



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

Mark Your Calendars . . .

Sunday Worship

10 a.m. Worship
Facebook Live

Annual

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, Dec. 5 immediately
following worship
Zoom

Family Advent Day

Saturday, Dec. 11 at 10 a.m.
(Young families only with RSVP)
More info on page 4.

Food Movers

Thursday, Dec. 16
Distribution 3:30 p.m.
Drive-thru pick up of
prepacked boxes

Christmas Eve

Worship at 6:30 p.m.
Facebook Live

Welcome John Dale Smith



John Dale Smith plays piano during a ULC Sunday morning worship on Facebook Live.

We are pleased to welcome John Dale Smith as our newly hired pianist at ULC. John Dale began his ministry with us the later part of November and brings a great deal of experience and expertise to the position. He has been the Director of Music/pianist at Mt. Hope Presbyterian Church, Plymouth Congregational Church, pianist at St. Johns/St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Churches all in the Lansing area, and Director of Music/pianist at First United Methodist Church in Owosso. He has a Bachelor of Music degree in piano performance from Bowling Green State University and a Master of Music degree in piano performance from MSU.

Many are already familiar with John Dale as he is well known in the community for his work in theater and because of his involvement at ULC with Worship Expressions, the Choir Scholarship Concert, and being the spouse of our director of music, Janine Novenske Smith. Together with Janine and our organist Kristie Wiggert, we are blessed with a gifted and talented music staff that brings experience, diversity, and creativity to our worship life. Welcome John Dale. We are happy to have you as part of our ministry team.

Pastor Gary

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Join us for Advent Worship

10 a.m. ET, Facebook Live

Choir Special Music

Sunday, December 5

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



Worship Expressions, Jazz

Sunday, December 12

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.

God Enters with Hope and Light

When the pandemic began in March of 2020 and we moved to worship online, we never imagined that we would celebrate Christmas 2020 by worshipping online. We thought we'd be back together in worship in a matter of weeks. We never dreamed that the pandemic would last through Christmas.

Now as we begin the season of Advent and prepare to celebrate Christmas 2021, we are still worshipping online, although we have gotten together for Communion outdoors during the summer and fall. COVID numbers have risen significantly the last few weeks. As I write this, Michigan has the highest or second highest COVID cases per 100,000 of any state in the country. We've had the death of someone in the congregation due to COVID, and there have been breakthrough cases in the congregation of those who have been vaccinated. Keeping people safe and continuing the ministry of the



congregation have been in constant tension. It's a challenging tightrope to walk. And we never imagined that we would be in this place nearly two years after the pandemic began - another Advent and Christmas worshipping online.

But this is what Christmas is all about!

O come, O come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel.... We sing it every Advent/Christmas season. But have you ever paid close attention to the words? *O come, O come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel that mourns in lowly exile here.* This Advent hymn comes out of exile. It comes out of struggle and pain. And it speaks of God, entering into the pain and brokenness to bring life.

Or what about the Isaiah passage that we read on Christmas? *"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has*

shined." It is God entering into the darkness and pain with light and hope.

Or what about the beginning of Gospel of John that we read as we surround the sanctuary bathed in candlelight? *"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."* Jesus Christ, the light of the world, breaking into the darkness.

We may still be in the grips of a pandemic. We may still be struggling with political, economic, and racial division in our country. We may still be dealing with a refugee crisis in the world. We may still be overwhelmed by the struggles of life. But Christmas is about God entering into the pain, brokenness, and darkness with light and hope.

Even though we will be lighting candles and singing *Silent Night* in our own homes because of the pandemic, the light of Christ will still be shining in the darkness this Christmas.

Pastor Gary

Sundays

- December 5 - Special Choir music
- December 12 - Worship Expressions, Jazz
- December 19 - Highlights from Family Advent Day

Christmas Eve Worship - December 24

- **6:30 p.m.** - Streaming from ULC sanctuary on Facebook Live
- **8:30 p.m.** - Gathering in the ULC parking lot weather permitting - Brief worship of reading the Christmas story from Luke, lighting candles and singing *Silent Night* around a bonfire

Sunday after Christmas - December 26

- 10:00 a.m. - Lessons and Carols streamed on Facebook Live

PEACE
on earth



Join us for Christmas.



An Exciting Month of Activities

Dia De Los Muertos (Day of the Dead) *ofrenda*, Spanish for altar, decorated on the Friday after All Saints Sunday by participants who brought photos to honor loved ones who have died.



Dia De Los Muertos ofrenda.



One Community with November speakers Claretta Duckett Freeman and Oprah Revish.

In November, Claretta Duckett Freeman and Oprah Revish joined One Community to speak on Racial Justice and Queer Theology, particularly the intersection of both

issues and how we as people of faith can do our part to help expand hearts and minds in the church. Many thanks to our congregation for supporting this ministry, and for Oprah and Claretta who serve our community with fervor and faithfulness.

Alternative Spring Break Info – students gathered for a “Friendsgiving” meal before the Thanksgiving holiday to share favorite food we’re thankful for. In addition to a meal “stuffed” with gratitude for this ministry, we shared details about our upcoming alternative spring break trip to Charleston, South Carolina in March 2022 where we will serve with Habitat for Humanity. Speaking of servant leadership and gratitude, one of the reasons we give thanks is for the support of ULC’s Endowment team who designated funds to our upcoming alternative spring break adventure!



Friendsgiving meal and spring break planning.

Pastor Haley Vay

Young Adults Invited to Journey Abroad

After a two-year pause during the COVID-19 pandemic, the ELCA’s Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program is preparing to send volunteers out into the world again! Applications are now open, and young adults aged 21 to 29 are invited on this journey abroad for the 2022-2023 program year.

Apply for YAGM by the deadline of Feb.1, 2022. (Priority deadline is Jan. 15, 2022.) To learn more about what this opportunity will mean for your faith, identity, career, and understanding of God’s work in the world, watch these [videos](#) on the YAGM YouTube channel experience.

YAGM volunteers will begin in August 2022 and will be placed in one of nine country programs.

Through YAGM, you will learn what it means to serve in a spirit of accompaniment as you walk alongside global church companions. You’ll become immersed in a new community and form deep relationships. 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 at [ELCA.org/YAGM](https://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.

Pastor Haley Vay



A Message of Peace



Worship Wednesday: "There is peace in sharing Christ's love."

Children and leaders from Worship Wednesday share their Isaiah 9 activity, "There is peace in sharing Christ's love." As Covid cases continue to increase in our state and around the country, our children are sharing a message of peace and comfort. May Emmanuel, God with us, fill your hearts and your homes this coming Advent season.

Confirmation Youth Ministry

Looking back, our November fellowship event with Confirmation students was an evening of Escapology in Lansing. They escaped! Our Confirmation youth discovered the "Antidote" and saved us all from virus contamination at Escapology in Lansing! From left to right: Katey, Morgan, Lizzie, Vickie, Brianna, Henry, and Daro. So glad Pastor Gary could join us too. Thank you to our congregation for supporting ministry with these intelligent, witty, courageous, kind, and faithful youth.

Looking ahead, for our December service event we have partnered



Confirmation students "escaped" and discovered the antidote.

with Samaritas' Christmas Wish program and will be providing gifts and clothing to four children in the Lansing area this Christmas. A word from our confirmands: "We are

excited to go shopping together, wrap gifts, and deliver them to children and families. We will look forward to sharing photos and our reflections on this experience with you! Thank you for your generous and faithful support."

Learning Events continue twice a month on Wednesday nights. In October and November, we focused on Baptism and Community, while December will focus on the Commandments before we break for Christmas.

Pastor Haley Vay



Adult Faith Formation

Annual Meeting and Saving Jesus Redux

We continue the inspiring, thought-provoking, and riveting DVD series, "Saving Jesus Redux," led by Pastor Gary and featuring a star-studded cast of theologians. December features parts 4 and 5, but the dates of these are preceded by the ULC Annual Meeting!



Dec. 12 Saving Jesus Redux: The World into Which Jesus Was Born

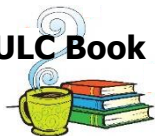
Dec. 19 Saving Jesus Redux: Jesus' Birth: Incarnation

Dec. 26 No Forum - Christmas Holiday

Dec. 5 No Forum - ULC Annual Meeting

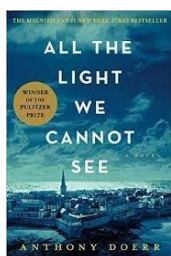
Linda Trevarthen

ULC Book Club



All the Light We Cannot See

Due to busy holiday schedules ULC Book Club will not meet in December. Our next meeting will be Thursday, Jan. 20, 2022 at 10 a.m. In January we will discuss *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr. This book follows the lives of two teenagers during World War II, a blind girl in France and an orphaned boy in Germany, as they



grapple with the loss, horror and uncertainty of war.

We will decide closer to the meeting if we are able to meet in person or if we need to continue meeting via Zoom. If you would like to

join us, please contact Beth Rahe at bwojan1@gmail.com or Mary Kotnik at mkotnik@comcast.net so we

can add you to our email list and provide you with the Zoom link if we are unable to meet in person.

We meet the third Thursday of the month at 10 a.m. through the month of May. Please join us,

Beth Rahe and Mary Kotnik

Earthkeeping News

Consider a Simpler Christmas

Christmas doesn't have to be a burden on the planet. With a little effort and imagination, we can reduce the environmental impact of the holiday season. The following are some ideas to help celebrate the season while caring for the earth and reducing our carbon footprint.

The main goal is to keep Christmas simple, less wasteful and Christ centered.

- Send forest friendly Christmas cards or Plantable cards (seed packets included)
- Consider a gift that will honor the recipient and make a difference in the world such as from ELCA Good gifts ([ELCA.org/good gifts](http://ELCA.org/goodgifts)) or a similar nonprofit organization
- Find alternatives to wrapping paper such as recycled paper, fabric, newspaper (many rolls of wrapping paper



contain non-recyclable elements like foil, glitter or plastic)

- Consider a live tree to plant later
- Make gift tags from last year's cards
- Reuse bows, ribbon, gift bags and boxes and save for next year
- Buy plastic free gifts and look for respected eco logos such as Fairtrade, and Forest Stewardship Council
- Swap strings of incandescent Christmas lights for LED's both inside and out
- Use beeswax or soy candles
- Start an annual earth friendly Christmas family tradition connecting with nature with a walk

Judy Kindel

Julie, Wrapped in Love



The Prayers & Squares Quilt Ministry wrapped Julie Baglien in a beautiful quilt as a thank you for her many years as ULC organist.



December Outreach of the Month ELCA Good Gifts

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

You can give chicks for \$10 which provides a family with 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 a whole “family farm” for \$715 which includes chicks, goats, pigs and a cow. For more information and to buy a gift, go to the ELCA’s [Good Gifts](#) website.

In addition to purchasing gifts, we will have a small Christmas tree set up in the church if you want to stop by and pick up ornaments and cards that go with your gift. The church will be open Tuesday through Thursday from 9 a. m. to 4 p.m. 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



Great News from Forest View!

Last month the Kids Hope USA article in the Lux was about Virtual Mentoring. Since the Lansing Schools do not allow visitors into the schools, ULC volunteers were planning to mentor their child online from home while the child was at school.

The great news is that mentors have been given permission to enter Forest View School to spend an hour with their student once a week. In-person mentoring is so much easier and effective than virtual



Volunteers provide lunch for staff. Staff give big thank you!

mentoring. To qualify for the in-person, volunteers must be fully vaccinated and give the school a copy of their vaccination card.

The other great news from Forest View was that we were able to provide a lunch for 42 staff members with a Thrivent grant from Kay Meints. Several mentors and prayer partners donated cookies and fruit trays as well. The staff was thrilled and showed their appreciation on a white board thank you card. With the pandemic, this has been a challenging year and it was nice to honor them with a lunch.

*Barbara Kissling
ULC Kids Hope USA Director*



Spreading Warmth in the Community

On November 9th during our regular sewing time, Erica, a representative shared with us the mission and operation of MSU Safe House. MSU is the only university in the nation that has its own program to help students, employees and retirees dealing with domestic abuse/violence. Twelve prayer quilts were ready for her to take back to their clients.

Several donated sewing machines will be given to Afghan refugees after Mr. Cooper gives them a cleaning and tune-up. He does this at a reduced rate for us. We include two

pieces of fabric and thread with each machine. Donations to defray the cost would be appreciated.

Several beautiful Christmas quilts made by Ann Booren were sold on-line as a fund-raising event for Prayers & Squares. Her energy, creativity and talents are most appreciated. She and Al may head to South Carolina sometime after the New Year to enjoy warmer weather than is expected here in East Lansing this winter. We are confident she will continue to sew for Prayers & Squares as well as participate with

the group at King of Glory Lutheran Church in North Myrtle Beach.

We continue to hope for a reduction in COVID numbers so that we can again fill the Fellowship Hall the first Saturday in February on National Quilts of Valor Sewing Day. Circle Feb. 5, 2022 on your calendar.

Prayers & Squares participants continue to meet Tuesday morning from 10 a.m. until 12:15 p.m. Come join this group of dedicated volunteers. All the tools and fabric are provided. We just need you!

Bobbie Davis

Quilt of Valor Recipients



These are the remaining quilt of valor recipients who received their quilts in November



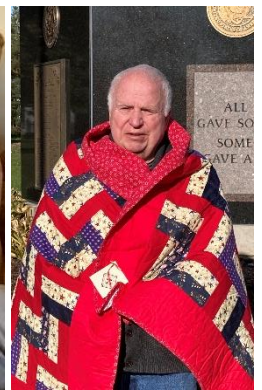
Everett Booren, nephew of Al and Ann Booren



Dr. Rachel Rosenbaum, a friend of Bobbie Davis' son Johnny. She is a neurologist with the MSU health care team.



Howard Gore, uncle of Vennie Gore.



Clare Tolan, awarded his QOV by Ann Booren.

Tight Knit

The Tight Knit ministry team distributed hats during the November Food Movers. Most of the over 480 hats were hand made by team members and other ULC members. Thanks so much for the generous donations!

Special thanks to Kris Stowe and Judy Hardies for braving the weather

Hats Distributed with Food



Kris and Judy with a wagonful of hats.

so the hats could get onto heads and help keep people warm this winter.

Tight Knit is not currently meeting in person. Members are working at home.

Vicki Anderson

Racial Justice Team Seeking Input from Congregation

The ULC Racial Justice Team (RJT) will be meeting in January to revisit our focus issues from 2021 and plan our direction for 2022. To help us in that effort, we are once again requesting input from the congregation.

The Church Council has graciously given the RJT ten minutes to conduct a brief survey of congregation members at the Annual Meeting on Dec. 5. We request that you review our Annual Report to prepare you to respond to the following questions:

1. Were you aware of the ULC racial justice ministry team prior to this meeting?

2. What part of our ministry has impacted you and how?
3. What parts of our ministry would you like continued in 2022? What would you like us to add?

We realize that everyone may not have a chance to respond that morning. Therefore, we encourage you to contact one of the RJT members listed below by phone or email. The team members will collect all responses and present them at our January meeting.

Here is the current membership list, but all are invited to join:

Michael Anderson
 Vicki Anderson
 Miriam Bunge
 Gary Bunge
 Erin Frisch
 Jack Guevara
 Wendy Guilfoyle
 Olga Holden
 Sue Kamens
 Connie Lenkowski
 Thom McCurdy
 Cindy Ramsey
 Andrea Vera
 Amy Wagenknecht
 David Wiggert

Thom McCurdy
Racial Justice Team Co-leader

The 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1865 in the aftermath of the Civil War, abolished slavery in the United States. The 13th Amendment states:

Section 1 - *Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.*

Section 2 - *Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.*

Despite the bold commitment to equality in the Declaration of Independence, slavery was legal in all thirteen colonies in 1776. By the start of the Civil War, four million people, nearly all of African descent, were held as slaves in 15 southern and border states. Slaves represented one-eighth of the U.S. population in 1860.

Many think that slavery ended with the Emancipation Proclamation, issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863. However, the Emancipation Proclamation freed only slaves held in the eleven Confederate states that had seceded, and only in the portion of those states not already under Union control.

The true abolition of slavery was achieved when the Thirteenth Amendment was ratified on Dec. 6, 1865. The Amendment is unique in the Constitution because it bars every person from holding slaves or engaging in other forms of involuntary servitude, whereas most constitutional provisions only constrain or regulate the government.

Impact of the 13th Amendment:

- Ends chattel slavery as it was practiced in the southern United States.
- Bars "involuntary servitude," which covers a broader range of labor arrangements where a person is forced to work by the use or threatened use of physical or legal coercion.
- Violates ordering specific performance of a service contract.
- Allows a person convicted of a crime to be forced to work.

Speaking of Racial Justice



The 13th Amendment

- Permits the government to require certain forms of public service, presumably extending to military service and jury duty.
- Allows Congress to pass laws pertaining to practices that violate the Amendment.

The year after the amendment's passage, Congress used this power to pass the nation's first civil rights bill, the Civil Rights Act of 1866. The law invalidated those laws put into place in the former Confederate states that governed the behavior of black people, effectively keeping them dependent on their former owners. Congress also required the former Confederate states to ratify the 13th Amendment in order to regain representation in the federal government.

Section Two of the Thirteenth Amendment has broader applicability as well. The Supreme Court has long held that this provision also allows Congress to pass laws to eradicate the "badges and incidents of slavery," but has never defined the full scope of what the badges and incidents of slavery are. The Court has left it to Congress to flesh out a definition. In *The Civil Rights Cases* (1883), the Court held that racial discrimination in private inns, theaters, and public transportation did not qualify as a badge or incident of slavery. In a series of cases in the 1960s and 1970s, however, the Court held that racial discrimination by private housing developers and private schools is among the badges and incidents of slavery that Congress may outlaw under Section Two of the Thirteenth Amendment.

Most recently, Congress has determined that Section Two provides a basis for a portion of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009 (which criminalizes race-based hate crimes) and the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (which penalizes human trafficking and protects its survivors). The Supreme Court has yet to evaluate these laws.

The 13th Amendment sought to establish equality for black Americans; however, the struggle to achieve full equality and guarantee the civil rights of all Americans continues today.

Source: <https://constitutioncenter.org/>; <https://www.history.com>

Contribute to the ULC Endowment Funds!

Two of ULC's frequently forgotten, yet tremendously important assets, are the "ULC Endowment Fund" and the "ULC Campus Ministry Endowment Fund." The Endowment Committee encourages you to consider one of the endowment funds when you are completing your year-end contributions. It is a gift that truly keeps giving!

Each year the Endowment Committee encourages members and friends of ULC to submit grant requests for projects that will assist ULC in achieving its mission and vision. The grants are intended primarily for one-time support of planning, demonstration or implementation of special projects. Applications for multi-year grants are discouraged. Endowment rules assure that the principal (actual amount of gifts given to the funds) is protected from being distributed and that the funds are not used as a source of funding for "regular and routine operations."

Despite the ups and downs of the market in 2021, as of Sept. 30, 2021, the balance of the ULC Fund was \$650,170.03 and the Campus Ministry Fund was \$392,648.25. Based on current spending policies, the Endowment Committee plans to award grants equal to four percent of the balance of the funds. In 2021 the Endowment Committee have approximately \$24,000 to support programs from the ULC Fund and \$14,500 from the Campus Ministry Fund.

In 2021 the Endowment Committee supported the following projects:

ULC Endowment

- "Auguste Community Aid Project" submitted by Auguste Shikongo (former MSU student) to develop a library in Namibia for \$5,000

- "Congregation Organizing for Racial Reconciliation (CORR) training" submitted by the ULC Racial Justice Team for \$4,500
- "Southside Community Coalition Green Energy Project" submitted by the Southside Community Coalition to support a community solar panel project for \$2,500
- "Health for Life" submitted by N/WLM Synod Honduras Team to support our synod's involvement in the ministry projects in Honduras for \$2,625
- "Adopt-a-visitation Room Project" submitted by Citizens for Prison Reform to create a more welcoming visitation space for incarcerated parents for \$2,000
- "M&M for Everyone" submitted by Fundación M&M Formando Líderes to purchase computers for a school in Colombia serving Venezuelan refugee children for \$1,200
- "Outdoor Summer Concert Series" submitted by ULC to create three outdoor summer concerts in different genres for the neighborhood and greater community for \$4,200

ULC Campus Ministry Endowment

- "Alternative Spring Break" submitted by One Community Lutheran Campus Ministry to support the 2021 Campus Ministry spring trip for \$3,000

Please consider donating to the "ULC Endowment Fund" or the "ULC Campus Ministry Endowment Fund" as you complete your 2021 giving. Every gift you make today - becomes a future gift for tomorrow and the coming years!

Larry Wagenknecht, Endowment Committee Chairman

Podcast: DecarcerationNation – Episode 113 Dr. Nneka Jones Tapia – Aug. 23, 2021, 59 minutes <https://decarcerationnation.com/113-dr-nneka-jones-tapia/>

Summary: Josh Hoe, a formerly incarcerated, and now freelance writer, and criminal justice reform advocate, interviews Dr. Nneka Jones Tapia, a clinical psychologist and Managing Director of Justice Initiatives at Chicago Beyond, and previously the warden of Cook County Jail in Chicago. She was one of the first psychologists in the nation to lead a prison. She is passionate about mental wellness, criminal justice reform, and supporting young people who have experienced trauma. She recently published a paper titled "Harm Reduction at the Center of Corrections"

Listening to Racial Justice Criminal Justice Reform



(Square One Justice) and she discusses the many aspects of harm introduced to inmates, inmates' families, staff, and correctional officers in the current criminal justice system. She describes her life story leading to her training in psychology and advocacy in the criminal justice system (from Decarceration Nation show notes). It is a powerful listen.

Podcast: 1A.org (National Public Radio) – Life in Prison Gets a New Chapter - Oct. 26, 2021, 31 minutes

<https://www.npr.org/2021/10/25/1049005528/life-in-prison-gets-a-new-chapter>

Summary: "Ear Hustle" is a podcast created and produced in the San Quentin State Prison in California. It originated in 2017 when Nigel Poor, a professor at Cal. State University teamed up with an inmate, Earlonne Woods, highlighting experiences and daily realities of life inside prison. The 1A host interviews these producers of the podcast, and their new book, **This is Ear Hustle: Unflinching Stories of Everyday Prison Life**. After his prison sentence was commuted in 2019, Mr. Woods continued his podcast with Ms. Poor and is an advocate for repealing the Three Strikes law in California.

From the President

Taking Stock and Giving Thanks

As the year serving as Council President concludes, I'm reflecting upon Council's 2021 goals, taking stock and giving thanks. My first Lux article focused on goals set by Council during our January Retreat. Progress working to achieve these goals includes:



Reentry Plan

- Develop plans for in-person worship and reentering the building – completed through revised protocol for building use in May, revisited the plan monthly and revised again to lower case-rate threshold in September. In November Council

formed a COVID Response Task Force to investigate what other congregations of our size are doing for in-person worship, identify best practices and provide recommendations moving forward into 2022.

- Find a way to do Communion – completed through summer outdoor communion; asked Worship Planning to coordinate with COVID Response Team to plan for bi-monthly indoor communion beginning January 2022.
- Continue to have some meetings via Zoom – ongoing

Digital Ministry

- Develop capacity to combine virtual and in-person worship – completed through bringing the screen and live streaming equipment into the sanctuary.
- Shape and build our digital ministry after the pandemic – making progress while pandemic continues as demonstrated through new Lenten mid-week service format and Worship Wednesdays.
- Develop a plan to reach out to those who can't access digital ministry - still needs to be addressed
- Consider plans to expand the Digital Intern position – making progress through a volunteer Digital Intern and building out a larger Digital Team

Arts Team

- Develop a team that uses the arts to enhance our worship life – still needs to be addressed

Mortgage Payoff

- Begin discussion of future dreams for funds freed up when mortgage is paid – held six “What is God Calling ULC to Be” discernment discussions; thanks to a successful mortgage pay-down match campaign, the mortgage will be paid off in August, 2022.

I am grateful for this year's Council - each member brought unique strengths, together they welcomed divergent opinions and worked productively as a team. Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

*Nancy Lindman
ULC Council President*

ULC Council met via Zoom on November 17. The following are some highlights:

Council has heard concerns about delaying return to in-person worship. Due to rising infection rates in Michigan and COVID exposures and concerns in the congregation, we want to approach a return with due caution. We are forming a task force to identify some options on which we will get further congregational input.



Council Notes

The council is continuing to work on this issue.

Consideration is being given to how we can gather for communion in the winter months until we can return to full worship in person.

Supported Social Action Team's recommendation that \$1,250 be disbursed to Citizens for Prison Reform and \$1,250 to Samaritas Afghan Refugee Fund from the Local Benevolence Fund.

Discussed Christmas worship service schedules.

*Emily Ubel
ULC Council Secretary*



2022 Faith Commitment

Don't forget to make your 2022 Faith Commitment [here](#).

For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. 2 Corinthians 8:9

Congratulations Linda, Bill, Annaliese and Elizabeth!

Congratulations to **Linda and Bill Trevarthen** for being named the MSU Justin Morrill College Distinguished Alumni Award Winners. Both are MSU grads and



Linda and Bill Trevarthen

have been active in many organizations in the area and at MSU. They have been active supporters of the MSU Residential

College in the Arts and Humanities. [Read more](#) about this award in the RCAHcommunity alumni Oct. 29, 2021 newsletter.

Annaliese Marks, daughter of Brad and Christy Marks, is one of 10 undergraduate students nominated for nationally competitive graduate school scholarships. Annaliese is an Honors College senior majoring in Biosystems Engineering the College



Annaliese Marks

of Engineering. She has been nominated for the Marshall and the Rhodes Scholarships. [Read more](#) about these scholarships in the Oct. 12, 2021 issue of

MSU Today.

Elizabeth Althouse, daughter of Lori and Jon Althouse, recently received her Doctor of Physical Therapy degree. Here is what she has to say about her achievement:

Dr. Elizabeth Althouse, DPT, PT still seems weird every time I say it or write it. The journey has not been an easy one however it has been rewarding. For the past seven years I have worked continuously to grow my understanding of the human body and how each integral part works together along with improving my

communication skills, honing my ability to document, and gaining an understanding of insurance.

I currently work in skilled nursing facilities in the UP and will be transitioning into the outpatient



Elizabeth Althouse received her Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from Mary Baldwin University in Staunton, VA.

setting where my true passion lies. My future career aspirations include vestibular therapy, pediatric therapy and general orthopedic cases. I look forward to my career of helping others live their

best lives without limitations. I would not have been able to do this without love and support from everyone back home.

ULC Archives

Advent Thoughts from 1991

Pastor Reed Schroer, ULC Campus Pastor, wrote the following article for the December 1991 Lux.

And From Out of the Darkness...

kindle the hilltops

in siege

and protest

and celebration,

dance,

hair on fire,

that the ending night might ring,

that the Sun might come,

that the yearning in God's heart

drawn by the ardor of our rounded hope

might complete the circle of

His love.

r.s. 1991



Pastor Reed Schroer

Advent remains as something of a yearly spiritual "speed bump" just about the time the season of Pentecost has the Church loping along in top gear. Kind of gets our attention about the time we have been lulled into complacency. It has for me a sparse and terrible glory which is compelling. It is the time of year during which my comfortable and "citified" self is marched away from the known and predictable to a more lonely and uncertain place.

This season feels older, less civilized than the others in the church year. As well it might. Its roots are more primitive and ancient, more basic to the primal human experience than the others. It is about silence and the terror of waiting in the dark. It is about the deep feminine in the psyche whose work it is to invite awareness, to watch and to receive the holy

Continued on page 12

December Celebrations



Birthdays

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 3 Marge Mahoney | 9 Paul Bartlett |
| Deanna Milligan | 10 Ross Clyma |
| 4 Kimberly Melton | 11 Libby Baswell |
| Diane Wanagat | Russell Fitzgerald |
| 5 Gerry Erickson | Lois Mummaw |
| Jerry Lindman | 12 Bruce Reinoehl |
| 6 Hannah Oslund | Heather Stanley |
| 7 Rachel Morin | Steven Viele |
| 9 Jacob Ophaug | 13 Paul Guilfoyle |
| Susan Zimmerman | Ross Lazar |
| | 14 Andrea Vera |
| | 15 Michael Sweat |
| | 16 Larry Cross |



Anniversaries

- 6 Art & Carolyn Lohr
- 14 Al & Ann Booren
- 20 Dan & Lindsay Sadler
- 22 Anthony & Chad Waldron
- 29 Todd & Barb Helser
- 30 Harry & Phyllis Kost
- 31 John & Bonnie V'Soske

Advent Thoughts continued from page 11.

But it is also about the audacity of the human spirit to claim light in the midst of darkness, to be warmed in the midst of winter, to affirm life in the midst of death.

I love it.

...Part of my fascination might well be genetic. My ancestors were Celts and forest dwellers of Northern Europe. Serious weirdness. But people who understood what it meant to fear and to fear not at the same time. While lost to conscious memory, maybe these ancient ones remain as sparks in the blood, messengers in dreams. Maybe Advent is a time which stirs up their witness... There is something of God which only waiting and watching in the presence of darkness and trouble may teach. Something wordless. These is something about the darkness that begs a fire to be kindled. Something wordless.

Like I said, my ancestors were Celts. They were strangers to neither the empty places or the waiting. I think of them often in this season. When they were gone, they left nothing tangible save a few stone circles. And yet their legacy remains in this season of the Christian liturgical year. Even the liturgical color is now the deep blue of a winter night.



But it is their audacity which is more interesting. The kindling of the yule logs, the circles of light, the feasts, the giving of gifts are thought to have origin in the rituals with which they defended themselves against the onslaught of the darkness. They would not give up until the days lengthened as the sun returned. They kept it up and kept it up until their god appeared.

I think theirs is the spirit of Advent which the fledgling Church coopted and incorporated. The wreaths, the lights, the gatherings, the sacrifices were the very best they could offer. And so it should be with us.

Weave the wreaths of evergreen and holly, light the fires and sing the songs. Bless each home with the warmth of companionship and laughter. Choose each gift no matter its size or cost with joy. Unselfconsciously enjoy the pageantry and the drama of this season. The winter is long enough on its own to satisfy the churlish among us who would steal small pleasures. Let the Sun of Righteousness arise in our hearts.

My ancestors knew enough to light one candle rather than curse the darkness. And to keep lighting them. So do we.

Connie Lenkowski



The deadline for the January Lux is **Monday, Dec. 13.**

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	8:00a Mushers-IHOP, EL	9-4p ULC Office Open	9-4p ULC Office Open
	9a-4p ULC Office Open	9:30a Amnos Circle-Fellowship	9:30a Amnos Circle-Fellowship
	9:30a Communications Team-Zoom	Noon Lectio Divina-Zoom*	Noon Lectio Divina-Zoom*
	Noon Lectio Divina-Zoom*	12:30p Rhodon Circle-Olive Garden	12:30p Rhodon Circle-Olive Garden
	4:15p Worship Wednesday for Kids-Zoom*	4:15p Worship Wednesday for Kids-Zoom*	4:15p Worship Wednesday for Kids-Zoom*
	4:30p Lead Management Team-Teams	6:30p ULC Council-Zoom*	6:30p ULC Council-Zoom*
	5:45p MSU Basketball Parking (Louisville)	6:30p Confirmation-Fireside/Student Lounge	6:30p Confirmation-Fireside/Student Lounge
	6:30p Confirmation-Fireside/Student Lounge	6:30p ULC Council Meeting-Zoom*	6:30p ULC Council Meeting-Zoom*
2	9-4p ULC Office Open	16	9-4p ULC Office open
	7:30p Senior Choir-Zoom*	10:00a ULC Book Club-location TBD	10:00a ULC Book Club-location TBD
3	5:00p Friday@Five	3:30p Food Movers Distribution-Drive thru	3:30p Food Movers Distribution-Drive thru
4	3:30p MSU Basketball Parking (Toledo)	19	10:00a Sunday Worship (4 th Advent)-Facebook**
5	10:00a Sunday Worship (2 nd Advent)-Facebook	11:00a Zoom Coffee Hour/Forum@11:10	11:00a Zoom Coffee Hour/Forum@11:10
	11:00a Annual Congregational Meeting-Zoom*	(Jesus Redux #4)	(Jesus Redux #4)
7	9-4p ULC Office Open	21	9a-4p ULC Office Open
	7:30a Tuesday Morning Bible Study-Zoom*	10:00a Prayers & Squares-Fellowship	10:00a Prayers & Squares-Fellowship
	10:00a Prayers & Squares-Fellowship	12:30p Staff Meeting-Zoom	12:30p Staff Meeting-Zoom
	12:30p Staff Meeting-Zoom	12:30p Lychnion Circle-Fireside	12:30p Lychnion Circle-Fireside
8	8:00a Mushers-IHOP, EL	TBA MSU Basketball Parking (Oakland)	TBA MSU Basketball Parking (Oakland)
	9-4p ULC Office Open	22	8:00a Mushers-IHOP, EL
	Noon Lectio Divina-Zoom*	9a-4p ULC Office Open	9a-4p ULC Office Open
	4:15p Worship Wednesday for Kids-Zoom*	Noon Lectio Divina-Zoom*	Noon Lectio Divina-Zoom*
9	9-4p Office Open	4:15p Worship Wednesday for Kids-Zoom*	4:15p Worship Wednesday for Kids-Zoom*
	9:30a Brunch Bunch-EL IHOP	23	9a-4p ULC Office Open
	7:30p Senior Choir-Zoom*	10:30a RJ: Education-Zoom	10:30a RJ: Education-Zoom
10	5:00p Friday@Five-ULC	1:00p RJ: Communications-Zoom	1:00p RJ: Communications-Zoom
11	10:00a Family Advent Day-ULC (must RSVP)	24	6:30p Christmas Eve Worship-Facebook Live
	12:30p MSU Basketball Parking (Penn St.)	8:30p Christmas bonfire-ULC parking lot	8:30p Christmas bonfire-ULC parking lot
12	10:00a Sunday Worship (3 rd Advent/Worship	(weather permitting)	(weather permitting)
	Expressions Jazz)-Facebook**	25	Christmas Day
	11:00a Zoom Coffee Hour/Forum@11:10	26	10:00a Sunday Worship (Lessons & Carols)-Facebook
	(Jesus Redux #3)	28	9-4p ULC Office Open
	1:30p Sons of Norway-Fireside	10:00a Prayers & Squares-Fellowship	10:00a Prayers & Squares-Fellowship
14	7:30 Tuesday Morning Bible Study-Zoom*	7:00p Pub Theology-Zoom*	7:00p Pub Theology-Zoom*
	9-4p ULC Office Open	29	1:30p MSU Basketball Parking (High Point)
	10:00a Prayers & Squares-Fellowship	9a-4p ULC Office Open	9a-4p ULC Office Open
	12:30p Staff Meeting-Zoom	Noon Lectio Divina-Zoom*	Noon Lectio Divina-Zoom*
	6:30p Racial Justice Team-Zoom	30	9a-4p ULC Office Open
15	8:00a Mushers-IHOP, EL	31	New Year's Eve

* Zoom link contacts: Choir - Janine Smith; Tuesday Study - Jim Kiefer; Pub Theology - Britny; Lectio Divina - Britny; Worship Wednesday for Kids – Pastor Haley Vay; Council Meeting – Nancy Lindman; Sunday Forum – Weekly email/Facebook live comments

** Check the ULC announcements, Facebook or Website for announcements regarding move to in-person worship





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Gary Carl
Financial Administrator

Mary Letvenow
Event Coordinator

Kristie Wiggert
Organist

John Dale Smith
Pianist

Louise Paquette
Director of Handbells



Annual Meeting

Join us for the 2021 Annual Meeting on Sunday, Dec. 5 immediately following Sunday worship.

The meeting agenda includes acceptance of the annual report, approval of the 2022 budget, elections, and feedback to the ULC Racial Justice Team.

The meeting will be held on Zoom. 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 2021 Annual Report [HERE](#).