

LAKE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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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



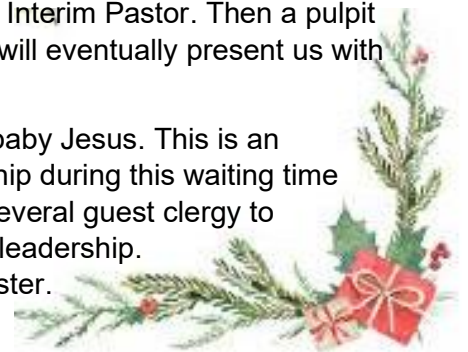
NOTES FROM YOUR ASSISTING MINISTER, SUSAN MAYBECK

I am still thinking about the wonderful send-off we gave Michael, our Pastor. The Burmese Thanksgiving Service and lunch were terrific. There was so much love and appreciation expressed for all Michael meant to our Burmese congregations. We were all touched by the little girl who walked up the aisle with Kleenex for Michael. If we weren't crying already, this gesture brought the tears.

And then on Sunday morning we repeated thanks and blessings at the LABC Sunday service. Michael tore up his prepared sermon to go back to what he said when he first came. He encouraged the congregation to be the people we are and to continue the great ministry and mission of LABC. After worship we celebrated his ministry with cake and lunch and many warm thoughts. We shared our appreciation and gave our blessing to his new ministry.

And now we face the future. The Church Council is in the process of seeking an Interim Pastor. Then a pulpit committee will be formed to consider our current needs and future hopes. They will eventually present us with a candidate for the position of Pastor of LABC.

During Advent, which begins on Sunday, we will be anticipating the birth of the baby Jesus. This is an appropriate time to face our **New Life** at LABC. I am planning and leading worship during this waiting time until we secure an Interim Pastor. During Advent and Christmas I have invited several guest clergy to preach and many people in the congregation have agreed to be part of worship leadership. I am excited to be leading worship at this time as we prepare for an Interim Minister.



THE WELCOMING AND AFFIRMING "BE YOU" MOVIE SERIES

The next movie in this series will be shown on **Saturday, December 6 at 6:00 pm** in Classroom 1 (the conference room) and is entitled "*Carol*". It stars Cate Blanchett and Rooney Mara. It is the story of the romance between an aspiring female photographer and an older woman who is going through a difficult divorce. To enter, please go to the office door and ring the doorbell. Someone will let you in. (Because many of the movies

have adult themes, they may not be appropriate for children.)



GINGERBREAD HOUSE DECORATING PARTY: Everyone is invited to join us on Saturday, December 13th from 1:00 to 3:00 pm for our Gingerbread House Decorating Party. We will be decorating Gingerbread Houses and making Christmas decorations! It's a fun event and all are welcome.

Happy Holidays, Piano Concert

Our friends at the United Church of Pittsford, 123 south Main Street, Pittsford, NY have invited us to attend a FREE concert with pianist John Williams on Sunday, December 14th at 7:00 pm. This will be a one hour narrated program of Christmas carols and holiday tunes saluting the season. The performance will conclude with a few singalong selections. There is ample free parking.



Our next community dinner will take place on Wednesday, December 17th at 6:00 pm. We will be having a ham dinner. A sign-up sheet will be available on Sunday, December 7th at the Welcome Center in the Narthex. Even if you are unable to bring something, your presence is always welcome.



It is a great pleasure to welcome back our friend Janet Archibald who once again has blessed us with a remarkable display of Nativity scenes. Janet is a retired Rochester Public Schools teacher. She taught for 34 years at #22 School where she was a colleague of Karen Brokaw. Janet has traveled the world and collected Nativity scenes from everywhere she has gone. The collection now totals over 600 scenes which are made from a wide variety of materials, tree trunks, paper, grapevines, metal, paper mache, yarn, and the list goes on. The collection also represents multiple countries from China to the U.S. to South America and Europe. Please take a moment and absorb the craftsmanship that has gone into each of these pieces.



CAMP VICK AND PATHFINDER LODGE

I have been the Secretary of the Board for Camp Vick and Pathfinder Lodge for two years now, and I wanted to share a little bit about what we're doing. For those of you who don't know, Camp Vick and Pathfinder Lodge are two Christian camps here in New York State that we have historically supported. Originally, these camps were run by ABCNYS (our sister region that covers most of the rest of New York State) Outdoor Ministries, but it split off into a separate entity about ten years ago, which was named Vick Pathfinder Camping and Conference Ministries. Since then, both

camps have experienced a fair amount of hardship. Pathfinder has fared better, as it still runs camps every summer (both overnight camps and day camps) and hosts retreats and gatherings. However, it has needed a fair amount of work in the past couple of years to update the water system and bring the active buildings (especially the kitchen) back up to modern code.

Vick, on the other hand, has been struggling. It closed down during the Pandemic, and since then has been unable to reopen, as the shutdown revealed several problems that need to be fixed before we can reopen even for adult guests in the main camp. However, we were able to reopen Family Camp this past summer and hope to reopen more services this coming summer.

I'm writing this because I know that, like myself, many people in this congregation have fond memories of attending camp, or of sending kids to camp, and want to support the ministry. I also know that many people weren't aware that Camp Vick and Pathfinder Lodge were still running, based on conversations I've had in the last few months. I encourage people to reach out to me, or to attend our virtual annual meeting on Saturday, December 6 at 1pm. If you are interested, reach out to me at evann.hasenauer@gmail.com and I'll forward you the information.



This plaque has been hung at Monroe Community College in honor of **Don Beech**. If you are unable to read the inscription it says:

"In recognition of Don Beech's contribution to global understanding and human dignity, Monroe Community College's Global Commons is dedicated in his honor."

For nearly 40 years, as the College's cross-cultural counselor, Don ensured that all new English Language Learners studying at MCC were welcomed with generosity, sensitivity, and respect. For those of us who have had the privilege of working with him, Don has been a teacher, mentor, advocate, and friend."

We congratulate Don for this honor and for the many years of dedicated service to new American's who attended MCC for their education.

THE MULTI-ETHNIC MYANMAR THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION AND RECOGNITION OF REV. MICHAEL FORD, NOVEMBER 22, 2025





Dear AWAB Members and Friends,

Every year on December 1, communities around the world pause to observe World AIDS Day, a day to remember the lives taken by HIV/AIDS, to honor those living with HIV today, and to recommit ourselves to compassion, dignity, and justice.

Within the LGBTQ+ community, the history of the AIDS crisis is marked by profound loss and immense courage. It includes painful stories of rejection by the church, but also powerful stories of those who chose a different way: people who refused to let fear have the last word; people who stayed, who cared, who loved, and who fought for the dignity of every child of God.

For AWAB, this day is both remembrance and recommitment. The wounds of the crisis still echo, especially for those who encountered condemnation where they should have found compassion. Yet every week we meet congregations choosing love over fear, affirmation over exclusion, and presence over silence. Their witness reminds us why this work matters.



Dear DRA Friend,

Imagine a deaf refugee traveling across the world with their family after being displaced from their home country, only to end up in an unknown environment and adapting to different languages and cultures. For example, one of our deaf refugees described her experience with communication barriers in medical care:

"Our family felt anxious and isolated when I couldn't understand the discussions between the doctor and interpreter about my husband's upcoming surgery. A deaf caseworker from Deaf Refugee Advocacy agency facilitated and advocated for our family in sign language, ensuring I understood every part of the surgical process." - Lan S.

To ensure the successful resettlement of deaf refugees in the USA, Deaf Refugee Advocacy (DRA) was established with a mission to protect their rights through culturally and linguistically appropriate support. What sets DRA apart is that it is the only agency led and staffed by deaf professionals. Deaf refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers visit DRA, a one-stop hub, to access vital services, including direct support, personalized group and individual instruction, comprehensive case management, advocacy, and community referrals—in sign language.

Join us and Lan S. in making a powerful impact during the United Way's Giving Tuesday campaign, "ROC the Day," on December 2, 2025! Your generous donation equips them with the resources to rebuild their lives as we journey with them through the significant and unique barriers to safety, stability, and independence toward their goal to become vibrant members of our community. Discover how you can help and get ready to ROC at United Ways ROC The Day - United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes.

We look forward to creating and sustaining pathways for hope, prosperity, and belonging.

With gratitude and determination,
The DRA Team,

Deaf Refugee Associates, 260 E. Main Street, Suite 3500, Rochester, NY 14604
585 286-3440 (Office), www.DeafRefugeeAdvocacy.org, Inquiry@DeafRefugeeAdvocacy.org

A MESSAGE FROM THE BURMESE ADVOCACY GROUP

From Rev. Greg Mamula:

Dear Colleagues,

Grace and peace to each of you.

I am writing today to invite you to partner with the Burma Advocacy Group in an urgent moment of advocacy alongside our Burmese American siblings in Christ. As you may have seen, DHS Secretary Kristi Noem announced yesterday that Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Burma (Myanmar) will be terminated, accompanied by public statements claiming that conditions in Burma have “improved” and that the junta’s upcoming elections are “free and fair.” These assertions are factually incorrect, run contrary to recent bipartisan U.S. Government statements, and disregard substantial documentation from more than 150 organizations, including our Burma Advocacy Group.

*Many of our American Baptist congregations include Chin, Kachin, and Karen (*and other ethnic groups from Burma) brothers and sisters who are deeply affected by this decision. The fear and uncertainty this announcement creates is real and immediate. As regional leaders, I believe we have a significant opportunity—and responsibility—to help communicate accurate information and to stand with these communities in Christlike solidarity. We are called to be our brother and sisters keepers. Our Baptist principles compel us to stand for their humanitarian right to thrive.*

As a member of the Steering Committee and Executive Committee for the Burma Advocacy Group, I want to invite you, entirely voluntarily but strongly and pastorally encouraged, to consider sharing this information within your regions, especially with churches that have relationships with Burmese congregations or ministries. Even brief statements of awareness or prayer can offer encouragement and help counter misinformation. Additionally, two national petitions have already been prepared and are circulating. I would be grateful if you would consider signing and sharing them within your networks:

- Petition to Congress:

https://actionnetwork.org/letters/tell-congress-support-tps-for-burma?source=direct_link&

- Petition to the President to extend TPS for Burmese refugees:

<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/president-trump-extend-temporary-protected-status-tps-for-burmese-refugees/>

We hope you will take the time to write a letter to our congressional representatives regarding this important issue. If you don't know your representative's staff contact information, you can find it here:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10NI75_NW1KV9YeuWISp-mqvA-cEgdxg7xYepuOwRnu4/edit?gid=815293344#gid=815293344

These tools are voluntary, simple, public, and accessible ways for our churches to express care and support.

Our Burma Advocacy Group will also be releasing additional materials in the coming days that I can pass along.

Thank you for considering this invitation and for the faithful leadership you embody across our regions. Our witness is stronger when we stand together.

