

Ministry in a Pandemic

I have begun to think of this time as LCM in exile. Like the people of Israel so many generations ago, **our understanding of what it means to be God's people and presence is rapidly changing.**

Lutheran Campus Ministry has not lost a temple, but we have lost access to a student center on campus, and like the people of Israel, students are spread in diaspora. After the destruction of the temple and during the Babylonian captivity, leaders struggled to adapt Jewish practices and traditions to their new-found circumstances. All of us who are leaders in the church today find ourselves doing the same.

In the past few weeks, my thoughts have centered on **what is most vital to students in this time**, and how we might continue to offer those things in this strange time. My thoughts have centered on **worship, Christian community, faith formation, and pastoral care.**

Connecting students to resources has been important.

Through email and social media, we've shared ideas for how students can join in worship activities of Bethel, Luther Memorial, and other congregations, shared thoughts on Holy Week and Easter from our greater church, and invited students to our own activities during this time.

We've also gathered virtually twice per week for an informal coffee break or lunch. Although meeting by Zoom, these virtual connections have given students **opportunities to share joy and sadness**, and share in celebration and lament. The day after UW's commencement was cancelled, it was a sad gathering, where we heard one another's disappointment. But during a different gathering, one student announced that she had gotten a job offer, and together we celebrated.

We also continue our faith formation efforts. Our weekly dinner and faith conversation as well as our fellows and interns meeting has continued online. In this time, it was especially interesting to hear from LCM alum Ryan Panzer about his masters' research on virtual community and technology and the church.

Perhaps most importantly, I continue to reach out to students, especially those from whom I haven't heard, **offering pastoral care and a listening ear in these difficult times.** Although I would much rather be sharing a cup of coffee, it is usually a computer screen that links us. **I am continually grateful for the technology that connects us, and I also long for the time when we can gather in person again.**

After the Babylonian exile, the people of Israel returned to Jerusalem. There was great rejoicing, but the nature of Judaism was changed forever. It was into this context that our messiah entered the world and Christianity was born.

COVID-19 will change our culture, the church, and campus ministry in ways that we cannot yet predict or understand. But in the midst of the unknown, a familiar prayer brought me comfort and hope.

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In the midst of COVID-19, **may God bless you in whatever exile you are experiencing.** I am praying for all of you who are a part of our community, asking God for safety, wisdom, peace, and hope.

Rev. Emily Tveite

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Lutheran Campus Ministry
news



Thanksgiving for Baptism

View the video at lcmmadison.org/blog. Written by Claire Embil for her home congregation St. Luke Lutheran Church, Park Ridge, IL.

Just as Jesus stretched his hand over the storming sea and said "Peace. Be Still," we ask for God's calming spirit to still the waters of anxiety that stir inside each of us during these frightening and uncertain times.

God, we thank you for the waters of baptism that bring us closer to your grace, hope, and unending love. Thank you for water that grows and nourishes your people and planet. We pray for the people and places that do not have clean water or their source of water is threatened. We thank you for water to play in: pools, lakes, and sprinklers. For water that helps us to see beauty and creation: fountains, waterfalls, and watercolor paints. God we thank you for all the water of the world, especially the waters that washed us clean and gave us new life in you. Amen.

The Keep Food Pantry Continues Serving Students

The Keep Food Pantry at Luther Memorial will remain open as long as we are able to serve our campus neighbors safely and in compliance with state mandates. We are currently offering our guests 3 pre-packaged 10-lb. bags containing a selection of shelf-stable dry goods and refrigerated food. Extra precautions are being taken to sanitize surfaces and maintain appropriate social distance between individuals. Many thanks to our volunteers for continuing this vital outreach!

The Keep Food Pantry is open to students, faculty and staff of University of Wisconsin-Madison, Edgewood College and Madison College.

OPEN DURING COVID-19

SUMMER HOURS (May 14–Aug 27)
Thursdays | 3:30–5:30 pm

During UW academic school year.
Thursdays | 3:30–6:30 pm



Ever-Present Grace at the LCM - A Reflection from a Cook

As a cook at the LCM, mid-day on a Tuesday would not usually be a good time to write and reflect. More likely, I'd be anxious to put the final touches on a big bowl of salad, pull potatoes from the oven, or season a pot of jambalaya fit to serve well over 100 hungry students.

Recently, though, due to COVID-19, staff and students alike have had to bid a temporary goodbye to their LCM family. For me, this has meant returning to my family home in Mt. Horeb. With little work to do there and no one new to engage with, I have found wide stretches of time to reflect on life and wander the wooded trails and prairie-covered fields near town.

One favorite park is nestled in a gentle river valley a few miles south of the highway, where a small, clear creek winds through prairie grasses and wooded groves. A trail traces its banks, where the sounds of rippling water and shaking leaves lend a steady calmness to my visits. Not far along the path, a bench and a colorful sign indicate the presence of an ever-flowing spring, known simply as "The Big Spring." The scene is gorgeous as water gurgles and spouts into a large, clear pool surrounded by towering pines and distant prairie grasses.

Even when I visit alone, the spring brings a sense of gratitude that extends far beyond me, a gratitude shared by all who have found a life-giving expression of God's love in its waters. The Big Spring is an ongoing gift from God to anyone who needs it—a display of grace in its purest form.

Places like the Big Spring are magnetic. They fill us up, and we seek them out in times of need. On the UW campus, the LCM is one such place, and I know I'm not alone in missing its embrace. From the first hiss of coffee pots in the morning, to the joyous lunch rush and quiet cups of evening tea, students at the LCM find the grace and nourishment they need. And like the Big Spring, its gift is constant, a perpetual reminder of God's goodness and bounty.

Thank you, thank you, thank you, for helping make those blessings flow. I can hardly wait to share them once again.

Liam, 2018, Kitchen Volunteer



Photo: Beth Skogen Photography

A recipe from the LCM Kitchen

LCM Mexican Rice

Yields 2 hotel pans (100 servings)

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| <i>1/2 C vegetable oil</i> | <i>6 diced onions</i> |
| <i>20 cups of rinsed rice</i> | <i>10 chopped cloves garlic</i> |
| <i>2 TBSP salt</i> | <i>6 quarts diced tomato</i> |
| <i>4 TBSP cumin</i> | <i>~10 quarts chicken broth</i> |

Divide and heat oil in 2 large hotel pans over medium heat and add rice. Cook, stirring constantly, until puffed and golden. While rice is cooking, sprinkle with salt and cumin.

Stir in onions and garlic and cook until tender. Stir in tomatoes and chicken broth; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes. Fluff with a fork.

Serve with warmed refried beans (9 quarts), a giant salad, and the soup of the day

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Financial Report

Income	2019 Actual	2020 Budget
ELCA & Synod	\$86,136	\$80,000
Donors	\$61,500	\$70,000
Congregations	\$43,753	\$45,000
Endowment	\$16,576	\$19,000
Apartment Rent	\$13,250	\$13,200
Grants	\$24,000	\$30,000
Program Fees & Miscellaneous	\$1,515	\$0
	\$246,730	\$257,200

Expenses	2019 Actual	2020 Budget
Building Operation & Maintenance	\$56,034	\$52,500
Communications and Office	\$11,502	\$11,000
Student Programming	\$26,922	\$40,000
Hospitality and Meals	\$9,372	\$14,500
Pastor & Staff Salary	\$122,430	\$124,079
Benefits & Continuing Education	\$23,737	\$28,100
	\$249,997	\$270,179

Net Income/Loss	-\$3,267	-\$12,979
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First Things From Pastor Brent

Retired Campus Pastor Brent Christianson wrote the following poem as he continues his journey with cancer. He and his wife Becky live in Northfield, Minn., and Brent is currently receiving palliative care through hospice-at-home.

We give thanks for Pastor Brent’s ministry to this community and continue to keep him and the Christianson family in our prayers.

First Things

Funny, isn’t it,
that the first insect in Spring
and the first snowflake in Autumn
can give a vague sense of contentment,
a whisper that things are right
and that the world is working,
a hope becomes visceral.

Of course, it doesn’t last
and there will be slush
the first days of April
and hardy mosquitoes
collect a meal in November.

But I will celebrate April snow
and, if I’m around
to feed a mosquito in November,
I will say grace with her.

—The Rev. Brent Christianson
Reprinted from the April 15 edition of *The Bethelite*.

LCM Board of Directors Update

Easter Blessings Partners in Ministry!

To say these are strange and uncertain times would certainly be an understatement. The hallowed halls of the University stand in eerie silence and our once bustling Campus Ministry building sits in an extended sabbath of sorts. The once common things in life have become uncommon. One of those now uncommon scenes was seeing all the students in their comings and goings at the LCM, whether just stopping in for a fresh cup of coffee, or hunkering down for a long study session with friends. It is evidently clear to all of us that life for the ministry has changed.

What hasn't changed is our commitment to our students and providing them a space to be fed spiritually and allow them to express their faith. This is currently taking place through virtual means and Pr. Emily continues connecting with students while social distancing. **As a ministry, we have been observing all the safety measures provided to us both by the Governor and the University.** This has certainly changed some aspects of the ministry, including our focus on food insecurity on campus, but through our partnerships with other campus organizations and congregations we are able to continue some of this work.

It is clear to us at LCM that under the shadow of the pandemic providing **space for students to experience God's grace and to be supported not only by LCM, but by other students is vital during this time.** This is made possible through your support and the support of your congregations. Our financial outlook for this year may be somewhat uncertain, but I am happy to say that we did receive funds through the CARES Act which will support payroll and ease some financial strain. Also, we are blessed by those we have received grants from who continue their support, even though some of the projects have changed in scope due to the pandemic.

We do not know what the future holds. We do not know when the University will reopen to on-campus learning, or when our beloved LCM will be once again bustling with students. What we do know is that your LCM Board continues the work of the ministry, continues to execute its fiduciary tasks, and continues to plan for ministry opportunities in 2020 and beyond. We have been reminded in this Easter season that we have a God who conquers the grave, a God who pulls us out of whatever entombs us, and a God who grants us new life - an everlasting life - in and with Christ. Knowing this and **wanting to share this Good News with all the world gives us strength in uncertain times like these** and empowers us to continue in the work of this shared ministry.

Blessings and thanks for your continued support of LCM,

Rev. John A. Worzala Dumke
LCM Board President



Photo: Kenzie Ruiz

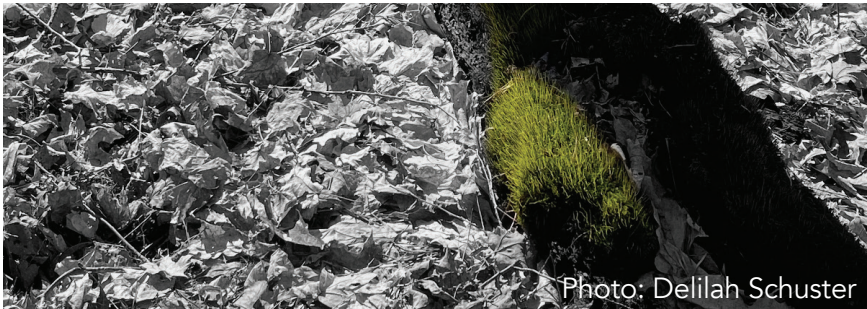


Photo: Delilah Schuster

Prayer Walk Practice

When our Faith & Vocation Fellows and Student Ministry Interns meet twice each month, they normally split into small groups for a student-led contemplative prayer practice. Because of COVID-19, the last few meetings of our semester have taken place online. During one of these meetings we talked about the intersections between science and faith, and on that beautiful Sunday afternoon, the fellows and interns were invited into an individual prayer practice of taking a walk outside while social distancing, taking a photo of something that they were drawn to, and reflecting on the object from a scientific and faith perspective.

Check out our blog for the Prayer Walk Practice post to see and hear the students' inspiration at lcmmadison.org/blog

Green Shoots from an Old Log (photo above)

Delilah Schuster

Bright green buds of grass shoot up from a rotted old log. From death comes new life, surrounded by leaves that are also dead, soon to be replaced with fresh ones on the trees.

How can I be colorful for myself and everyone around me in a time that is otherwise grim? What nourishment will it take to grow this way? What is better to leave behind?

Crickets & Frogs Chirp in Harmony

Jaret Schroeder

I took a nighttime walk and I decided to take a video of crickets and frogs chirping together instead of a picture.

From a scientific perspective, the ability of two species to live in the same space and carry out their necessary functions with order is fascinating. When you begin to consider all of the species in the picture/recording, myself the plants, insects, other animals, etc. the amount of order surrounding us is astounding. It makes you wonder about the purpose for all of this. Was it random, or intent, or a combination that lead it to all work together like this?

From a spiritual perspective, the harmonious sounds of nature abounding around me is a type of faith. A faith that spring will come after winter and the sounds of each new year will reach our ears. Every new day is a blessing and the sounds of spring are equally a blessing. There is no guarantee that it will occur again, but we trust that it will.

Vulnerable New Shoots

Sarah Schultz

The stalks of plants are beginning to poke up from the ground. However, they are still tightly closed to protect themselves until they have the strength to safely and fully bloom.

How can I continue to practice self care when things are new and changing? How can I make progress in my life while continuing to keep myself safe and secure? How do I balance risk/reward?

Want to do your own Prayer Walk? Take a walk outdoors (while social distancing). Give full attention to your surroundings, then choose one thing you see to focus on. Reflect on the item from a scientific/natural perspective. Do some research to aid you in this reflection. Reflect on the item from a spiritual/faith perspective. This should be related to your convictions about God, the planet, and yourself. Journal, document, draw, record yourself, consider another option, reflect, etc. *Share on our social media!*