt of Valor sewing day is the first Saturday in February. During pre-Covid times

we always had a sewing day in the fellowship hall. This will not happen in 2021. If anyone would like to sew at home that day, we will provide you with a kit. Please contact me or Bobbie Davis if you would like a kit cut for you.

Prayer quilts are still available. If you have a family or friend that needs one. Please contact Ann Booren at Boorena@msu.edu or Bobbie Davis at bobbieanddavis80@gmail.com to get one prepared for you.

Ann Booren

What is Online Mentoring?

The ULC Kids Hope USA ministry is using online mentoring with some of our students at Forest View Elementary in Lansing. This home-based online mentoring is for students not attending school in person. Students meet online weekly with their mentor from home using an approved digital platform like Zoom on a designated day and time. Online mentoring sessions are typically 30 minutes.



In order to follow child safety guidelines, the ULC Kids Hope USA Director or school personnel may listen briefly to a mentoring session two or three times a month. Following every session, a mentor fills out a digital progress report on the Kids Hope USA website. Copies are emailed to the student's teacher and the ULC Director.

Online mentoring activities can include simple games and activities

such as reading a book, Show and Tell, Pictionary and Simon Says. Screen sharing activities can be Story Starters, virtual field trips, online Mad Libs, National Geographic quizzes and museum or zoo tours.

Not all families choose to do online mentoring. Some parents are overwhelmed with the online classes in the Lansing School District and prefer pen pal mentoring or waiting until in-person classes return.

*Barbara Kissling
ULC Kids Hope USA Director*

Food & Hats for 165 Households



On Thursday, Nov. 19 the Food Movers distributed food to 165 households, the most ever. This is the outdoor drive-thru touchless delivery system used at this time.



During the November food distribution, the Tight Knit group distributed over 300 hats to families.

Introducing a New Facebook Group

As we're finding out during this pandemic, how we communicate is crucial to staying in touch. Without the option of virtual visits using a computer or smart phone, these long stretches without in-person visits would be unbearable. Since we can't meet in-person after worship in the narthex to share ideas and news, the ULC Communications Team and the Communication Sub-group of the Racial Justice Team (RJT) have been brainstorming how to provide safe opportunities for sharing and interaction between ULC members and friends.

Regular Facebook users are familiar with Facebook groups, which are closed groups that an individual must have permission to join. Once you are a member, you can share information and news to other members with the peace-of-mind that it is not going out to the World Wide Web for everyone to see. Like conversations in the narthex, there is a trust factor that members won't then share without permission what they have heard. Only approved members can see what you share in a closed Facebook group.

Some of you are not Facebook users for a variety of reasons. Some have joined Facebook to take advantage of live worship on Sunday mornings. We want to remind those of you in this group, that you are in control of how you use Facebook and how much is shared to the world. You can have a Facebook account and only use it for live-stream events and closed groups. If you set the permissions to only share with your friends and groups, anything you post on Facebook remains private.

The ULC RJT launched a closed Facebook Group called, "ULC Doing Racial Justice" in July that was used exclusively by the RJT to share information and ideas and to provide a space for sometimes difficult discussions. We are now inviting everyone to join this conversation!

To join *ULC Doing Racial Justice*, you must first have a Facebook account. Then in the search bar at the top, type in "ULC Doing Racial Justice." The group should pop up with a button to click to join. You will then be asked a couple of questions to help the administrators (Pastor Haley Vay and Vicki Anderson) determine if you are a member or a regularly worshipping friend. If so, you will be accepted within a few days.

Following are the group rules and questions you will be asked before joining. If you would like to be a part of the Racial Justice conversation at ULC, consider this option.

ULC Doing Racial Justice Facebook Group Rules

- 1. Feel free to post thought provoking articles, podcasts, interviews, etc.** But don't just post the link. Tell the group why you believe it is important to share the information. Why does it resonate with you? For example, instead of posting "interesting stuff," a post such as "this podcast by a citizen of the Cherokee nation gives the background and potential impact of the recent Supreme Court decision regarding Indian reservations in Oklahoma" provides more information.
- 2. Start discussions/ask questions** This is meant to be a brave place where we can learn and grow together to become anti-racist. Pose questions as a post (maybe about something that you heard or saw) or in comments under posts as outlined in #1 above. We are a Christian community, learning and growing together.
- 3. No Promotions or Spam** Give more than you take to this group. Self-promotion, spam and irrelevant links aren't allowed.
- 4. No Hate Speech or Bullying** Make sure everyone feels safe. Bullying of any kind isn't allowed, and degrading comments about things like race, politics, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender or identity will not be tolerated.
- 5. Be Kind and Courteous** We're all in this together to create a welcoming environment. Let's treat everyone with respect. Healthy debates are natural, but kindness is required.
- 6. No Drama** If you don't like something, keep scrolling. Rude and distasteful comments are strongly discouraged.
- 7. Respect Everyone's Privacy** Being part of this group requires mutual trust. Authentic, expressive discussions make groups great, but may also be sensitive and private. Do not share any content from the group—whether by copy/pasting or taking a screenshot—without the express permission of the author.
- 8. Learn More** If you're interested in learning more about the life of our church, check us out on our [Facebook Page](#) and [website](#). There are many Racial Justice resources on our page under "Action."

Questions:

1. How did you learn about ULC Doing Racial Justice?
2. How are you connected to ULC, East Lansing?
3. Have you read the Group Rules and agree to abide by them?

*Racial Justice Team Communication Sub-group
(Vicki Anderson, Pastor Haley Vay Beaman, Amy Wagenknecht and David Wiggert)*

Materials for Jan. 27 Racial Justice Forum

The Adult Forum on Jan. 17 (MLK weekend) is the last in a four-part series by the ULC Racial Justice Team. We welcome guest speaker, Judith Roberts, ELCA Program Director for Racial Justice Ministries. Judith will lead a discussion about the document “Explanation of the Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent,” which was presented to the African Descent Lutheran Association by Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and ELCA Church Council Members at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly.

We encourage you to read this document before Jan. 17, [click here](#). Hear this powerful statement from our ELCA document: *Beyond empty promises or well-meaning intentions, this church recommits to the work of racial justice, socioeconomic equity, and racial reconciliation.*

In a powerful and inspiring short video recording well worth watching, this document was formally accepted and commented upon by ELCA pastor Rev. Lamont Wells, President of the African Descent Lutheran Association. To watch, [click here](#).

Rev. Wells, a colleague of Pastor Haley Vay, met virtually with ULC's campus ministry students on Oct. 2. You can watch this, also powerful and inspiring, gathering on ULC's YouTube channel at [Racial Justice Series - Rev. Lamont Wells – Oct. 2, 2020](#)

*Miriam M. K. Bunge
ULC Racial Justice Team*

Speaking of Racial Justice



Bias

Bias is the tendency to take a side for or against something based on a belief you already had, or a prejudice. It interferes with us making a fair judgement.

Implicit (unconscious) bias is the attitude or stereotype that affects our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. It operates outside of the person's awareness and can be in direct contradiction to a person's espoused beliefs and values. Studies show that racial implicit bias in an individual reflects the racial biases of the community in which that individual resides and does not necessarily reflect whether the individual acts in a racist manner.

For example: Police shootings of black people are more prevalent in communities with high racial implicit biases. (Eric Hehman)

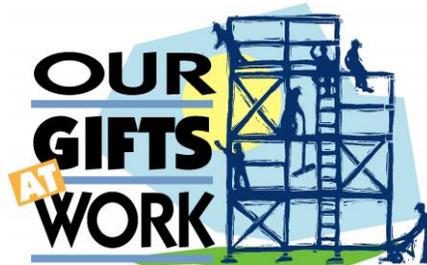
For more information see the podcast:

Hidden Brain (NPR) - The Air We Breathe, June 12, 2020. <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/531587708>

Local Benevolence Funds

The following recommendations for distribution of 2020 local benevolence funds were approved by Council:

- \$2,000 to the Greater Lansing Food Bank in recognition of increased food insecurity during the Covid 19 pandemic
- \$1,000 to Citizens for Prison Reform as there are new issues keeping prisoners safe within the



- prison system during the pandemic
- \$400 to Michigan Refugee Hope as the need to help refugee youth continues

- \$200 to Interfaith Power and Light which is headed by Pastor John Schleicher and promotes energy conservation by faith organizations
- \$200 to Friendship House which recently hired a new director
- \$200 to St. Luke's Lutheran Church Coat Bank to make coats available during the upcoming winter.

Social Action Team

December Outreach of the Month

ELCA Good Gifts

December Outreach of the Month will be the ELCA Good Gifts as it has been the last couple of years. Given that Christmas gift giving will be more difficult this year because of the pandemic, why not consider buying a gift that brings life and hope to a family somewhere around the world?

For \$10 you can provide a family with chicks, giving them protein-rich



eggs, or the possibility of a steady source of income. You can give a pig for \$30 which provides fertilizer to grow crops. Or you can give a goat for \$50 which provides a family with milk and income to send children to school, a cow for \$500, a fish farm for \$250, a community garden for \$200, or lots more options. For more information and to buy a gift, go to the ELCA's Good Gifts website at:

goodgifts.elca.org/?_ga=2.207893778.1291175075.1605644490-1808450714.1555419878

In addition to purchasing gifts, you can find gift cards and ornaments to present to the person for whom you bought the gift in honor of. If you would rather simply donate for Good Gifts, please send your check to the church office or donate online and designate your contribution as "Good Gifts."

Pastor Gary

ULC Memorial Garden - Revisited

In the late 1990's, ULC created an *ad hoc* committee to look into establishing a memorial garden somewhere on the church grounds. Two of the members of that committee, that I remember, were Bill Hartwig and Barbara Hoopingarner.

My wife, Barbara, toured many of other church's memorial gardens to get ideas. The two major options were spreading the cremains into the flower garden, or having an urn buried among the flowers. The difficulty that occurs with the latter is that the location of the urn must be permanently identified much like a headstone at a cemetery. The committee decided to follow the scattering protocol.

At about this time Barbara died and I decided to fund the garden in memory of her. A landscape company was engaged to design and implement the garden.



Now, about 20 years later, what appeared to be good plantings then have become overgrown and/or troublesome today. For example, the River Birch trees grew too large and undermined the walkways. They have recently been removed, and the walkways are being repaired.

The garden's plantings are currently being re-assessed, probably with an emphasis on planting native wildflowers. The Memorial Garden Committee is seeking professional help in deciding on any future plantings.

We are also looking for volunteers to coordinate maintenance of the garden in the coming year.

Are these changes to the Memorial Garden the final changes? Most assuredly not. Plants grow and die and need to be replaced. Stayed tuned for future updates.

Roger Hoopingarner



Thank you to all who donated to the annual St. Luke Winter Gear/Coat Bank during October and November. Your generosity is appreciated!

Darra and Steve Haase



From the President

Privilege to Serve in an Unusual Year

Dear members and friends of ULC,

As I look back on this year as Council President, I'll be honest, I'm not sure I would have agreed to do it if I had known what we would all be in for. I trust God knew what God was doing though, and it has been my privilege and honor to serve.

We did not do everything we set out to as Council when we set our goals back in January (can anyone remember back that far?), and yet we have had a very productive year. We have established a racial justice ministry team, made decisions on the lectionary, installed solar panels through a generous gift from our neighbors at the Islamic Center, and spent significant time thinking through and discerning ULC's path through this pandemic.

We are fortunate to be a community blessed in many ways, including tremendous leadership during tough times. It is not easy to lead when there is nothing to reference in terms of how it has been done before. I want



Erin offers prayers during Alpha Sunday 2019 outdoor worship

you to know that your Council cares deeply for this congregation and has remained committed to representing our members throughout the year. I'm grateful and proud to be a part of the team.

We also have many members that have given so much to our shared community this year. It is easy to take for granted all the efforts that are happening daily, yet the only way community continues to thrive is with active participation. Our members have built new relationships, used their creativity in new ways, and found renewed wellsprings of energy to keep ULC thriving. I encourage you to find ways to contribute to our shared community, especially during this time of separation. This is what the love of Jesus looks like. This is what it means to be Church in the World.

As I transition to Past-President, I look forward to working under Nancy Lindman's leadership as she takes on the role of President and I know we are in good hands. I thank all of you for your prayers and support. I continue to pray you are well, taking care of yourselves and your loved ones, and that we see each other again soon.

Yours in Christ,
Erin Frisch, epfrisch@gmail.com

The ULC Council met via Zoom on Nov. 18. The following are some highlights:

- The annual congregational meeting will be held via Zoom on Dec. 6 after worship.
 - Members can access the Zoom meeting online or by phone.
 - For anyone who needs help with accessing Zoom, a council member will be available to call for assistance. That phone number will be in



Council Notes

the emailed announcements.

- The council discussed procedures for building use during the pandemic.

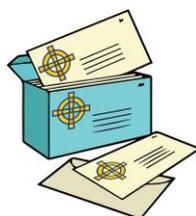
Joy Oslund
ULC Council Member-at-Large

Attendance (Virtual via Facebook Live)

- Oct. 4: Up to 95 devices watching live, and 355 views so far
- Oct. 11: Up to 86 devices watching live, and 424 views so far
- Oct. 18: Up to 86 devices watching live, and 614 views so far
- Oct. 25: Up to 89 devices watching live, and 524 views so far.

Offering Envelope Change

Because of the pandemic, we are changing the Offering Envelope system we use. Beginning January 2021, we will be mailing offering envelopes to those who request them. For this to work, it is very important that you communicate with the church office, (Britny)



if you want to continue using offering envelopes next year. Please do this as soon as possible so the information can be sent to the company. If you have questions, please contact me at 517-676-1877 or mikevicki.anderson@gmail.com.

Michael Anderson, Stewardship Team



In 2019 and 2020, the ELCA is celebrating 50 years of Lutheran women being ordained in the United States, 40 years of women of color being ordained, and 10 years of LGBTQIA+ individuals being able to serve freely. Here is the final portion of the Ministry of Lutheran Women timeline that began in the June/July 2020 Lux.

40th Anniversary-1979

Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the First Women of Color Ordained in U.S. Lutheran Churches. As recently as October 2018, out of 2,979 women active on the ELCA roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament, only 289 are women of color. This is 9.7% of the ordained women.

Statistically, pastors who are women of color experience discrimination more than their white counterparts because of racism. On average, pastors who are women of color face a disproportionate wait time for their first call compared to their white counterparts.

Women's Ordination Statistics

Women are more likely to serve as supply pastors than men. Additionally, men are more likely to be senior pastors, while women are more likely to be associate pastors.

As of January 2015, 119 out of 145 member churches in the Lutheran World Federation ordain women.

Additional Statistics

In the ELCA, 32% of women pastors have experienced sexual harassment, compared to 6.5% of male pastors.

As of April 2016, the average defined compensation for female clergy in the ELCA was 86% of what their male counterparts were compensated. This gap is compounded for ordained women of color.

5000 - Cumulative Number of Women Pastors



Young Adults in Global Mission

Applications for the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program are now being accepted for the 2021-2022 program year!

If you're a young adult ages 21 to 29, you can apply for an international service year that will shape your faith, career, identity and understanding of how you fit into God's work in the world. YAGM volunteers will begin in **August 2021** and will be placed in one of the country programs. **PLEASE NOTE: Due to the continued uncertainties presented by COVID-19, country programs for the 2021-2022 service year are subject to change.**

Through YAGM, you'll learn what it means to serve in a spirit of accompaniment as you walk alongside global church companions. You'll immerse yourself in a new community and form deep relationships with the people you meet. And you'll confront issues of wealth and poverty, racial privilege, gender privilege, economic disparity and globalization, all through the lens of faith. [Learn more and apply at ELCA.org/YAGM.](https://www.elca.org/YAGM)

No matter what energizes you, you'll find relevant opportunities for professional experience, including:

- **Health and human rights:** health care, HIV and AIDS, homelessness, immigration and refugees
- **Education:** fine arts, youth education, childhood education, working with people living with disabilities
- **Environmental justice:** agriculture and farming, development, environment
- **Professional support:** office work, communication, technology, finance
- **Congregational ministry:** children's ministry, Christian education, youth ministry, congregational ministry, camp ministry

Around the world, host families, churches, workplaces and communities are ready to welcome you. **Are you ready? The deadline to apply is Jan.15, 2021. [Apply Now.](#)**

From ELCA.org



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Thank You for Your Kindness and Support!

2020 has not been a great year for most of us but dealing with a breast cancer diagnosis made these last few months particularly challenging. In the midst of my own cancer battle, my 89-year-old mother was also diagnosed with bladder cancer.

In November, we both received the wonderful news that we are both cancer survivors! I wanted to take this opportunity to thank my extended ULC family for the amazing support so many of you gave to me during the last year. Your cards,



Melissa with her "Fight" hat.

notes, emails, gifts, flowers, phone calls, meals and rides to treatment were so appreciated during my cancer fight. Surgery, chemo and radiation cured me, but your prayerful support lifted me up and reminded me of God's love every step of the way.

Thank you for being there for me and Jeff when we needed you most.

XOXO,
Melissa Andresen

ULC Archives

Christmas Traditions

From the December 1977 Lux: Evelyn Frost wrote an article titled, "Board of Ministry Starts a New ULC Christmas Tradition." It reads, "Several years ago (we think it was Christmas of 1963) the Trees of Sin and Grace were used at University Lutheran Church at Ann and Division Street for the first time. Red lights, red balls, and red ribbons represented our sinful state in which we all fall short of the glory of God. White lights, white roses, and white ribbons represented the gift of Grace given by God to everyone who would accept it. These trees were vivid reminders to all of us of the real meaning of Christmas. We used them as reminders to us for some 12 or 13 years.

This year (1977) the Board of Ministry asked itself some questions: Should three trees be used in our sanctuary when we consider the need for conservation in all facets of our lives? Could we justify the cost of lighting three trees? Could we afford to replace the well-worn lights and



Chrismon Tree

decorations? Most important: Could we depict the meaning of Christmas in some other way by using just one tree? We decided this could be done.

So, in 1977 at Christmas, we will begin what we hope will be a new tradition. This year we will have one tree, a Chrismon tree. Chrismon is a combination of two words, Christ and Monogram. Early Christians used Chrismons to identify themselves to one another, to identify meeting places, and sometimes to show unbelievers where they stood. Most important these monograms served to transmit the beliefs of the maker or bearer to those who viewed

them. This is what we want to do—to convey our belief that Christ is Lord.

How many symbols mean Christ to you? A fish? A crown? A manger? A cross? A star? Chi Rho? A butterfly? An orb? These symbols will all be on our tree. Look for them the first Sunday in Advent. May our Chrismon tree remind you that God's greatest gift to all of us is Jesus the Christ."

This Christmas we will remember Christmas season's past as we make new memories and traditions for 2020.

Connie Lenkowski



2019 Christmas Trees

Celebrations



3 Marge Mahoney
Deanna Milligan
4 Kimberly Melton
Diane Wanagat
5 Gerry Erickson
Jerry Lindman
6 Hannah Oslund
7 Rachel Morin
9 Jacob Ophaug
Susan Zimmerman
Paul Bartlett

10 Ross Clyma
11 Libby Baswell
Russell Fitzgerald
Lois Mummaw
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

21 Cheryl Kruger
Brie McPhall
22 Kathy Sweat
24 Catherine Ernst
26 Gloria Olson
28 Johanna Karcher



6 Art & Carolyn Lohr
14 Al & Ann Booren
20 Dan & Lindsay Sadler
22 Anthony & Chad
Waldron
29 Todd & Barb Helser
Roger Hoopingarner &
Marian Stoll
30 Harry & Phyllis Kost

Congratulations Phyllis & Harry on 70 Years!



Congratulations to Phyllis and Harry Kost who are celebrating their 70th anniversary this December! They were married at Phyllis's home church, Bethlehem Lutheran in Mankato Minnesota, on Dec. 30, 1950. The service took place at 8 p.m. in a sanctuary lit by candelabras. For more good stories about their courtship and wedding reach out to Harry and Phyllis and be sure to share your good wishes!

Shared by Beth Rahe



Lead Management Team Notes

The Lead Management Team met via Zoom on Nov. 4 and the following are highlights from this meeting:

Two fundraisers were approved, Prayers & Squares on-line bazaar and support for Islamic Center Solar project.

Facility–Dale Romsos: A boiler system water pump failed and is in the process of being replaced. The failure occurred at an opportune time, one week before the warranty expired! We had two leaks in the roof after the last rain. A significant leak occurred where water from the west half of the sanctuary roof funnels on to the upper level flat roof. A large patch will be applied to this area to cover the multiple patches earlier applied to this area. The second leak occurred in the coat room and resulted from a minor failure of the lower level flat roof. This repair is under warranty.

Other team information is contained in articles in this Lux.

Amy Wagenknecht

Newsletter

SUBMISSIONS

The deadline for the January Lux is **Friday, Dec. 11.**

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!

December

- | | | | | | |
|----|--------|---|----|--------|--|
| 1 | 7:30a | Tuesday Morning Bible Study-Zoom* | 15 | 7:30a | Tuesday Morning Bible Study-Zoom* |
| | 9:30a | Lux Planning-Zoom | | 12:30p | Staff Meeting-Zoom |
| | 12:30p | Staff Meeting via Zoom | 16 | 1:00p | Rhodon Circle-Zoom* |
| | 7:00p | Pub Theology via Zoom* | | Noon | Lectio Divina-Zoom* |
| 2 | Noon | Lectio Divina via Zoom* | | 6:30p | ULC Council-Zoom* |
| | 4:00p | Worship Wednesdays for Kids-Zoom* | | 4:00p | Worship Wednesday for Kids-Zoom* |
| 3 | 7:30p | Sr. Choir-Zoom* | 17 | 4:30p | Food Movers-Drive-thru Pickup |
| 4 | 5:00p | Friday@Five-Zoom* | | 7:30p | Sr. Choir-Zoom* |
| 6 | 10:00a | Worship-Facebook Live | 18 | 11:00 | Racial Justice-Education-Zoom |
| | 11:00a | Annual Meeting-Zoom* | 20 | 10:00a | Worship-Facebook Live |
| 8 | 7:30a | Tuesday Morning Bible Study-Zoom* | | 11:00a | Zoom* Coffee Hour/Forum@11:10
(RJT: Beyond White Privilege) |
| | 12:30p | Staff Meeting-Zoom | 22 | 12:30p | Staff Meeting-Zoom |
| | 6:30p | Racial Justice Team-Zoom | 23 | Noon | Lectio Divina-Zoom* |
| 9 | Noon | Lectio Divina-Zoom* | 24 | 7:00p | Christmas Eve Worship-Facebook Live |
| | 4:00p | Worship Wednesday for Kids-Zoom* | 25 | 10:00a | Christmas Fellowship- Zoom* |
| 10 | 7:30p | Sr. Choir-Zoom* | 27 | 10:00a | Worship-Facebook Live |
| 11 | 5:00p | Friday@Five-Zoom* (Concludes for 2020) | | 10:00a | Worship: Lessons & Carols - Zoom* |
| 13 | 10:00a | Worship-Facebook Live | | 11:00a | Zoom* Coffee Hour |
| | 11:00a | Zoom* Coffee Hour/Forum@11:10
(Mitchell-Seminary Intern) | | | |

* 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 – Judy Kindel; Rhodon Circle – Connie Lenkowski (clenkowski@frontier.com); Council Meeting – Erin Frisch

ULC Facilities

At our November Council meeting, out of an abundance of caution because of the sharp rise of COVID-19 cases in Michigan and across the country, the Council decided to once again close the church building until further notice. Groups will no longer be able to meet inside the building and staff will work mostly from home with the occasional stop at church. We feel that this is a necessary step to both keep our members safe and the community safe. When the situation warrants, we will open the building again. However, even with the building closed, the church is open, and ministry is happening. ~Pastor Gary

Please don't hesitate to call if there is a need. The church number (517-332-2559) is connected to my personal cell phone during the day. ~Britny Pollard



Join us for our 2020 Annual Meeting on Sunday, Dec. 6 at 11:00 a.m., immediately following virtual worship.

The meeting will be held by Zoom meeting. The link to the meeting is available in the Friday email or by contacting the ULC office at 517-332-2559.

You can view a copy of the 2020 Annual Report **[HERE](#)**.



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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

Christmas Play 2019



P & S Christmas Bazaar 2018



Christmas Past



Freewheelers Cookie Decorating 2013



Christmas Elves 2016

Caroling at Burcham 2018