

LAKE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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The day before Lara and I left for vacation I cut the grass in our front yard (I've filled our small backyard with plants and sitting areas, so it really doesn't need too much regular mowing). The grass was very brown and very dry. We've had one of those summers where it's been very hot and very dry. Any rain that

we've received has come quickly and heavily. That means that the rain we have had hasn't had much time to soak into the ground and most of it has simply evaporated off the surface of the ground. The end result, at least for those of us who don't water our yards, has been dry and brown grass.

As we left Rochester and made our way westward (destination Michigan and then on to Green Lake Wisconsin) I immediately noticed that things were "greening up." The corn was looking healthy, and the fields had clearly had a good mix of sun and water (some of which, I assumed, came directly from the sky and not totally reliant on sprinkler systems, etc.). It was beautiful to see. In fact, once we arrived at Green Lake we could tell they've had a good year of rain. The ground was clearly saturated from earlier storms, so much so that apparently one of the local fairs had to be cancelled because the midway was underwater.

Please note, this isn't just an update on precipitation numbers across the northern United States. I share this observation for a reason. With very little rain, little grows. With more rain, we can see the impact of the moisture on the plants, trees, and grass around us. Even a little can make a big difference. In fact, since we've been home, we've had a couple of storms that have helped the grass grow and even our brown patch of lawn has started to green up a little.

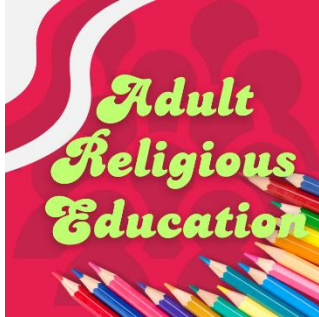
It's amazing how the little things can make a big difference. I also noticed it with getting out in the sun. I have a job that keeps me inside quite a bit (LABC isn't one of those churches where time spent on the golf course, discussing church matters, can pass as work). As a result, my typically pale skin gets even more pale throughout the year. Getting out and getting some sunlight not only darkens my skin but also lifts my spirits. It's amazing how just a few days working outside can lift us up and help us see things more clearly and through a new lens.

I hope you've had a good summer full of fun and relaxation. As we prepare to move into the fall, I encourage you to remember how much the little things can do to make a difference that is felt by others and ourselves. Just as a little rain can add to the growth and colors around us, and just as the sun can help us see things anew, and make us feel all the more alive, the things we do in the life of the church, however small, can indeed make a big difference in others and in ourselves.

How are you going to engage in the life of LABC this fall to impact others? And how can the little things you do have a meaningful and long-lasting impact for the good of the faith? Just as the drops of rain can make things grow and green, and the sun can warm and nurture, so too can the people you are the things you do make a difference in the life of the church and kingdom.

Blessings,

Michael



As we prepare to begin a new church year, we are excited about the upcoming Adult Education opportunities. Our Sunday morning second hour adult education (11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. in Classroom One) will begin on Sunday September 14, 2025. While we are still putting the finishing touches on the fall programming, you can expect a combination of Bible studies, topical discussions, and guest interviews and leaders. Here's what we have lined up so far:

Sunday September 14, 2025 – Kicking Things Off (Pastor Michael leading)

Sunday September 21, 2025 – Sermon Talkback (Pastor Michael leading)

Sunday September 28, 2025 – Refugee Minors Foster Care Presentation (Kelly Thein, the URM/UC Foster Care Program Supervisor at Catholic Charities Family and Community Services)

Sunday October 5, 12, 19, 26, 2025 – Interview program (Tom Argust leading ... more information to follow)
Keep your eyes peeled for more information. Suggestions? Please reach out to Pastor Michael or Pastor Susan!

AGING

Gracefully
& JOYFULLY

FOR ALL PEOPLE WHO ARE AGING GRACEFULLY AND JOYFULLY

(and a few who are not!)

From Susan Maybeck, Assisting Minister

Our next gathering will be on Monday, Sept. 8, 2025, from 1:00 - 2:30.

Sept. 8, 2025

A discussion about our place in our childhood family. Are you the youngest or oldest or an only child? How has that influenced your personality? I think it will be an interesting discussion.

Oct. 6, 2025

Since some of us are facing some decline in memory (probably many of us) I will invite someone knowledgeable about the different kinds of memory loss.

Nov. 3, 2025

Thanksgiving. What memories do you have of past Thanksgivings? What are you thankful today at Thanksgiving.

Dec. 1, 2025

PARTY!! Lunch! Presents! Games! Surprises!

By the way, this is an open group. ***All are welcome, no matter what your age!*** Come any time. Maybe you are interested in the subject or want the community. Perhaps you are feeling graceful and joyful - at any age.

MISSION OPPORTUNITY

It's that time of year when the days start to turn a little cooler, the leaves change color, and the school buses start to run. I love this time of year!! Fall is my favorite time of year; its beauty is stunning. But, also, I think it's the return of the school year that feels nostalgic to me. For thirty plus years, I was able to "begin anew" with a

different group of kindergarteners each fall. I love that age, I love showing them the joy of reading, I love the funny things they say! And I love school supplies!!! I love Crayola crayons, sharpened pencils, brightly colored markers, AND plastic bins for organizing all those beautiful supplies. I still find myself looking at school supplies when I am shopping and my two favorite little girls, Ava and Cam, are in awe of my still functional " Kindergarten Supply Closet". I am asking you during the month of September to help us collect school supplies for Cameron Community Ministries. Throughout the year crayons break, glue sticks and markers dry up, pencils disappear, and the classroom or tutoring supplies just need a spruce up. At the end of this article, you will see a supply list. Pretend you are a kid again. Remember your excitement upon receiving a new pack of crayons, a new pointy pencil, and a new sticky glue stick. Those were the days. Please bring the supplies that you purchased to church on Sunday mornings and place in the collection box in the Narthex at the Welcome Center. As always, thank you for your kindness.

SCHOOL SUPPLY LIST

Crayons	Pencils	Glue Sticks
Two pocket folders	Children's Scissors	Composition Notebooks
Highlighters	Markers	Pens

THE CUPBOARD IS BARE!



Our Little Free Library (which is located just outside the office entrance) is very popular. We've had it up for over a year and the turnover of books has been fantastic. We've seen a lot of our neighbors (young and not so young) stop by to see what books we have, and to take, or leave, a couple of books. It's great to know that books are making their way into the hands of folks in our community.

One of the challenges of our Little Free Library is keeping it stocked with books. Normally we're in a pretty good position but at this present time it's empty. We know some of the challenges in our neighborhood and that is that there are more people taking books than leaving books. That's a good thing. We want people to read. However, if you have some books that you think people may enjoy, please feel free to bring them in and put them in the library. If the library is full, you can leave them at the office and we'll get them into circulation as soon as they're needed.

The most popular books (it seems) are children's books and books for teens/young adults. Also, historical fiction books seem to move pretty quickly too.

Thanks so much for your help!

DID YOU KNOW?

Throughout its 150+ years, LABC has been tracking church membership. What started out as a series of books with handwritten records has morphed, over time, into electronic records. Recently, we have been using a program called PowerChurch. This program was incredibly useful at the time when it was developed (and most churches were looking for ways to record and keep track of their members. However, over time, PowerChurch has become somewhat dated.

This summer, we have been moving the data from PowerChurch over into a new program called ChurchTrac. Like most programs, this one does much more than we'll ever use it for. However, it offers us a couple of features that are particularly appealing for LABC. First, it's free (at least how we're using it). Who doesn't like free? Second, it is stored in the cloud, which means it's not stored on one or more computers in the church office. This keeps data more secure (both in the situation of a computer failure but also in terms of overall data security). While we don't keep much sensitive information (names, contact information, and dates of baptism/membership/etc.), it's good to have layers of security for anything we do with electronic records.

I will be teaching Ken Setera during the next few weeks about this new system and how to input and correct data. Hopefully, we will have updated all our membership records in a couple of months. Once this is accomplished, this new system will facilitate the tracking of our members and friends.



A REMINDER FROM NURTURE AND CARE!

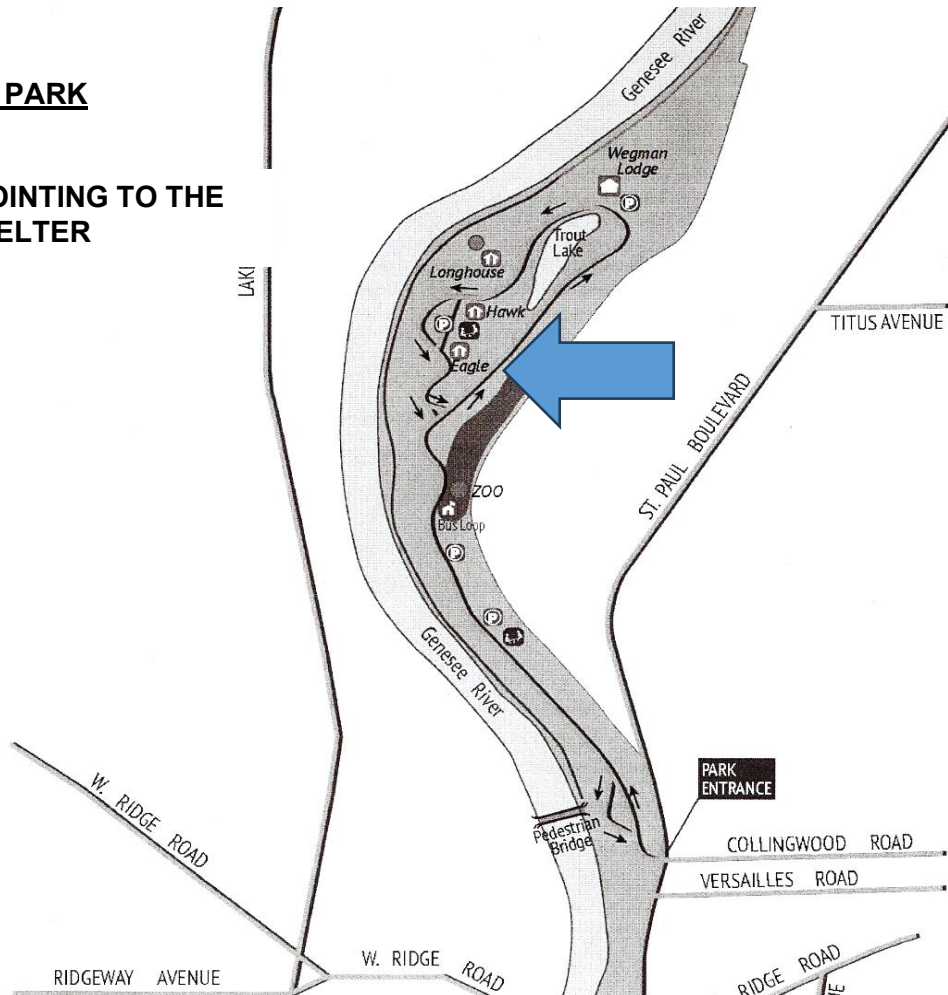
On **Sunday, September 7**, following our church communion service we will gather at the **Eagle Shelter** in **Seneca Park**!

We've got the main dish covered, but we'd love your help with the extras such as salads, drinks, or desserts. A sign-up sheet indicating what you plan to bring is located at the Welcome

Center.

MAP OF SENECA PARK

ARROW POINTING TO THE
EAGLE SHELTER



Welcome Back, Families!

We hope you had a wonderful summer! As the school year begins, we are excited to welcome our children back to Sunday school. This fall, we'll explore God's Word together through our Bible lessons, crafts, and fun activities.

Join us on September 7th for an exciting morning as we launch our fall program with a Creation Escape Room! Kids will work together to unlock clues from the story of Creation and solve puzzles to "escape" the room! A huge thank you to all our summer Sunday school teachers. With your leadership, we were able to have 9

Sundays of summer programs. You are all very much appreciated ❤️

THE WELCOMING AND AFFIRMING “BE YOU” MOVIE SERIES



All are welcome to the next movie in this series which will be shown on Saturday, September 6 at 6:00 pm in Classroom 1 (the conference room). Chuck Theis will bring several movies and those who attend will vote on the movie that will be shown. Because many of the movies have adult themes, they may not be appropriate for children. If you plan to attend, please come to the church office door and ring the doorbell and someone will let you in.



Agape Haven of Abundance summer camp at our church ended on Friday, August 22. Since the beginning of July, the children and youth have been careful to put their leftover fruits and vegetables into a bucket. I have taken over ninety-one pounds of food waste to a worm farm on Lyell Avenue. This small business uses red wiggler worms to make compost from food waste and other organic substances. This means that ninety-one pounds of garbage did not go into the landfill but is being repurposed to provide good soil for home gardeners. Good for You, Agape Haven campers! Thank you for collecting this organic material which will eventually be used to fertilize a number of gardens in our area!



NO – THIS IS NOT LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS!

By Ken Setera

Every summer I like to plant flowers in my small plot of land on my patio. This year I decided to plant some sunflowers. I bought a pack of seeds in May and on the back it stated that the flowers would grow about 5 to 6 feet tall. When the seedlings sprouted, they didn't grow much for the first few weeks. But, as soon as the warm weather came, they really began to grow. When they were about three feet tall, they seemed to be growing about 4" every day. And they continued to grow and grow! When they passed 6 feet, I figured that the seed package was mismarked. As you can see, they have grown to approximately 12 feet tall. My dog Kirby and I are dwarfed by them! I have to use a ladder to cut the flowers! Several of my neighbors have said that they love looking at my garden from their back patios. And, people on the street just stop and stare at them. The only care I have given them is to keep them watered and to apply just a little fertilizer. It's a good thing I didn't use any of the compost that Jane Grant and the Agape Haven campers made. My goodness, if I did that, they might have been trees by now!



The Agape Haven of Abundance Executive Director, Julia Oakley, expressed her appreciation to our church for the use of our building for their 8 week Summer Camp program which ended on Friday, August 22nd. As she stated in a letter to us:

"Dear Lake Ave Baptist Team members,

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to you for extending your hands of grace and mercy towards Agape Haven of Abundance for the past eight weeks. Thank you for opening your doors and trusting us to utilize your space as we cared for our young precious souls in the Rochester community.

We served over 50 kids and every day we were receiving a lot of requests to add more children to the

enrollment. Even some of the nearby neighbors were intrigued, as our children played on the playground or loaded the bus. I am truly grateful that through your partnership many lives have been changed, families rescued from adverse circumstances and children have a brighter hope for the future.

I have attached a few photos of the Community Cleanup to add to your newsletter or social media. FYI: My team will come next week to do an additional cleanup of the classrooms and community room!

Thank you for truly exemplifying the love of Christ!

Best regards,

Julia Oakley, Executive Director of the Agape Haven of Abundance”

On Thursday, August 21st and as a tangible display of their appreciation, Agape Haven of Abundance arranged for approximately 20 students from Nazareth College to work with the children of the Summer Camp to clean the grounds of the church, to trim the dead flowers, and to spread mulch around the gardens. Our church plans to continue our partnership with **the Haven of Abundance ministry for future events.**



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



The 2025 American Baptist Churches USA Biennial Mission Summit which took place July 3-6, 2025, in Omaha, NE. saw the debut of the exhibit “A Resilient Faith,” which presents the Northern Baptist response to the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. The exhibit is the culmination of the ABHS Japanese American Confinement Sites (JACS) project, wherein we scanned over 16,000 pages of records, including items contributed by congregations in Seattle and Los Angeles. The exhibit was on display throughout the Biennial and was a focus of this year’s ABHS dinner.



In addition to the exhibit on display in Omaha, we also launched an expanded online version of the exhibit, showcasing more items from ABHS collections and providing additional educational resources. The online exhibit is accessible through the ABHS website, alongside the digital collections of scanned records from the JACS project.

Left: Garth Brokaw (ABHS Board), Katharine Hsaio (Alliance of Asian ABC), Gina Jacobs-Strain (ABC General Secretary), Brice Bongiovanni (ABHS Staff), Mariah Hambry (ABHS Staff), Jenny Manasco (ABHS Staff)

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 15	TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 16	WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 17	THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 18
 <p>JC Wynn Chapel Service</p> <p>Rev. Dr. Melany J. Silas CRCDs '06</p> <p>Senior Pastor Trinity Emmanuel Presbyterian Church, Rochester, NY</p>	 <p>Melanie Duguid-May Christian Faith & LGBTQ+ Experience Lecture</p> <p>Rev. Dr. Brian Henderson</p> <p>Executive Director Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists (AWAB)</p>	 <p>Helen Barrett Montgomery Lecture</p> <p>Rev. Deborah L. Hughes CRDS '87</p> <p>Executive Director Susan B. Anthony Museum & House Rochester, NY</p>	 <p>African American Legacy Lecture</p> <p>Bishop T. Anthony Bronner CRDS '92</p> <p>Senior Pastor ELIM Christian Fellowship Buffalo, NY</p>

FALL 2025 LECTURE SERIES



Colgate Rochester Crozer
DIVINITY SCHOOL

GREAT IS God's FAITHFULNESS
LAMENTATIONS 3:21-24, NRSVUE

September 15 – 18, 2025

7:00 PM, Eastern

6PM Central / 5PM Mountain / 4PM Pacific

REGISTER NOW ➤

[CRCDS.EDU/LECTURES](https://crcds.edu/lectures)

