



LAKE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER



APRIL 2024 NEWSLETTER, ISSUE 4, VOLUME 87

72 Ambrose Street, Rochester, NY 14608; Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
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TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE APRIL 8, 2024



The total solar eclipse, on April 8, 2024, is the last great opportunity for large segments of our country to experience a total solar eclipse until 2045. Rochester, NY, sits on the **center of the path of totality** and it's the place you and your family will want to be on **April 8, 2024 at 3:20pm**.

Timing

2:07 PM: Eclipse begins as Moon will begin to cover the Sun.

3:20 PM: Totality Begins. Duration depends on where you're in the path of totality.

4:33 PM: Eclipse ends for Rochester viewers.

CITIES THAT WILL EXPERIENCE THE TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE. Please take a look at the map here.



Please note that Rochester is almost on the center of the path of the eclipse.

During totality, it should get very dark and it is the only time you would be able to see the following features of the sun: the corona (corona is the outermost part of the Sun's atmosphere and is usually hidden by the bright light of the Sun's surface), the colorful lights in the chromosphere (the chromosphere is a thin layer of particles that lies between the Sun's visible surface and the corona), and solar prominences (solar prominences are large, bright features extending outward from the Sun's surface). You can see these with your eyes uncovered because the moon will be blocking out the most extreme source of light. During totality you should feel a temperature drop, about 12 degrees, and animals may begin to act like it is nighttime. (Note: Pictures of the corona, prominences, and chromosphere are shown on the last page of this newsletter)

REMEMBER: Eclipse glasses must be used for viewing to protect your eyes. Glasses may be removed only when the sun is totally covered, and only then.

The next total eclipse in Rochester will take place on October 26th, 2144!

KEN'S KORNER: *Thoughts about the total eclipse.*

Have you ever pondered how miraculous a total eclipse is? Maybe not, but due to my interest in science, astronomy and geology I certainly have. What amazes me about a total eclipse is that the moon and the sun both have the same diameter when the eclipse occurs. Our moon is one of the largest moons in our solar system and, although other planets have total eclipses, they are not as curious or as special as ours. According to Robert Naeye, Senior Editor of Astronomy Magazine, "The moon and the sun have virtually the same angular size in our sky because the sun is 400 times wider than the moon, but it's also about 400 times further away. This allows us to see spectacular solar coronal displays and prominences during total solar eclipses." It is also the reason the entire sun is covered by the moon during a total eclipse. But, cosmologically and spiritually speaking was this some kind of accidental astronomical coincidence or did a higher power aid in its design. Somehow this question fascinates me. What do you think?

The other thing that fascinates me about a full solar eclipse is that it is, at least to me, metaphorically speaking, an Easter symbol of Christ's death and resurrection. The beginning of the eclipse is like the arrest of Jesus. As it progresses and as the sun gets darker we can associate that with Christ's being condemned to death, to his scourging, to being crowned with thorns, and having to carry the cross to Golgotha. When eclipse totality occurs and the sun's light is gone, so was Jesus' light extinguished with his death on the cross. It was not until 3 days later that the life and glorious light of Jesus returned. Likewise, after 3 minutes the sun once again reappears and its bright light fills the sky and covers the earth. I just think this is a neat way to observe the eclipse spiritually and mystically. It's a wonder of nature that we can enjoy and learn from.



NOTES FROM YOUR PASTOR'S DESK

Over my years living in the United States, I have discovered that I enjoy watching college sports. Specifically, I enjoy watching college football and college basketball. One of the main reasons that I enjoy spending time watching these sports is because there is a drive and commitment in college sports that is unparalleled. For most of these student athletes, college sports are as far as their competitive sporting careers will go. Very few of them will make it to the professional leagues. However, it is the potential of professional glory that motivates these students to excel. There is just something different about college sports that make them exciting, at least to me (and the 100,000 other people who watch some of these sports live, not to mention the millions on television). It's an exciting thing to be part of, even if it's just sitting at home on my couch cheering on whoever I'm cheering for that day.

Perhaps the most exciting time of the year in college sports is March Madness. For the uninitiated, March Madness is a tournament amongst some of the best teams in the nation. Each team gets to play at least one game. If a team wins, they move on to the next round of games. If a team loses, they are done. It's exciting because teams are playing to continue in the tournament. Sometimes there are "upsets" where the lower ranked (aka less highly regarded) teams beat the better or more highly regarded teams. There is an excitement that draws me in and keeps me engaged.

I give this background because it brings me to my main point. This past Saturday and Sunday, while I recovered from my medical procedure, I watched a number of games. After each game the reporters meet with the coaches and normally one of the players (often the best or standout player of the winning team). Without exception, when the coaches are asked about the game, they say that

they are so proud of how the team played together as one unit. They were committed to the game plan and played well together. When asked about the game, the player who is interviewed speaks about their teammates and how they worked hard as a team. You see the common theme? Teamwork. Working together as one unit towards a goal.

I think in terms of church. It's my worldview. I can't help but think about how the focus on teamwork and working towards a goal is what makes a successful church what it is. Just as the college basketball teams are made up of different people with different backgrounds, different skills, different personalities, different abilities, and different futures, it is those people working towards a shared vision that makes teams successful. Churches are just as diverse, but when we work together towards a shared vision, that too can be what makes a church successful.

LABC is a unique church. We are very diverse in a wide range of ways. However, it is because of that shared vision of being a people sharing God's love to the world that makes us who and what we are. There are losses, there are pains, there are sorrows, there are failures, but just as a college basketball teams learn from their wins and losses, we too learn from the good and bad. We pick ourselves back up and move forward.

I look forward to seeing what God is doing with our "team" at LABC during this Easter season and the time after. How is God calling us together as a unit so that we might do things greater than we could do ourselves? And how can we continue to work as a team to make a difference in our community, sharing God's love and grace to a world so desperately in need.

Blessings,

Michael



APRIL NOTES FROM YOUR MISSION COMMITTEE

By Karen Brokaw

Our collection of dishwashing liquid ended with Easter Sunday. We have collected many bottles which will be delivered to Mothers in Need of Others (MINO) once they have settled into their new space at Foodlink. Thank you so much for sharing in this ministry!! While vacationing and spending time with extended family, we had many conversations about

our relatives, many of whom are long departed. At one point, I made a comment, and immediately said,

"Oops!! That wasn't very Jesus-y of me!!

Tracy, daughter in law of my cousin Marsha, jumped up, disappeared from the room, and brought back a miniature Jesus, which she placed in my palm. I call it TINY JESUS. At first it was a bit of a joke, then I kind of liked having TINY JESUS around. It made me think about what our mission is. This picture reminds me how our being a reflection of Jesus is reflected back into the world, giving hope for the suffering that seems to never end. Jesus clearly showed us how to do mission!! I have some extra TINY JESUS figurines if you want one. I like that it reminds me to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and that our actions here at LABC are reflected back into our world.



CONGRATULATIONS TO SOE WIN ON HER PHD DISSERTATION

On Sunday March 17, 2024, we had the privilege of hearing from Soe Win on the topic of her PhD dissertation entitled: *Women's Participation in the Spring Revolution: Resistance, Resilience, and*

Solidarity. All those present learned about some of the history of Burma that set the stage for her exploration of the role of women in Burmese society and the changes that took place (and are still taking place) as part of the women-led Spring Revolution. We are so proud of Soe Win for completing her PhD and look forward to celebration with her in May when her degree is formally conferred.



WHAT FEEDS MY SOUL? By Susan Maybeck, Assisting Minister

Many things of course: participating in worship, walking on a sunny day, hugs from my grandchild, and conversation with close friends. **But what most feeds my soul is music!**

I grew up with music. Mom played the piano so we could sing Christmas carols. Dad loved classical music. I played the violin from 2nd grade, took piano lessons, and sung in choirs and choruses. In high school I played in an orchestra for a rather raunchy performance by a Colgate University students. What fun that was! And I'm still singing. I am moved to tears when I sing.

I have always appreciated excellent church music. I am moved to tears when I sing the anthem "Forsaken" which the choir sung on Good Friday. Such pathos and emotion is expressed. And then on Easter Sunday when we joined together in the joyful, Hallelujah Chorus, my heart soars.

In the latest Christian Century Magazine there was an editorial written by Peter W. Marty in praise of church musicians. I thought of our church musicians led by Lee Foster. His



spiritual and musical talents lead our church in singing, listening, and playing wonderful music. We are fortunate to share a deep spiritual experience.

Peter W. Marty writes about his experience:

Church musicians who give the greatest shape to my life are those who appear to delight more in getting music into my soul than just out of theirs. Yes, the talent of their hands, feet and vocal cords may be awesome, which is beautiful. But the way they deploy their abilities determine whether the rest of us feel bigger or smaller than when we arrived.

The next time you find yourself in worship experiencing more joy than you can hold inside yourself, sing like your life depends on it. And then flag down your music leader on your way out the door to let them know your gratitude.

Thank you Lee Foster, Musical Educator, Chancel Choir Director and Organist!

News and Views from our Director of Next Generation Ministry

Rebeka Fergusson-Lutz

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. James 1:17, NRSV

Every week in Sunday School, we do Prayers of the People, just as in “adult church.” We structure our prayer time a bit differently than the liturgy that appears in the worship service, though. In Sunday School give each student a pencil and a Post-It Note (or two) and we prompt the students with something like: “Write down the name of someone who needs to feel God’s love today” or “write down a place that needs God’s help right now” or “write down a word that describes God.” We have the students generate all the prayers, but we attempt to model for them the various modes of prayer: supplication, thanksgiving, intercession, confession, adoration.

A few weeks ago, we prompted our Sunday School students with this simple prayer: “Write down one or two things that you’re grateful to God for.” We got a variety of standard responses -- *friends at church. Family. My school.* We also a few non-standard responses like *the Philadelphia Eagles* (What is that child thinking? Doesn’t that kid know that we don’t pray for any team other than the Bills?!?) and *chicken tenders.*

Chicken tenders? Really?!? They seems so silly and inconsequential in the scheme of things, but James reminds us that “every good and perfect gift is from above” (James 1:17, NIV). Why shouldn’t we thank God for chicken tenders? There are lots of ways to nourish our bodies, but God has given us a mechanism for achieving nourishment that is breaded and crunchy, with a little salt and spice. God has created things that bring us joy, and we should be grateful for them.

As adults I think that we sometimes fall into the trap of only thanking God for “the big stuff” or “the important stuff.” Human nature being what it is, though, we won’t give thanks for “the big stuff” and “the important stuff” if we have not first conditioned ourselves to celebrate “every good and perfect thing.” God is the source of all the good you have and all the good you crave – including chicken tenders! (And sometimes even the Buffalo Bills.)

●**ANNUAL ONE ACT PLAY FESTIVAL AT THE U OF R:** Two of our youth, Julia and Gloria (right-center and left-center), attended the 21st annual One Act New Play Festival produced by the International Theater Department at the University of Rochester, where our Sunday School teacher Manita Opoku is enrolled. Manita was heavily involved in the festival, with her hand in three of the five plays! She acted in one, wrote another, and directed a third! Brava!

Our own LABC Siskel and Ebert (Jane Grant and Sue McMeekin-Davis) gave the show two thumbs up!



●The youth of our church are participating in a Presbytery-wide regional youth event at the University of Rochester on April 6. It is the Iftar Dinner on April 6 from 4-7 pm. It is hosted by the Muslim Student Association of the U of R. This event begins at 4:00 pm with a student led workshop on Islam which will be followed by the shared Iftar dinner.



It's not too late to sign up with Rebeka for the visit to the hydroponic farm at the Volunteers of America campus on Friday, April 5 at 1:00 pm. Contact Rebeka via email at labcnextgeneration@gmail.com and let her know that you would like to attend.

VISIT TO THE FARM

Rochester's new vertical hydroponic farm at the Volunteers of America campus on Lake Avenue

Friday, April 5
at 1 p.m.

Sign up with Becca by March 28:
labcnextgeneration@gmail.com



•Our youth attended "Messy Game Night" at the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford on Sunday evening, March 10. As you can see from the attached photos, the event lived up to its name. =)





**A
NOTE
FROM**



**LEE FOSTER,
MUSIC EDUCATOR,
CHANCEL CHOIR
DIRECTOR, PIANIST
& ORGANIST**

Our Choral Scholars have a busy schedule in the next two months as they complete their Master's Degrees at the Eastman School of Music. Come. Hear them sing!

Master's Degree Recital - April 3, 8:30 p.m. Hatch Recital Hall - **Levi Spanarella** (A regular substitute for Ashlee and Xiaoge). The recital is free to the public.

Opera on April 4 thru April 6 at 7:30 pm and Sunday, April 7 at 2:30 pm. Kodak Hall in the Eastman Theater "Dialogues of the Carmelites" by Francis Poulenc. **Elizabeth Healy** has a part and will be singing in the Friday evening, April 5th, performance. Tickets are available at the Eastman School of Music Box Office. "Dialogues of the Carmelites" is an intensely written, quasi-historical version of the story of the Martyrs of Compiègne, Carmelite nuns who, in 1794 during the closing days of

the Reign of Terror during the French Revolution, were guillotined in Paris for refusing to renounce their faith and vocation. Tickets available at the Eastman School Box Office for \$20.00.

Master's Degree Recital - April 30, 8:30 pm Hatch Recital Hall - **Liz Healy** - Free to the public.

Master's Degree Recital - May 3, 12:30 pm Kilbourn Recital Hall- **Xiaoge Zhang** - Free to the public. Note: Xiaoge has also been accepted into the DMA program beginning in September 2024. Congratulations, Xiaoge!

Master's Degree Recital - May 3, 8:30 pm Kilbourn Recital Hall - **Ashlee King** - Free to the public.



The "BE YOU" MOVIE SERIES WILL PRESENT BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY. Bohemian Rhapsody celebrates the band Queen, their music, and their extraordinary lead singer Freddie Mercury, who defied convention to become one of the most beloved entertainers ever. The movie will be presented, free of charge, in the conference room on Saturday, April 6th at 6:00 pm. We hope you can make it.



Our next Wednesday night community dinner will take place on **Wednesday, April 17th, 2024**. This is a wonderful chance to connect with our neighborhood. If anyone would be interested in being part of this service opportunity please contact the church office and let Ken Setera know. Once a menu is decided upon a sign-up sheet will be available on the back table of the Social Hall.

THE SECOND ANNUAL UNITY SUMMIT

Hkadin Lee, New American Case Coordinator

I recently attended the 2nd annual Unity Summit which was held on March 19th, 2024 at the Memorial Art Gallery. The event was hosted by The Finger Lakes Hate & Bias Prevention Regional Council. Lt. Governor Antonio Delgado attended as a keynote speaker and his speech was to ensure that the people of New York would continue to create safe spaces for difficult conversations.

The summit was focused on the people of New York and the ways to prevent hate crimes as well as repair the broken relationships between law enforcement, the justice system and the communities.

Community, youth and response panelists presented effective speeches. Over all, the event was well organized but the attendance could have been higher.

A Restorative Justice overview was Presented by Dina Thompson; executive Director of the Erie County Restorative Coalition. Her practices are based on positive relationships as central to building community, accepting cultural differences and encouraging personal responsibilities for change that which should be changed. Also, Restorative Justice seeks to find ways to repair the harms already done in the communities. Within all the communities, we should put our energy toward supporting without expectation the healing needs to make things right even though it might be a lengthy process. It truly was a day full of learning; hearing about the brokenness in our society as well as encouragement to take actions to correct them.

Toward the end of the summit, attendees were giving an opportunity to share personal experiences and I was able to share my Asian hate experience that happened 3 months ago in downtown Rochester. There are many of us have faced similar experiences, but it's always good to know & feel that there are people who are willing to listen to each other's experiences with understanding.

If we can all take responsibilities on our own actions, community, country and society would be a much better place for everyone.

NEWS AND EVENTS FROM OUR EXTENDED COMMUNITY



**FREE Smoke
Alarms Available!**

Call: **(585) 241-4390**

or request online:



Request by April 1st

www.redcross.org/WNYRegionSTA

Many of you are well acquainted with our Sound the Alarm Program that has been around since 2014. It is that time of year again, when we hope to reach many families with life-saving, and **FREE smoke alarms**. On April 13th we will be gathering with our volunteers and partners, to install primarily in the Rochester area.

We need your help spreading the word! We need about 60 more homes to sign up for this event, and while we are communicating with various organizations (other non-profits, Fire Departments, places of worship, and the media) we know, historically, the best way to get homes to sign up is by word of mouth.

Please ask your neighbors, family and friends to call the number in the attached flyer (585-241-4390- they will go straight to a voicemail) and sign up. You could even share their name and phone number right back to me, and someone will reach out to confirm their appointment. Even if they believe their alarms are in good working order, we could add additional when appropriate or leave behind educational material.

This is a nationwide, all year program, but this is the time of year we try to do more. Please help our reach.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Best Regards,
Jessica Cappelletti (She/Her)
Disaster Workforce Engagement Manager 716-258-1006

Schedule a meeting with me! <https://calendly.com/jessica-cappelletti>

UPDATE FROM OUR FRIENDS AND MINISTRY PARTNERS OF CAMERON COMMUNITY MINISTRIES CRCs MISMANAGEMENT OF NCP FUNDING

Monroe County has released the findings from their audit review, which state that "It does appear that Ms. Paradiso had absolute control over the financial aspects of the Organization" with regards to the CRC. This establishes that Tina Paradiso is the sole party being considered at fault for the financial malfeasance at play, and that no other partner agencies of the NCP are being considered at fault for what has taken place.

Finally, the record reflects the truth. The only guilt NCP, and more specifically, Cameron, has in this debacle is that **WE EXCELLED IN REACHING OUR CONTRACT GOALS AND PROVIDED THE MUCH-NEEDED WORKFORCE DE-VELOPMENT AND STREET OUTREACH SERVICES TO OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS AS WE SAID WE WOULD.** The annual report for NCP submitted to Monroe County attests to that. Another fact is that we haven't received any reimbursements of funding since September 2023.

Despite not receiving any reimbursements of funding, the generosity of individuals, churches, civic groups, corporations, and foundations have sustained us in the interim. The value of the uplifting emails, cards, prayers, and phone calls received daily have been a great source of inspiration for us. Thank you!

I would be remiss in my comments if I didn't mention and thank our partners in the NCP. Committed is an understatement. We are here for each other, meeting weekly, sometimes having emergency meetings to strategize, research financial options, offer a listening ear, yet still provide services, as best as we can, for vulnerable individuals who depend on us. We lost a few partners because of their lack of funding, but we're working to bring them back with us. Cameron is fortunate and honored to be a partner among a group of 12 organizations whose leaders are some of the most dedicated and tenacious leaders in Rochester. We are still standing. It didn't break us or our commitments we made.

However, we are still feeling the effects of the malfeasance. While the audit is complete, funding has not been restored nor has a new administrator been selected for the project. It could be June before we begin to receive funding again. Our workforce development programs need to continue. We are looking for bridge funding, financial donations, volunteers to assist with donor development, and any resource or referral information to help us financially. You can reach out to me at 585-254-2697 x101 or email: Olivia@Cameronministries.org.

We send heartfelt thanks to everyone who has and continues to support us. Your support keeps our spirits lifted and our motivation is high. We rest on our faith and know that "this too shall pass".

Olivia Kassoum-Amadou

● **IT ALL STARTS WITH A TABLE, ABCRGR MISSION FEST 2024:** The Mission Fest will take place on May 3rd at 7:00 pm and May 4th at 12:00 pm. Join together for inspiration, education, and fellowship! Come to see the wonders that God is already doing through American Baptists in our churches, our region, and around the world. Learn about topics facing the people of God today, and find out how you can be engaged. Share in good food and good fellowship. Come, worship God together! This event is in person at First Baptist Church Rochester, 175 Allens Creek Road, Rochester, NY 14618 and also via Zoom. You must register to attend.

Please visit the following web address to register, to find out more about this event and how to connect to Zoom. https://abcgrg.regfox.com/missionfest?mc_cid=15ebc11ef6&mc_eid=10a0799dae. Registration is currently open.

CHARLES WALKER'S REQUIEM FOR BROTHER MARTIN REIMAGINED

4 | April 2024
7:00 PM, Eastern

United Church of Pittsford
123 S Main St, Pittsford, NY 14534

All are welcome to attend this free event. Free will offering available.

Ample parking available in the parking lot off Sunset Blvd.

Church is fully handicapped accessible.

Sponsored by The United Church of Pittsford in partnership with Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School.

We look forward to gathering as a community to honor the enduring legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. All are welcome to attend this free event, and a free will offering will be available.

DATE: Thursday, April 4, 2024 **LOCATION:** United Church of Pittsford, 123 S Main St, Pittsford, NY 14534 **TIME:** 7:00 PM, Eastern Ample parking available in the parking lot off Sunset Blvd. Church is fully handicapped accessible.

Sponsored by The United Church of Pittsford in partnership with Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School.

• **You are invited to join the GRCC Board on Monday, April 22 from 12-2 and hear from two experts about local efforts to respond to Rochester's homeless population.** *"Our Homeless Neighbors: Who are They? Why are they in this situation?"* Connie Sanderson, head of Partners Ending Homelessness and Captain Gabriel Person, head of the Homelessness Outreach Team will give us context and understanding as well as ways to get involved as a faith community. Please join us and invite others. (From Rev. Deborah Grohman, Administrative Coordinator, Greater Rochester Community of Churches Faith in Action Network.)

OUR CHURCH FAMILY



A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION FOR A LONG TIME VERY ACTIVE MEMBER OF LAKE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH

Hard to believe but on March 2, 2024 Jane Grant, a vital, active, hardworking, talented, intelligent, creative, and young acting member of our church celebrated her 80th birthday! Hard to believe, isn't it! It was a wonderful church event both Saturday, the 2nd, and Sunday the 3rd. Here are a few pictures from that weekend.

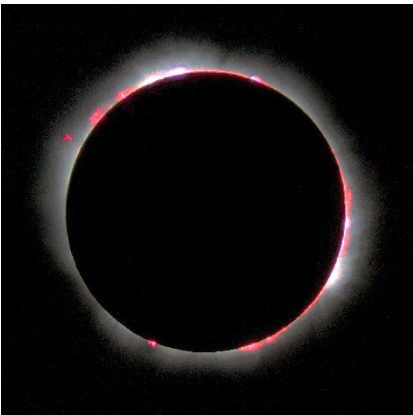


EASTER SUNDAY MARCH 31, 2024

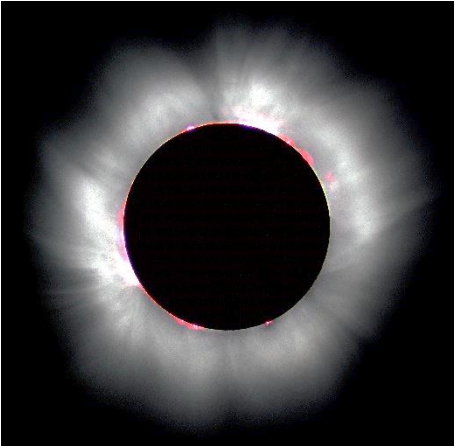


If you were unable to make it to the Easter Sunday service or the Holy Thursday Service and Good Friday Services, remember that these services are posted on our website at www.lakeavebaptist.org and our YouTube page (search Lake Avenue Baptist Church Rochester).

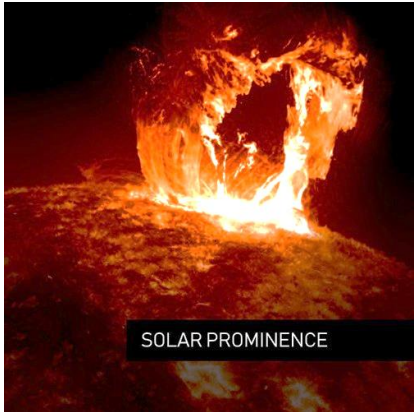
WHAT YOU CAN OBSERVE DURING THE TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE SUN ON APRIL 8TH.



chromosphere



corona



SOLAR PROMINENCE