



LUTHER MEMORIAL
lutheran church

Quarterly Messenger 2026 Easter Edition



Rev. Sara Funkhouser, Lead Pastor
Raj Lingappiah, Council President

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church
13047 Greenwood Ave. N
Seattle, WA 98133
206-364-2510

A Glimpse at our Winter Activities





FROM PASTOR SARA FUNKHOUSER

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast.”

-Ephesians 2: 8-9



This writing from Paul is one of the grounding tenets of our Lutheran theology. Yet the phrase, “saved by grace through faith alone,” sometimes gets tossed around so much in church that we have a hard time letting it settle into our hearts. The reality of this belief is that it is frequently challenged by the world around us. I know I am guilty of often responding with “busy” or “tired” when someone asks me how I am doing. It is so easy for our lives to be defined by our busyness, by what we do and all that we are producing. It feels challenging to dwell within this promise that we are saved by faith alone when the never-ending to-do lists fill our workspaces and phones.

Lent and Holy Week are surely near the top of the list of busy church year seasons. But this time is also meant to be a season of slowing down, of paying attention as the days begin to grow a little longer, of sitting in our complicated and messy emotions. Lent is a season of paying attention to all the ways in which we have turned away from God, forsaking God for the new and shiny, the things in our world that promise quick fixes and fleeting satisfaction. Lent is a season that exists as the opposite of the reality of our world, a reminder of the love and grace we have already received as a free gift from God.

We are nearing the end of our Lenten season and quickly approaching springtime and Easter. I hope that we are able to take some of these lessons from our Lenten journey together into these new seasons. As the pace of the world picks up around us again, with more sunlight and warmer weather, may you take time to enjoy the world around you. Delight in the little things! Do something kind for your neighbor! Smile at a stranger! Love the world that God so created with care because we have first been loved by God!

I know that my schedule gets even busier as the next few months come along, but I am challenging myself to find ways to slow down a little bit. To resist the hustle and the push to forgo rest for the sake of getting one more thing done. I hope that you will join me on this journey, as we see where God is calling us in this new season of life, and lean into where our passions meet the needs of the world around us!

Peace,

Pastor Sara Funkhouser

206-364-2510

pastorsara@luthermemoralseattle.com

FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT



Dear Luther Memorial Friends in Christ,

Welcome to Spring! Pay no attention to the snow we had last week; just look at those bright cherry blossoms.

The Lenten season started last month with Ash Wednesday service, and then Lenten Soup Suppers on Wednesdays through March 25th.

Holy Week will wrap up the season with Maundy Thursday dinner at 6:30 PM (April 2), Good Friday service at 6:30 PM (April 3), and Easter Sunday service (April 5).

Celebrations on Easter Sunday include LMLC's famous Pancake Breakfast starting at 9:00 AM and an Easter egg hunt for the younger ones before church service.

We have new and returning members on your church council, with some returning members serving in new roles. We look forward to working with the LMLC congregation over the next year.

Luther Memorial's 2026 Council Officers:

President: Raj Lingappaiah

Vice-President: Elaine Hardin

Secretary: Donna Smith

Treasurer: Bob Johnson, in partnership with Dave Cederberg

Peace,

Raj Lingappaiah

LMLC Council President

Cell: (206) 683-6311

E-mail: council@luthermemoralseattle.com

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

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

For live stream events: <https://www.youtube.com/@luthermemoriallutheranchur8764/streams>. You will see a list of scheduled (marked "UPCOMING") and past events. 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 you to watch. We suggest you subscribe to our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@luthermemoriallutheranchur8764>, then click on the bell icon to turn on the notifications, it will send you email notifications for upcoming events.

OFFICE HOURS

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

Wednesday: 9:00am-10:00am; 12:00pm – 2:00pm (Pastor Sara Funkhouser)

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

Friday: 9:00am – 2:00pm (Pastor Sara Funkhouser)

Monday - Friday: 8:00am – 12:00pm (Jian Zhang)

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

Recent Worship Attendance

Sunday, 1, February 2026 - 40
Sunday, 8, February 2026 - 43
Sunday, 15, February 2026 - 49
Ash Wednesday, 18, February 2026 - 25
Sunday, 22, February 2026 - 48
Sunday, 1, March 2026 - 45
Sunday, 8, March 2026 - 40
Sunday, 15, March 2026 - 45

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church Financial Results Through February 28 2026

| Revenue | 2026 Actual | 2026 Budget |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Pledges | \$ 28,039.74 | \$ 21,618.76 |
| Unpledged Offerings | 980.00 | 147.27 |
| Room Use | 1,902.00 | 903.07 |
| Gifts and Income Other than Offerings | 138.09 | 103.21 |
| Unrestricted Revenue | \$ 31,059.83 | \$ 22,772.31 |
| In Kind Donations | \$ 678.43 | \$ - |
| Feeding Ministry | 900.00 | 820.14 |
| Restricted Revenue | \$ 1,578.43 | \$ 820.14 |
| Total Revenue | \$ 32,638.26 | \$ 23,592.45 |
| Expenses | Actual | Budget |
| Staff Compensation (Pastor, Office Admin, Musician, Bookkeeper, Custodian) | \$ 26,092.67 | \$ 22,262.46 |
| Administrative | 2,258.00 | 2,188.55 |
| Property (includes In Kind Giving) | 7,049.29 | 6,933.39 |
| Worship & Music | 468.18 | 80.96 |
| Fellowship (includes In Kind Giving) | 85.06 | 62.51 |
| Synod | 2,085.00 | 1,383.60 |
| Total Operating Expenses | \$ 38,038.20 | \$ 32,911.47 |
| Outreach | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Food Ministry (includes In Kind Giving) | 886.68 | 1,312.09 |
| Designated Funds Expenses | \$ 886.68 | \$ 1,312.09 |
| Total Expenses | \$ 38,924.88 | \$ 34,223.56 |
| Operating Surplus/(Shortage) | \$ (6,286.62) | \$ (10,631.11) |
| Withdrawal from Ministry Growth Fund | 10,000.00 | 12,000.00 |
| Net Surplus/(Loss) | \$ 3,713.38 | \$ 1,368.89 |

Feeding Ministry

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Balance January 1 2026 | 4104.84 |
| Donations | |
| Cash | 900.00 |
| In kind (Where known) | 394.89 |
| Expenses (including 'in kind' goods) | <u>-886.68</u> |
| Balance February 28 2026 | <u><u>4513.05</u></u> |

Roof Fund

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Received Jan 1 2024 – Feb 28 2026 | 25825.69 |
| Giving In Kind | <u>296.09</u> |
| | <u>26121.78</u> |
| Paid from Roof Fund direct to roofing company | -8447.09 |
| Repayment to MGF (A) | -12000.00 |
| Giving In Kind utilized | <u>-296.09</u> |
| | <u>-20743.18</u> |
| Balance in BECU (for MGF reimbursement) | <u><u>5378.60</u></u> |

(A) – Rather than actually transferring repayment of \$12,000 to MGF and, at the same time, requesting \$12,000 be transferred from MGF to LMLC as the 2nd quarter withdrawal, the same result was accomplished by a journal voucher entry. No money actually moved.

| | | |
|--|----------|----------|
| MGF Account | 12000.00 | |
| LMLC BECU Account (Roof Fund) | | 12000.00 |
| Repayment to LMLC's MGF account for funds withdrawn for roof repair. | | |

**Luther Memorial Lutheran Church
Ministry Growth Fund as of
February 28 2026**

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Beginning Balance, January 1, 2025 | \$ 868,071.17 |
| Addition from distributions | 0.00 |
| Withdrawals | (10,000.00) |
| Change in market value | <u>25,997.16</u> |
| Ending Balance as of February 28 2026 | <u><u>\$ 884,068.33</u></u> |

Proceeds from the sale of Luther Memorial's parking area are invested in the above ELCA sponsored fund. The August 31 2025 UCC gift of \$75,000 was added to the Fund to provide continuing support for areas of common interest. The Fund is administered by 2 outside financial firms.

'Additions from distributions' are income distributions for 2026. Distributions are paid quarterly and represent 4.0% of the average market value of the 5 previous year ends.

A \$48,000 total withdrawal was included in the 2026 Budget approved at the Annual Meeting. \$10,000 in withdrawals have been made against the Budget.

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.

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.

Age to Age Initiative:

We are excited to share that Luther Memorial has been accepted into Cohort 3 with the Age to Age Initiative through Capital University in Columbus, Ohio! This program is focused on a Lilly Endowment Initiative: *Nurturing Children through Worship and Prayer*. The focus of Cohort 3 will be innovating ministry with neurodivergent children and children living with disabilities. The program officially kicks off in June!

As a part of this program, we will have a team within the congregation working together with a Coach, and connecting with other congregations in our cohort, to listen to the needs of the community and implement an experiment within our congregation. Thanks to the Lilly grant, it will not cost us anything to participate in this program, and we will be receiving a \$1000 grant to cover the cost of conducting our experiment. We are still learning more about everything that will go into this, but we are excited to be included as we focus on creating an even more welcoming community! If you are interested in learning more, or being a part of the congregational team that meets monthly to plan and run the experiment, please contact Pastor Sara.

For more information, you can also visit their website: <https://www.agetooage.capital/home>

Little Free Food Pantry

A big thank you to the congregation for your support, cash contributions and in-kind giving, for the pantry. We are also thankful to our school partners Whittier Elementary and Broadview-Thomson K-8 for their continued support. Thank you to Keiko Long for applying to the ELCA to secure a \$500 grant for the pantry from ELCA World Hunger.

We also have new volunteers! Mark Chapman and Christine Lawson are filling the pantry on Saturdays. We are now again able to fill the pantry 7 days a week, and of course most days the pantry is empty. Each month we have an emphasis, but be assured, anything you donate will be welcome and is greatly appreciated!

Suggestions:

Fruit: Apples, Pears, Oranges, Avocados, onion, potatoes and carrots

Canned goods of any kind especially chili, pasta, hearty soups, chicken, tuna and fruit

Personal Hygiene: soap, tooth brushes, travel toothpaste, travel deodorant, Kleenex and TP

Shelf staple milk, cereal, juice and granola bars.

Mary Hinderliter

Diane Chapman

Co Chairs

Property and Maintenance report from Laurie and Marilyn

Thank you to those of you that helped with maintenance.

Lynne cut back the fuchsias and the dead areas of the rhododendrons. The hydrangeas were pruned back and the tree by the parking lot door was trimmed back.

Our contract with Church Mutual concerning the smoke detection monitoring was terminated January 31st. The church purchased 4 smoke/CO2 detectors to add to the 2 additional ones we have. New batteries were placed in those. Sarah M.'s husband, Chris, who installs smoke detectors, generously donated his time to come in and install the 4 new ones in the appropriate areas. The 4 new detectors are synced with Pastor Sara, Jian, and Laurie's phones to alert us if smoke or CO2 is present.

Bill and Laurie cleaned off the Greenwood outside of the building and partially the north end of the building. Laurie also scrubbed out the pantry.

Outdoor faucets were covered and a slow trickle started in the Sacristy sink when the temperature dropped to freezing.

Bill removed the music supply closet door and picked up a new door and hardware at Frank, the door store, and installed it. Thank you to Gordon for doing the ordering!

The custodian closet was cleaned out and reorganized with lots of unusable items disposed of thanks to Laurie.

Gordon brought in a mold killer spray which Bill used around one of the Narthex ceiling lights, from a water leak in the past before the roof was replaced. That area will be replaced eventually.

Church Mutual came in to do a utility inspection. We have yet to hear results.

Laurie took the 4 fire extinguishers to AAA Fire and had them checked and inspected. This is a yearly obligation. One needed recharging and all 4 are back and good for another year.

The AED was checked. It is charged and ready to be used if needed, and sits on a shelf in between the bathrooms.

There have been discussions for 3 issues . One is replacing the stair rails along the steps leading to the parking lot door, as well as a discussion of how to securely store the handbell cases. A yard clean-up day has been planned prior to Easter.

Laurie revised the Usher duties instruction sheet and it should be available on the desk in the back of the Sanctuary.

Finally, thank you to Lynne, Karen and Sarah M. for volunteering to help with the Property and Maintenance committee. Marilyn and I are very grateful.

And thank you Carolyn for our holiday decorations in Celebration Hall! It is a much cheerier place.



2026 LUTHER MEMORIAL

LENT AND HOLY WEEK

You are invited you to join us for Lent and Holy Week services.

If you would like to volunteer to assist with any of the services or with the Easter activities, please contact Pastor Sara.

All services besides, the Maundy Thursday service, will be Livestreamed on Luther Memorial's YouTube page.

Maundy Thursday (April 2nd)

6:30 P.M. Dinner Church in LMLC Sanctuary

Good Friday (April 3rd)

12:00 P.M. Stations of the Cross (Zoom)

6:30 P.M. Tenebrae Service

Easter Sunday (April 5th)

9:00 A.M. Easter Breakfast* and Easter Egg Hunt

10:30 A.M. Easter Sunday Service**

*All are welcome to join us for our annual ham and pancake Easter breakfast!

**As a part of our Easter Sunday service, we will again have the flower cross as you enter the Sanctuary. You are invited to bring cut flowers and/or help arrange the flowers in the cross.



From the Bishop:

April 2026

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. John 20:1

When I ask people how they are, so often they say, "Well, I'm doing ok considering ..."
Sometimes they confess to me that the world just feels so dark right now.

And I get it – I can feel this way, too. Sometimes it does seem the shadows are gathering around us and just getting scarier and more menacing and it is hard to see a path forward.

But then I am reminded of the gift of darkness.

Recently I read Conor Knighton's book *Leave Only Footprints* where he talks about visiting all the national parks in a year. One of the most captivating chapters was about national parks that have been certified as Dark Sky Places. He describes areas where light pollution is carefully limited so people can experience the night sky as humans did for most of history. Standing in one of these places, the sky can be overwhelming. Stars multiply as your eyes adjust. Constellations sharpen. The universe stretches above you in breathtaking clarity. Conor says that what surprises many visitors is this: the darkness does not feel frightening. It feels beautiful. Everyone is standing shoulder to shoulder – strangers to one another in the daylight – but at night, all eyes are lifted to the heavens in wonder experiencing something extraordinary.

In these particular times that we are living in, this brings me hope. For in the light of day war is happening and people are dying and there is shouting on all sides and beliefs seem intransigent and we experience and participate in the hatred and greed and selfishness and bigotry that is everywhere around us. We see our enemy. We identify our enemy. We classify our enemy. The light shines harshly.

But in the darkness of night, we gather together. In the darkness of night, we huddle close. In the darkness of night, we sigh with wonder at the beauty and majesty of the heavens. In the darkness of night, we no longer can tell who our enemy is. And, while this could be scary, this is also liberating. For we remember the beginning of the story of God and creation – that for God darkness is not chaos beyond God's reach – it is the very place where God begins midwifing new hope, new promise, new life – in spite of what happens in the light of day.

We experience this promise in the Easter story. (Let me remind you, the resurrection did not occur at sunrise even though many of us have attended a lot of sunrise services!). For even as Mary Magdalene started hurrying towards the tomb before dawn, the resurrection had miraculously already happened. The tomb was already empty. Jesus Christ was alive! For as we read in scripture, life was rising before the dawn. This is the strange and beautiful truth at the heart of our faith - and truly at the heart of the gospel. The power of death was broken even before the sun began to shine.

This is the hope of Easter. Even when the world feels uncertain, even when grief and fear weigh heavily on our hearts, even when the shadows fall, God is at work beneath the surface of things. Life is stirring. Hope is rising.

Go find a place of darkness. And there you will see God.

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee | bishop@lutheransnw.org



From the VEEP:

"To love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength and to love one's neighbor as oneself—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." (Mark 12:33)

I love my children. I really, really, really love my children. And here is the miraculous part: they didn't have to do anything but exist for me to love them. I loved them from the time I felt them move inside me. I loved them more when I held them for the first time. I have loved them through all the ups and downs of childhood, adolescence, and now adulthood. Now, I happen to think they are pretty nice people, and they have each done many commendable things in their lives, but I do not love them because of those actions. I love them because they are. This is grace. This is what it means for us to be loved by God. God doesn't need our works to love us. We don't have to be valedictorians; we don't have to be rich; we don't have to be athletic champions; we don't have to be inventors or legislators or judges or doctors. We just have to *be*.

This is the best way I know to explain the Lutheran notion of being saved by grace through faith. We claim that nothing we can do can separate us from God's love. We do not come to God through our efforts, but God comes to us in God's infinite love. God loves us because we are. That doesn't mean that we shouldn't also do good works that God wants us to do. My children were pretty good about doing their chores. They did their homework. They treated each other well. They behaved in such a way as to let me know they loved me back. That is what we do with God. Because God loves us so much, we love God back by loving kindness and doing justice in the world. Because God loves us, we show that we love our siblings by treating them well. We do our chores not to earn God's love, but to return it.

But, some might say, what if your children weren't nice people? What if they didn't do their chores or treat each other kindly? What if they hurt others? What if they hurt you? Would you still love them? I would like to believe that I would. I might not *like* their actions very much and I might even fear them, but I think I would still love them. Likewise, I know there are some parents who do not love their children. Some people just don't have that emotional capacity. Humans are fallible. We don't always love perfectly, nor do we act purely. My analogy is imperfect because humans are. That is why we fall back on some kind of transactional relationship with God - we expect God to act like us. God, however, is not fallible. God's love is perfect and abundant and therefore we CAN be saved by grace through faith and not through our good works. We CAN do good works as a way of loving God back. Grace is Amazing that way.

So, as we enter this Easter season we let us give thanks for a God who loves us so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

Here's what I or the synod council have been up to in March:

- I continue to work with the Synod Equity Team doing one-with-one listening sessions.
- I participated in the LiVE Project class: Mystics and Mysticism
- The Synod Policy Review Team continues to meet and work on updating key policies.
- The Synod Council met on March 21.
- I met with the Association of Synod Vice Presidents' planning team on March 6 and facilitated our monthly Zoom on March 28.
- I attended a synod coaching training event on March 19.

Kay Edgerton, Vice President of the NW Washington Synod
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