

# LAKE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2021, ISSUE 9, VOLUME 84

72 Ambrose Street, Rochester, NY 14608; Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm  
www.lakeavebaptist.org; Phone & Fax: 585-458-5765; Email: lakeavebaptistchurchoffice@gmail.com

## UPCOMING EVENTS AT LABC:

**Sunday, October 3, 2021 is Worldwide Communion Sunday.** Join us as we celebrate communion with other Christian churches around our country and the world.

**Sunday, October 10, 2021: At 4:00 pm we will have a service celebrating the life of Margaret (Peg) Witmer.** All are welcome. For information about the Peg Witmer Memorial Fund for School #4 please see the last page of this newsletter.

**Sunday, October 17, 2021** we will collect our **World Mission Offering.** Be on the look for a letter and offering envelope which will be sent out during the week of October 11 - 15.



## YOUR PASTOR'S ARTICLE

One of the things that I have come to appreciate most about LABC is the malleability of the people who make up this remarkable community. When I say malleability, I mean the ability of people to adapt, bend, adjust, and roll with things as they come up. As we explore more about our history as part of our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, I have learned that this is an important part of our history and we have, in effect, always been this way. LABC is a community of people who have, and are, willing to be malleable to the needs of the changing faces and shapes of ministry.

I have seen this most clearly in the last month or so that we have been open and getting fully back up to steam using our building on a weekly basis and for our variety of worship, education, and mission initiatives. I wanted to point out a few areas where this malleability has been most evident to me.

First, we have adjusted to the use of our worship space. We have moved around our seating, we have moved around the space at the front of the church, we have incorporated two worshipping gatherings (10 a.m. and Myanmar services) in one, and we have found ways to bring back our Choral Scholars in safe ways. While some of these things have been a challenge to get used to, people have been very positive in recognizing that we are doing everything we are doing for the good of the community as a whole, and are doing their part to make adjustments where needed.

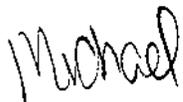
Second, we have worked with recreating the model of Sunday School to recognize our need to use an entirely different physical location in the building with some different constraints. What began as Sunday School has really become Children's Church, where our young people meet downstairs and are learning in a larger group setting with breakout groups by age, all in one main space. And I give great thanks to the Myanmar community for supporting the use of that worship space for Children's Church for the time being.

Third, our community partners have been fantastic in working with us to follow our Covid protocols (even as they've changed), and have been adjusting on the fly. For instance, AA is meeting in the back of the sanctuary because it allows a larger space for them to gather safely. Further, our new Rochester Deaf Refugee Advocacy group has been fantastic in setting up their space and following our rules re. safety protocols and everything else. They have really looked at working with LABC as a partner in mission and have worked with us, even as things have changed along the way.

Fourth, I have seen the malleability of LABC in each of you. You have all been so wonderful not only in adjusting to the realities of the original building closure, and all that brought with it, but with the reopening as a whole. You have been supportive not only of the ways things have had to be, even as they've changed, but above all else, you've been supportive of each other. I've seen you all embrace each other, check in on each other, greet newcomers with joy, extend hands to help those in need, and continue to truly "be the church" even in the midst of these uncertain times.

LABC has a history of over 150 years of being the church in changing circumstances. The last three months (frankly, the last 18 months) has been just another example for the history books about how the values that run so deep in the DNA of this place are written on not only your hearts, but on your souls, and your actions. May God continue to extend blessings and grace to this changing, evolving, shifting, moving, malleable place that we call LABC.

Blessings



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## MODERATOR'S MESSAGE FOR OCTOBER 2021 NEWS

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Dear Friends,

*To sing or not to sing? That is the question. (Apologies to Shakespeare!)*

It has been such a delight to hear our choral scholars singing together during worship services in September. Some of you have asked why we are not yet singing together as a congregation. As your moderator and resident COVID science explainer I have not yet recommended that we begin congregational singing to the Church Council. I realize that other churches have begun singing so I want to explain why I think we should wait a little longer.

When we sing, yell, or breathe heavily more air and virus particles get through and around our masks than if we are speaking or breathe normally. More virus particles in the air always leads to more risk of infection. This is true for colds and flu as well as COVID. Our choral scholars are standing up and away from others, are spaced well apart from each other, and are all vaccinated. After reading recommendations from professional choral organizations provided by Lee Foster and considering the CDC data, he and I decided to ask the choral scholars if they would be comfortable singing together in our sanctuary. They decided that they were and we are all enjoying hearing their amazing voices.

There are two main reasons that I have recommended that the congregation not sing yet. The first is to protect our children. We do not yet have approved vaccines for our children under 12. Our sanctuary is not very big and we cannot always open the windows. More viral particles in the air will create more risk for our children. We are hopeful that we will have an approved vaccine for children soon but we don't have one yet. The second reason for not singing together yet is that the delta variant is *much more contagious* than the previous variants of COVID and the infection rate here in Monroe County is continuing to rise. Those of us who are vaccinated can now be infected with COVID, feel fine, and yet be exhaling enough viral particles to infect others. This was not true for the earlier variants of the virus. Looking at these facts and the relatively small size of our sanctuary has led me to continue to recommend that we not begin congregational singing yet.

I really miss singing with the choir and with all of you! I know that many of you feel the same way. When the circumstances of the pandemic change so that singing together is not such a risky act we will rejoice and sing together once again.

With gratitude for your patience and care for one another,

Laura Tubbs, LABC Moderator



## A FROM SUSAN MAYBECK, ASSISTING MINISTER

How I miss singing in church. I am afraid my voice is becoming rusty and my soprano notes are low. They'll never want me back in choir!

The first Sunday that the quartet sang was marvelous. I was greatly moved by their singing, by the four part harmony, by the beautiful voices. How fortunate we are having such excellent choral scholars. I think they were as happy to be back in the Sanctuary, as I was to hear them.

Then I made a mistake. When we all stood up for the children's hymn on Sunday. I began to join some in the congregation with the children's movements to lighting the candle. And then, I heard myself singing through my mask. It felt so good. But I realized that I wasn't supposed to be singing. I was embarrassed!

And I ask with others of you, "Why can't we sing?"  
Many churches are singing hymns together.  
Couldn't we just sing quietly behind our mask?  
Maybe we could hum?

But unfortunately, according to our protocol, we are doing the best to keep safe as we worship in the sanctuary. And still included in our protocol is no congregational singing. Sigh!!

So do as I'm doing. Keep your voice up to par. Sing in the shower. Sing to your fall flowers. Sing to everyone you live with. Practice hymns and favorite songs. Then we'll be in tune and in full voice when we can sing again.



## A MESSAGE FROM AUSTIN PETTIGREW- DIRECTOR OF YOUTH & CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Autumn is a special time for me. I think back fondly to my childhood of raking leaves, the smell of corn drying after harvest, of zucchini cream pies and outdoor fires.

Change has always been a part of seasonal life for me.

In 2008, I had an eye-opening experience as I did my ministry internship with World Impact in Fresno, California. I started in May 2008 and ended in December 2008. I can remember returning back to Indiana and so distraught and upset that I had missed fall. Living in the San Joaquin valley for the year, I didn't have an autumn and my body and mind didn't know how to process that. I vowed to live in an area that had all 4 seasons from that moment on.

What a small thing to miss, you might say? But for me it really threw me for a loop.

Thinking about that has led me to think about what our young people might be feeling or expressing as we go into this new school year still in the midst of a global pandemic.

Our young people are so resilient and adaptable, much more than I was at their age. I think about what normal may look and feel like for them in this new reality. They give me so much hope.

As we enter this new school year, we have decided to have a children's church time in place of their Sunday morning time together. This allows us to keep social distancing in place while still having a bible story time and some type of hands-on craft or activity.

We are continuing our Wednesday evening Zoom meeting and the kids are sharing drawings about the lesson or their day with the group. This time together is focused on them sharing their weekly updates on how they are

doing and what they have been up to, along with a bible story. I think it has been helpful to give those that may be a little shy to share and update the group on how they are doing.

I have been keeping in touch and getting updates from our junior high/high school/ early college students. Many are excited with the new school year starting up. Please keep our young people in your prayers as we begin this new school semester.

Peace, *Austin*



## *A Letter from Lee Foster*

### **A Simplistic Guide to Communion**

**What Is Communion:** Most Christian churches refer to Communion (with an upper case C) as an act of sharing a deep connection, especially a spiritual connection, with God/Jesus/Holy Spirit. The Latin root of the word 'communion' (lower case intended) is *communio*, meaning fellowship,

mutual participation, or sharing. When you intimately share your feelings with someone or share a deep connection through experience, you are in communion with that other person. What **we** call Communion is referred to by other churches as the **Eucharist, Holy Communion, or The Last Supper**. That is simplest and most agreed upon statement regarding Communion. From that Communion holds many meanings and interpretations.

**Sacrament vs. Ordinance:** Baptists consider Communion as an ordinance while most churches regard Communion as a sacrament. Catholic, Anglican/Episcopal, and some branches of Lutheranism hold that the Eucharist/Communion celebrates Christ's sacrifice on the cross while some other churches place more meaning on the Resurrection, even while referring to the last time Jesus met with the disciples before his death, commonly known as the Last Supper.

**Open/Closed Table:** The Catholic Church generally regards Communion as offered by the Church, and in many congregations, Communion is closed except to those who have been to confession (or believe they don't need to confess). But ultimately the priest, bishop, or higher is the decider as only the Church may decide who experiences Communion. Just recently, Pope Francis stated that no one should be denied Communion - surely a flashpoint with more conservative Catholics. At LABC and in most Protest-ant churches, the table is open and welcomes all.

**Meaning:** Catholic Churches believe that the bread and wine, once consecrated, become the living body and blood of Christ. Lutherans believe that God is present in, over, and under the elements. Most Protestant Churches believe Communion to be a symbol, a remembrance of the Last Supper, in the manner of a Passover meal.

**Nuances:** Even the words of experiencing Communion are different in meaning. The Catholic Church 'offers' Communion, Anglican/Episcopalian Churches 'make' Communion, while most Protestant and Evangelical Churches 'take' Communion, or recognize the presence of God in Spirit - each idea placing more or less responsibility for Communion on the individual.

**Frequency:** For the most liturgical churches Communion is experienced each Sunday, and, in daily masses. Many churches hold Communion once a month, plus Maunday Thursday. Some have Communion at weddings and funerals, while other churches do not permit Communion at those services.

**Mood:** For many, Communion is a quiet, somber affair while others **celebrate** Communion. Indeed some even have quiet, somber celebrations, but in my years in the church, I know of a young Associate Pastor at a wealthy, staid Presbyterian Church who gave his Communion Sermon carrying in a wine bottle and a loaf of bread and exclaimed, "We are going to have a party. We are going to have a blast. We are going to celebrate!" The following month he was sending out his resumé.

In short, while we may not agree amongst ourselves, the details of Communion, on World Wide Communion Sunday, we celebrate with the company of Christians from around the globe (no flat earth here).

How do you see/interpret Communion?

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## AN INVITATION AND WELCOME MESSAGE

From Chuck Theis, Chair

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So it occurs to me that I haven't written too many items for the newsletter ever in my tenure as the Invitation & Welcome Chair. Oh, hello everyone, this is how my brain works. I tend to forget the formalities and just get right into the business of things.

The Invitation & Welcome Committee meets on the **Fourth Monday of the month at 7:30**, anyone is welcome to attend. It's hard to ask for help when we're not all here attending services on Sunday, we have a few key positions we need to fill.

The first vacancy we have is our Welcoming & Affirming Liaison. This individual would ideally keep us informed and involved in events in the LGBTQ+ faith community, coordinating with other Churches both in and out of the local AWAB circle.



The next vacancy is Ushers. While we currently are doing okay under our current Covid protocols, once things get back to something closer to normal we are going to need a few more bodies.

And the last area of concern for me is that I do not want another term as the Committee Chair. I would like to see someone come in and learn what it is that we do before it's time to vote on my eventual replacement (successor?). I would hate to see someone get tapped for the job and have no knowledge of what it involves. So, if you are interested, please join us at one or more of our meetings!



### KEN AND LILLY'S KORNER, MUSINGS OF YOUR OFFICE MANAGER

*"Believe in the light while you have the light, so that you may become children of light." John 12: 36*

*"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16*

*"But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines brighter and brighter until the full day." Proverbs 4:18*

Since I have had Lilly and because I am an early riser, I am in the habit of walking her around 6:00 am or earlier! In the summer, the sun has already arisen by that time. But, now, as we enter the fall and winter, it is dark at 6:00 am. So, I have been walking Lilly with a flashlight in hand. The flashlight serves several purposes: the light helps me to prevent Lilly from getting into something that might be harmful to her and it tends to, for the most part, keep other predators and animals such as skunks at bay. And, we all know that a run in with a skunk is not a good thing for either Lilly or me! Also, if I am crossing a street the flashlight lets motorists know that we are there and to avoid us.

The light from the flashlight also helps me to negotiate the walk safely. It prevents me from stumbling over a rock or an outcropping of tree roots or stepping into a hole. It aids me in avoiding low hanging tree branches that I might walk into.

Although this may seem like a peculiar analogy, but, the light from this flashlight makes me think of the light of God that shines within each of us. When you examine the Bible you will find many references to "the light of God". (I refer you to the three Biblical quotes at the beginning of this article.)

Sometimes, however the light from my flashlight dims or goes out because I forgot to change the batteries. When this happens I invariably stumble over something or walk smack-dab into a tree branch. And, likewise, sometimes the light that shines within each of us dims or becomes blocked, like when we get angry or jealous or vengeful. It's at those times that we stumble from the path of righteousness or lose track of what is the God-like thing to do. It's often during that time that we do something we regret or feel guilty about the following day. Our own humanity dims the light that emanates from us and results in our making some very poor choices. It's at those times, when the light goes dims or goes out, that we need to turn to God to rekindle the light within. This past Sunday we sang "This Little Light of Mine". If we keep that light shining brightly, our path through life will always be illumined and filled with good, loving and kind choices. So, as the song says, "*Let It Shine! Let It Shine! LET IT SHINE!*"



## ● **Second Hour Adult Education**

Our Second Hour Adult Education program will begin on Sunday October 3, 2021. While some of us were able to connect online for Adult Education over the past 18<sup>th</sup> months, this will be our first "in person" Adult Education class since March 2019!

Over the course of the year, we will meet from 11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. as we engage in study, conversation, and prayer. The topics will vary and will be announced in advance to help you get things "on your calendar," and to make sure if you wish to extend any special invitations to friends/family to join us you have time to do so.

Our first gathering will be a reconnecting and planning session when we work together to share some of the topics we wish to explore in the year ahead. What will make this year particularly interesting is that it is our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year, and so interspersed over the course of the year we will have special Adult Education offerings with 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Topics and Speakers. We're in for a fantastic year.

Please note that both the time and location of our Second Hour Adult Education program have changed for this year. We will be beginning at 11:45 a.m. and ending at 12:30 p.m. to enable those who wish to attend Myanmar service to do so, as it begins at 12:30 p.m. Further, we will be meeting in the Fellowship Hall (at least to begin) as it allows the physical space to allow the necessary social distancing under our current Covid protocols.

I hope you're able to join me for our Second Hour Adult Education Program!

Starting – Sunday October 3, 2021, Time – 11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Location – Fellowship Hall

## ● **Anti-Racism Education Group**

Our LABC Antiracism Education Group will begin our fall gatherings on Wednesday, October 6, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. As we did last year, we will hold our first meeting via Zoom to accommodate those who do not yet feel comfortable gathering in person, though this may be adjusted depending on the preferences of the group. So keep your eyes and ears posted!

Over the past year, this group has engaged in some fantastic study, conversation, and growth. We have explored a variety of articles, podcasts, and books, to deepen our understanding of white privilege and racism in our nation and in our community. It is our hope that this greater knowledge will help us engage in some important conversations with our congregation as we collectively deepen our understanding of these issues, and our calling as a community of faith to respond out of our Christian responsibility and as followers of Christ.

Join us as we continue to delve into these important issues. If you haven't been involved in this group before, please know that all are welcome, and we all bring something new to this conversation. Join us!

When - Wednesday October 6, 2021, Time – 1:00 p.m.

Where – Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81202979451?pwd=ZzZ5RE5Kb0J1V1RNMHAvNkxtTG1lQT09>

Meeting ID: 812 0297 9451; Passcode: 177833

## ● **Supper and Something**

Supper and Something began as the Lenten Soup Supper group. What happened with the onset of Covid in March 2019 was that the group expressed interest in continuing to meet. They did just that, and continued for the last 18 months. Over this time they grew in their relationships with each other, and in their knowledge about a variety of topics. It has been a great way to fellowship and grow together.

The Supper and Something group has expressed interest in continuing to meet each month on the first and third Thursday evenings from 6 p.m. – 7 p.m. You are invited to join us, whether you are able to do so intermittently or every time. The name reflects the way the group operates. People are invited to prepare something to eat and then log on and eat and share in “something.” That something may be a facilitated conversation on a topic, it may be a study of some sort. It may even be a presentation of interest. The name “something” gives us a lot of flexibility and we're bound to enjoy that time together.

We will be starting out on **Thursday October 7, 2021 from 6 p.m. – 7 p.m.** We will meet ONLINE via Zoom at least for the time being. Please join us!

When – Thursday October 7, 2021 and then the First and Third Thursday Evenings of each month from 6 – 7 p.m.

Where – Via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87340315423?pwd=cVBwNEVXVFRMaDJRTNJK1pBVktiQT09>

Meeting ID: 873 4031 5423, Passcode: 665475



OUR CHURCH  
FAMILY

**We keep Tom and Thekla Raisner in our prayers.** Both Tom and Thekla have returned home from their recent stay at Fairport Baptist Homes. They both would appreciate a call or a note from our congregation. Their address is 26 Kirklees Road, Pittsford, NY 14534-1556 and their new phone number is (585) 203-1688.

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## **OUR LARGER COMMUNITY**

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**Seeds of Hope presents**

**“All Our Relations: Renewing our Relationship to our Fellow Creatures”**

**1:30 PM EDT Sunday, October 3, 2021**

**A free Zoom event that is open to all**



Author Charles Eisenstein and others speak of our society's "separation sickness." It's the persistent loneliness, emptiness, and loss of meaning that drives much of our addiction to substances, work, and electronic devices. Its cause is our culture's deep estrangement from the natural world. In our quest to conquer nature, we are destroying both nature and our felt connection to the sacred living Earth.

October is the month of Indigenous People's Day. While our culture sees the natural world as a source of resources and a place for our waste, indigenous cultures see, greet, and give thanks to "all our relations." While our culture sees the land as belonging to us, indigenous peoples see themselves as belonging to the land. They know in their bones that they are an integral part of an interconnected web that has given them life, sustains them with each breath and bite, and will receive them when they die.

Our October Seeds of Hope is being designed to re-awaken us to our connection with "all our relations." If you attend, you will see how our very language and thought patterns estrange us from the natural world. You will watch a beautiful documentary about Anna Breytenbach, an interspecies communicator who opens our minds and hearts to the energetic link between us and other species. And you will even experience what it's like to be another creature--one you're attracted to and one you're averse to. We expect that you will leave the event with a renewed appreciation for "all our relations," healing some of that separation sickness, giving you a felt sense of being part of the web of life, and inspiring a life that is more mindful of our fellow creatures.

**To register, please go to <https://www.pachapeopleroc.org/> and go to "Seeds of Hope"** You will receive a confirmation and the Zoom link from Zoom. You will also receive the link the day before the event. Feel free to invite others by sharing this invitation rather than your Zoom link, as each party needs to register separately.

*Seeds of Hope is a project of Pachamama Alliance of the Rochester Area (<https://www.pachapeopleroc.org/>), which is part of the global Pachamama Alliance (<https://www.pachamama.org/>)*

**WITNESS PALESTINE FILM FESTIVAL:** This is the 10th anniversary for this event which will run from October 13 through October 24 at the Little Theater and St. John Fisher College. They are back in their traditional format: in-person screenings followed by discussion with an expert panelist. Because you were a key in reaching our tenth anniversary, our thank you is that all of our fall 2021 offerings are free.

The first presentation is "*Objector*" which will take place on Wednesday, October 13 at 6:30 pm at St. John Fisher College in the Skalny room 141. The subject of the first film is Atalya who is obligated to become a soldier. Unlike most, she questions her family's legacy and seeks the truth about her government's practices. Despite her family's political disagreements and concerns, she refuses military duty and is imprisoned for her dissent. Her concern for Palestinian human rights disqualifies her for status as an official conscientious objector, but her actions sweep her family and community into a journey of political transformation.

The second film in the series is "*Solidarity: Five Largely unknown Truths about Israel, Palestine and the Occupied Territories*" on Saturday, October 16 at 4:30 pm at the Little Theatre, Little 5.

Number 3: "*Gaza Fights for Freedom*", Sunday, October 17, 2:30 pm at Little Theatre 5. This film tells the story of Gaza past and present showing archival footage that explains the history never acknowledged by mass media.

Number 4: "*Imprisoning a Generation*", Saturday, October 23, 4:30 pm at Little Theatre 5. This film tells the stories of 4 Palestinian children detained and imprisoned by Israeli forces.

Number 5: A Program of Shorts: "*The Present*" and "*Occupation & De Facto Annexation*", Sunday, October 24, 2:30 pm at Little Theatre 5.

*"The Present"* follows Yusef and his young daughter who set out to buy his wife a present and the difficulties of navigating segregated roads and check points.

"Occupation and De Facto Annexation" Leading Israeli human rights lawyer Michael Sfard explains the Israeli government's decades long project to settle Palestinian land on the West Bank and entrench permanent Israeli control.

## The Peg Witmer Memorial Fund for School #4

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A partner with the  
Rochester Education Foundation

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Peg Witmer was a 4th grade and math resource teacher at the George Mather Forbes School #4 in Rochester, NY for 25 years. Peg's ways of nurturing and enjoying the students, teachers, staff and volunteers in the multiracial #4 School community, led a student at her retirement party to describe her as a "bridge builder." Peg's family established this fund to serve as an ongoing resource to enrich learning opportunities for students at School #4.

School #4 is located in an economically disadvantaged Rochester neighborhood, and students at the school face multiple challenges in and outside of school. Peg always felt a strong sense of dedication to her students and their families, and sought ways to provide support in the classroom and beyond.

About the Fund:

The Peg Witmer Memorial Fund for School #4 will provide students with enriching materials and experiences not otherwise provided by the City School District or other support programs.

Some examples of supports the Fund will provide include:

- board and card games to aid in socialization, and in math and language skill learning
- educational field trips, with a focus on Rochester history, the real-world application of STEM skills, and fine and performing arts
- manipulative objects to support math concept learning
- classroom instructional charts and cards as supplementary visual learning supports

### To donate:

Please go to: [rochestereducation.org/pegsfund](http://rochestereducation.org/pegsfund)

or mail a check (with 'Peg Witmer Fund' in the memo line) to The Rochester Education Foundation, 250 Mill Street, Rochester, NY 14614

**The Witmer family and the School #4 community thank you for your generous donation.**

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The **Rochester Education Foundation** is an independent, not-for-profit organization whose mission is to improve learning and success for all Rochester public school students through the provision of programs and cultivation of partnerships with educators, businesses and the community.

For further information, go to:  
<http://www.rochestereducation.org>  
or call 585-571-5790.