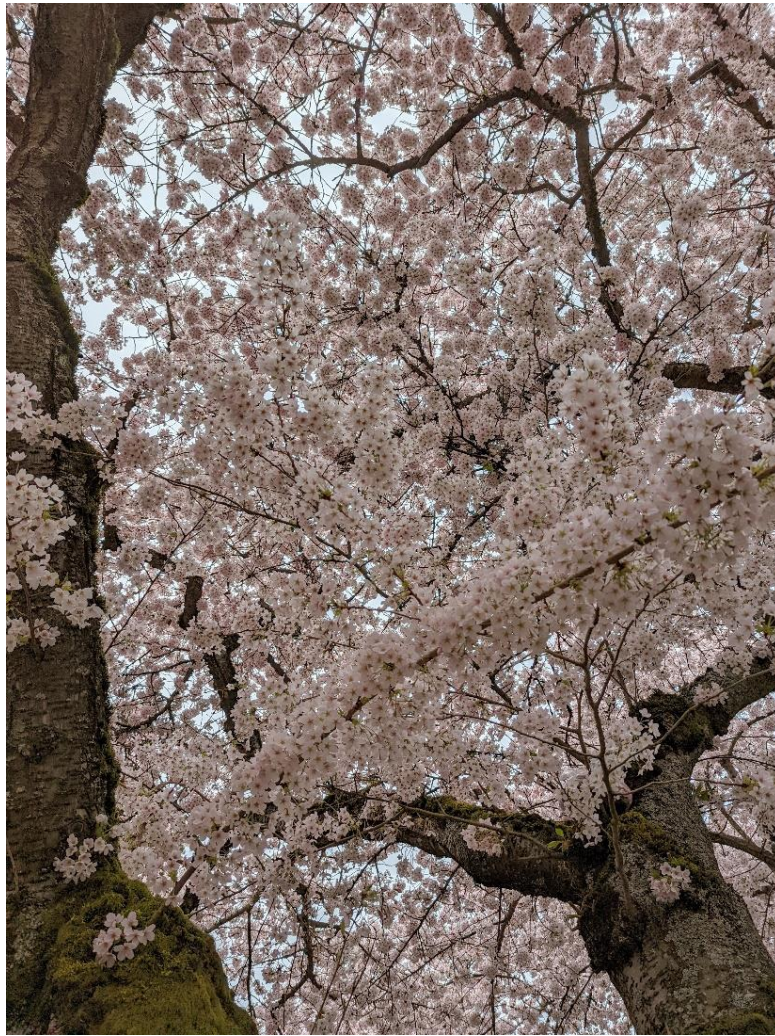




LUTHER MEMORIAL
lutheran church

Quarterly Messenger 2023 Easter Edition



Rev. Sara Funkhouser, Lead Pastor
Donna Smith, Council President

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church
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Seattle, WA 98133
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FROM PASTOR SARA FUNKHOUSER

*“But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:31 NRSV)*

Dear Luther Memorial, after what felt like a never-ending winter, we have finally made it to Spring! The flowers are beginning to bloom, we have more daylight each day, and Easter is right around the corner. I chose this reading from Isaiah because it feels so easy to be overwhelmed by all of the things that need to be done as we begin a new season. After all, there is Holy Week, tending to our landscaping after months of winter, and so much more. While it serves as a reminder of the strength that we have in God, especially to do those spring cleaning tasks we don't want to do, I also think it serves as a reminder to rest.



Even with God's strength on our side, we do not have an unlimited amount of energy. We need to take care of ourselves, whether that means getting outside in the spring sunshine, tending to gardens, sitting by the water, or stopping to smell the flowers. We are gifted with God's presence amidst a vast and beautiful creation! If we just stop and pay attention, we'll see that there is new life springing up all around us.

As we enter into spring, may we continue to see what new growth lies ahead for our congregation as well. We'll have concerts, game nights, and potlucks - and a return of the Easter Breakfast! We will continue to grow as a community that loves and cares for its neighbors, especially through our partnerships with Foss, Broadview Thomson, and Compass Broadview. We cannot know all that lies ahead for us, but I trust that through it all, God will be with us, guiding and sustaining us as we continue to live our mission to actively share Christ's love in community!

Peace, Pastor Sara Funkhouser

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FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Dear Luther Memorial Friends in Christ,

Spring is here! How thrilling it is to see the spring flowers blooming and new buds on the tree and bushes. It is also exciting to see spring activities “blooming” once again at Luther Memorial. How wonderful it has been to resume the Lenten Soup Supper gatherings, and we will soon be enjoying our pancake breakfast with you on Easter Morning once again. I am delighted to share the many blessings of Easter with you.

As your new Council President, I look forward to working with you as a congregation and taking part in the many new opportunities we can share as we research out to our community.

Feel free to contact me at any time with ideas, recommendations, and concerns.

Take care,

Donna Smith
Council President
Cell: (425) 971-9581
Email: donnasmith@luthermemoralseattle.com



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

In-Person & YouTube Live Stream Worship Sunday @ 10:30am

YouTube Live Stream Worship links and instructions:

For upcoming live stream event: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6reljQJuFBuOvnbeAF31sA/live>. When the event goes live, you will be able to watch the event in real-time. When the event is complete, the event will be recorded and saved as a video.

For past events: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6reljQJuFBuOvnbeAF31sA> will show the past events/videos for you to watch.

We suggest you subscribe our YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6reljQJuFBuOvnbeAF31sA>, then click on the bell icon to turn on the notifications, it will send you email notifications for upcoming events.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday: 9:00am – 1:00pm (Pastor Sara Funkhouser)

Tuesday: 9:00am-12:30pm, then @Foss 1pm-5pm (Pastor Sara Funkhouser)

Wednesday: 9:00am – 3:00pm (Pastor Sara Funkhouser)

Thursday: 1:00pm – 3:00pm (Pastor Sara Funkhouser)

Monday – Wednesday: 9:00am – 2:00pm (Jian Zhang)

Thursday – Friday: 9:00am – 1:00pm (Jian Zhang)

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

Recent Worship Attendance

Sunday, 19, February - 26

Sunday, 26, February - 23

Sunday, 5, March - 27

Sunday, 12, March - 19

Sunday, 19, March - 24

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church Financial Results Through February 2023

Revenue	2023 Actual	2023 Proposed Budget
Pledges	\$ 22,813.50	\$ 102,690.00
Unpledged Offerings	1,634.66	10,000.00
Foss Pastor Share	0.00	20,000.00
Room Use	0.00	1,500.00
Gifts Other than Offerings	175.06	500.00
Unrestricted Revenue	\$ 24,623.22	\$ 134,690.00
Feeding Ministry	1,223.30	10,000.00
Kaleidoscope Revenue	1,666.74	0.00
Neighborhood Outreach	0.00	1,500.00
Restricted Revenue	\$ 2,890.04	\$ 11,500.00
Withdrawal from Ministry Growth Fund	0.00	40,000.00
From Dedicated Acc't for Musician's Salary	0.00	6,000.00
Total Revenue	\$ 27,513.26	\$ 192,190.00
Expenses	Actual	Proposed Budget
Staff Compensation (Pastor, Office Admin, Musician, Bookkeeper, Custodian)	\$ 21,093.81	\$ 126,845.00
Administrative	2,662.15	20,450.00
Property	6,351.48	23,900.00
Worship & Music	220.58	1,500.00
Christian Education	0.00	450.00
Fellowship	0.00	250.00
Evangelism	839.25	9,500.00
Synod	1,416.66	5,800.00
Total Expenses	\$ 32,583.93	\$ 188,695.00
Projected Surplus	\$ (5,070.67)	\$ 3,495.00

Foss Pastor Share - Foss was quarantined much of January and February which limited services Pastor Sara could perform. Discussions are in process to determine an equitable amount for the services performed.

Kaleidoscope Revenue - This amount is a 'catchup' payment relating to 2022.

Withdrawal from MGF - No funds had been withdrawn from MGF through February. However, some funds are likely to be withdrawn during the latter part of March.

From Dedicated Acc't for Musician's Salary - The applicable amounts for January and February (total of \$1,000) were not transferred in, in error. The correction will be made in March.

Property - The balance appears high relative to Budget because the 1st half year King County Assessment Fee has been charged to the account.

Christian Education, Fellowship - No major programs have been initiated during this period.

Evangelism - The expenses shown are for the Food Ministry. The amount shown is relatively low due to 'giving in kind' from non-member persons; thus, reducing the amount needed to be purchased.

**Luther Memorial Lutheran Church
Ministry Growth Fund**

Beginning Balance, January 1, 2023	\$ 703,394.45
Addition	0.00
Withdrawals	0.00
Change in market value	<u>15,965.30</u>
Ending Balance, February 28 2023	<u><u>\$ 719,359.75</u></u>

Proceeds from the sale of Luther Memorial's parking area are invested in the above ELCA sponsored fund. The Fund is administered by 2 outside financial firms.

Additions are from the annual distribution for 2023. The distribution is paid quarterly and represents 4.0% of the average market value of the 5 previous year ends.

Although a \$40,000 total withdrawal is included in the 2023 Budget approved at the annual meeting, no withdrawal has been made. A partial withdrawal is likely in March. The purpose is to cover the operations deficit.

The Fund's investment holdings are valued at market value (marked to market) each month. The total of these holdings plus cash held by the Fund determines the value of each Fund unit. That unit valuation times the number of units held in account for LMLC determines the ending balance with the change from January 1's balance being reflected in the 'Change in market value' amount. As many of us know, 2022 was a difficult investment period and was so reflected in the 2022 Fund's reports. 2023, unfortunately, could also prove a difficult period; in spite of the positive beginning.

Any holdings the Fund liquidated would result in a 'realized' gain or loss. However, for any holdings continuing to be held by the Fund, the changes to valuation are 'unrealized' (paper) gains or losses which may be reversed in the future.

News from your Property Committee

Spring is essentially here and time to spruce up the church grounds in time for our Easter service. There will be a grounds clean up after church March 26th. We need volunteers to do some light pruning, light weeding and general cleanup. Please consider helping with this important project and bring your gardening gloves to church.

Also in property news: Dougie Dyer has graciously agreed to look at installing the remaining 2 security cameras so that they will overlook the parking lot. Marilyn and Bob generously donated their security system to our church and Jian has installed the inside cameras in the Sanctuary. Thank you Jian!

Gordon has graciously taken on the task of checking out our electrical outlet issues in the office area and the outlet next to the pantry outside. Also, the problem with the west door lock not working correctly. Thank you to both Dougie and Gordon!

The leak in the roof on the east side will need to be addressed soon. Excessive rain or rain/snow causes the leak in the area of the office directly behind where the pantry sits. If you know of a roofer or competent handyman let us know!

Marilyn and Laurie

Little Food Pantry Update

The Free Little Pantry is going strong with the continued support from the faithful volunteers who restock it; Keiko Long, Marilyn Enloe, Vickie Cook, Leia Smith, Diane Chapman and Mary Hinderliter. Beverly Mueller and Rosemary Semrau graciously fill-in as vacation relief and the church sponsored Cub Scouts lend a hand on Saturdays from time to time. Thank you all!

Also thanks for the generosity of Broadview Thomson School's holiday food drive, upcoming spring Whittier Elementary food drive, food donation from groups using our facilities and money donations in remembrance of Selma Johnson, as well as, donations from our congregation.

All this provides ongoing help for our neighbors with food insecurity, especially in these times of higher food costs and they are grateful.

Mary Hinderliter and Diane Chapman

Thank you for all of the prayers, cards and messages as I make my recovery from the blood infection. Third chemo done one more to go so hoping to be able to see you all at church soon.

Diane Chapman



LUTHER MEMORIAL HOLY WEEK & EASTER

You are invited you to join us for Holy Week services. Experience the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus through song, prayer, and reflection.

Our Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services will be held in partnership with Broadview UCC. All services besides the Stations of the Cross on Zoom will be Livestreamed on Luther Memorial's YouTube page.

Maundy Thursday

7:00 P.M. Worship at LMLC

Good Friday

3:00 P.M. Stations of the Cross (Zoom)
7:00 P.M. Worship at LMLC

Easter Sunday

9:00 A.M. Easter Breakfast
10:00 A.M. Easter Egg Hunt
10:30 A.M. Worship at LMLC

April 2023



From the VEEP

“Why doesn’t God speak to us through angels anymore?” Although I have had to start participating asynchronously due to a temporary scheduling conflict, I have been enjoying the synod wide Acts bible study. Reading the texts and listening to the discussion has deepened my understanding and been spiritually enlightening. Many questions are raised that give me food for thought. During one of the sessions in February, one of the participants wondered why we no longer have angelic visitations. Throughout the book of Acts there are twenty-one references to angels, so we wondered, why doesn't God speak to us the way he spoke to the people in the Bible? Where are our burning bushes, visions, angels, and prophetic dreams? Why don't we have those experiences now?

Well, maybe we just no longer have eyes to see or ears to hear when God's messengers come to us. Maybe today, in our very practical analytical manner, we dismiss the dreams we have as just mere nonsense. Living as we do in an age of reason, we want to believe that we can understand everything by a simple application of our senses to the physical world. So, our dreams, we believe, are our brains sending neurons to make sense out of the stimuli we have every day. Dreams don't come from outside us, we think, rather they are the creation of our own minds.

Or perhaps we are just out of tune with God – not on God’s wavelength. Maybe we aren't tuned in to God’s frequency. Maybe we need to readjust our settings so that the signals that God is sending out are capable of being read and interpreted by us. Theologian Leonard Sweet refers to Jesus as a “divine tuning fork to the eternal.” Maybe we need to recalibrate through Jesus and get back in tune with God.

Recently, I had the pleasure of listening to a lay preacher reflecting on Mark 9:7 - “This is my son, the Beloved; listen to him.” She traced back through our scriptural history the ways in which God has spoken and we have been called to listen. She shared a time in her life when she felt that she had received a very clear message from God, but it wasn't from an angel or through a dream, rather it came in writing through a verse-a-day calendar that she had received from her mother long before she needed it. There were three different incidents that she described where she had a very significant problem and concern and went to the calendar and looked up the message for that date and it spoke directly to her problem or concern.

I think I have mentioned in a previous article how I have felt God communicating with me when it came to my calling as a teacher. God spoke to me through “coincidences.” For example, during a time when I wasn’t a regular church attendee, I felt pulled to attend on a particular Sunday and it turned out to be World Education Sunday. That was followed up with various friends and acquaintances suddenly regaling me with accounts of their experiences as teachers. Later, the message came through scripture when I was avoiding returning to teaching after a leave of absence and, as the lector, I was called to read from Isaiah 50: “The Lord God has given me the tongue of a teacher.”

Were these experiences burning bushes or descending doves? No. Were they God speaking through calendars and friendships and scripture? I believe so. And because I believe, I will keep listening, watching, and seeking to tune in to God’s frequency. May you also hear God’s amazing messages to you this Eastertide.

Here's what the Synod Council and/or I have been up to in March:

I continue to attend the Synod-wide Acts Bible Study (though recently by watching the recordings). I’m looking forward to upcoming classes and the Spirit Stirring and Creation Care retreat coming up on April 1 at First Lutheran in Bothell. Synod Council met on March 18. Among other agenda items, we reviewed updates to our personnel and finance policies.

Kay Edgerton

Vice President of the NW Washington Synod

veep@lutheransnw.org



From the Bishop:

I recently learned that the largest glacier between Mt. Rainier and Glacier Peak is no more. The reporter actually said that the glacier had died. Died. Gone. For thousands of years, the Hinman Glacier lived in the Washington Cascades providing much needed water to the Skykomish River. It is now gone.

A few months ago, my beloved dog, Gracie, died. She was thirteen. She was sick. It was time. But Gracie was with me through my cancer treatment, my children leaving home, my marriage ending, moving to a new city, beginning a new job, being in a new relationship ... and now she has died. She is now gone.

In this synod we recently had two churches close: Clearbrook Lutheran Church in Lynden and Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in Concrete. There are additional congregations who are discerning closure in this synod. All these congregations thrived in their communities for many years. Baptisms, weddings, funerals happened. People heard, shared, and lived into the good news of Jesus. And now these congregations have either decided, or are discerning, if their time lifecycle has come to an end.

All of these deaths are hard. They hurt my heart. There is grief and there is pain. And, while I might not know what you are grieving, I am sure that there is heartache in your life, too. Sometimes it seems that there is so much death. And sometimes it seems overwhelming.

As Christians we might say, "But I thought we were promised immortality. I thought "death has lost its sting." Truthfully, it doesn't feel that way. Death is real. It hurts. Where is this resurrection and new life we are promised?"

Dr. Brian Bantum, professor and author, writes regarding human immortality:

Our personhood, the body we speak of so confidently that was meant to live forever, is itself an arrangement of cells and tissues that are cycling through life and death. Our bodies are constantly undergoing changes, small transformations in our gradual development from infant to adult. Our bodies are no different and are connected to the cycles of life and death that are intrinsic to creation's goodness. As Indigenous theologian Randy Woodley reminds us, 'Death is simply another part of living.' (*Christian Century, Did God intend for Adam and Eve to live forever?, March 12, 2023*)

On Ash Wednesday this year, I had a vision of God playing in the dirt. Kneeling down, mixing dirt into mud, molding and mixing, and forming each human. God – laughing and creating. God – loving and generating. I smiled at this sight. Later in the service, when I went forward to receive ashes in the shape of a cross upon my forehead, when I heard, "Dust to dust and ashes to ashes," I had a vision of God scooping each beloved human into God's arms at the end of their life. Holding the human turned dirt again. Loving and creating even more.

Dr. Bantum writes later in the same article, "Change, transformation, death, cycles of renewal and cessation—these are all part of God's creation. And this change is beautiful and good." Is it possible to move beyond the grief we feel when something ends and see the new life that might be coming?

Perhaps the glacier that died could be an impetus for us to take seriously the threat of climate change. I would hope so. I hope that the love my dog Gracie had for me will make me more loving towards others. In our synod, we are working with the closing congregations so that together we may begin new ministries and new ways of being church in this new day and age.

During this season of Lent – and into Holy Week and Easter – we know the truth of death. We know it in our bones. We acknowledge the pain, the difficulty, the fear, and the grief that comes with death. And yet, even more so, as people of faith, as people who celebrate Easter, we trust in God's love through Jesus Christ who died and rose again for us and for the redemption of this entire world. Yes. There is death. And yes. There is resurrection.

God continues to play in the soil. God continues to create and nurture new life. God continues to hold and sustain life. And, fundamentally, without question, God brings life from death - each and every day.

May you have a blessed Easter. May we together, in this real world that we live in, trust in Jesus. And may we, with all the angels, archangels and all the saints, shout the good news together, "Happy Easter! Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed!"

+ Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee / bishop@lutheransnw.org