

LAKE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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72 Ambrose Street, Rochester, NY 14608; Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

www.lakeavebaptist.org; Phone and Fax: (585) 458-5765 & (585) 458-5766; Email: lakeavebaptistchurchoffice@gmail.com



MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Women's History Month celebrates the often-overlooked contributions of women in history, society, and culture. It has been annually observed in the United States and other countries, including the United Kingdom and Australia, every March since 1987. The month is observed in October in Canada. March is selected as the month for observing Women's History Month to correspond with International Women's Day on March 8, and Canada observes it in October in correspondence with Persons Day on October 18.

The month-long commemoration started with Women's History Day in 1978, organized by the school district of Sonoma, California. Hundreds of students participated in the essay competitions, many presentations were given, and a parade was held in Santa Rosa. The idea caught on and, a few years later, school districts, communities, and organizations all over the country were celebrating the day. In 1980, the National Women's History Alliance championed for the holiday to be observed as a national week, and this was backed by President Jimmy Carter, who issued the first proclamation declaring the week of March 8 as National Women's History Week. The following year, Congress forwarded a resolution establishing a national observance. Six years later, the expansion of the event to the whole month of March was successfully petitioned by the National Women's History Project.



Amelia Earhart standing with Mayor Walker of New York City and crowd of well wishers, New York, NY.



First WAVES Machine gun instructors



Women electric welders at Hog Island Shipyard, 1918



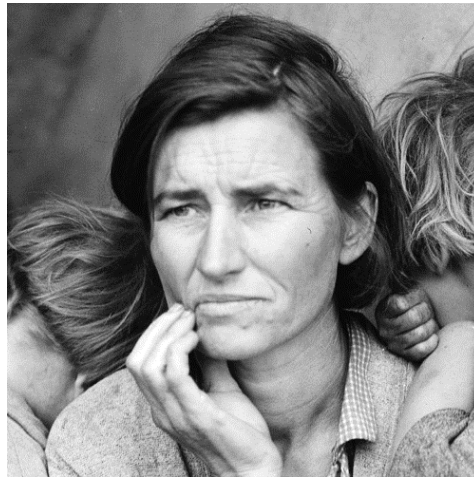
Sojourner Truth, three-quarter length portrait, standing, wearing spectacles, shawl, and peaked cap, right hand resting on cane



Pennsylvania on the picket line, 1917. The sign being held reads "Mr. President, How long must women wait for liberty?"



Portrait of Ella Fitzgerald along with Dizzie Gillespie, Ray Brown, Milt Jackson, & Timmie Rosenkrantz at the Downbeat, 1947.



Destitute pea pickers in California. Mother of seven children, thirty-two years of age in Nipoma, California.



Esther Bubby, Farm Security Administration/Office of War information photographer kneeling with camera, Bayway NJ.



Women's Suffrage, Washington,DC 1916-1918. The banner reads: "President Wilson is deceiving the world when he appears as the prophet of democracy. President Wilson has opposed those who demand democracy for this country. He is responsible for the disfranchisement of millions of Americans. We in America know this. The world will find him out."

All are invited to worship and communion this Sunday, March 5, at 10:00 am on Zoom. The Zoom link can be found on the church website, www.lakeavebaptist.org. Please have some bread, crackers, and juice available so you can participate in communion at home,



A Note from Your Pastor's Desk

Well, that was unexpected. I can honestly say that in all my years of theological and ministerial preparation I was never given any background about how to handle the calls that I got from both Ken and Becka that came in to me on Monday, February 13th and began with the words “a car ran through the wall of the sanctuary.” Nope, no preparation on how to handle that. No words of wisdom from any historical scholars. Luther was responsible for nailing his 95 Theses to the door at Wittenberg, not navigating through the gaping hole in the wall only to post it on someone’s door inside. Even Roger Williams did not come to America and to establish the Baptist Church in the United States and go “hole in the wall to hole in the wall” to share his vision of what a congregational church could be. Nope, no experience or preparation in how to respond to

this exact situation.

However, while none of your church staff have any formal training in how to respond to the situation of a hole in the wall caused by Cadillac Escalade at high speed, I have learned over the last couple of weeks that we all have what it takes to handle such a situation. You know what is necessary? To just do it. Nike may have coined the phrase and applied it to a variety of different contexts, but when I look at what is needed to attend to our current situation it’s the exact same thing ... just do it.

Ken immediately called me. He couldn’t get through (phone was on the charger) and so he called Garth who came in immediately and took the firefighters down to the basement to try to turn off the water. He just did it. Becka reached out to me (I was by then on my way) and she worked with the firefighters to get a lay of the land to update me when I got there). When I got a sense of what was happening Becka and I worked together to handle things. Becka got in touch with Emergency Enclosures to close up the wall (neither of us knew there was a company that did that sort of thing, but when you think about it, it makes sense ... someone needs to secure buildings or homes after accidents or, as is in their name, emergencies). I got in touch with our insurance company.

Once the building was secure our whole team switched gears and we all started thinking forward. How do we notify our rentals – Ken reached out to notify them they would need to make other arrangements and they all have been fantastic. Lee and Susan started thinking online worship. Our Choral Scholars started recording their parts for mixing for services. We held an Ash Wednesday service live on line (we have some experience in that because of Covid). As those pieces were in the works I kept moving forward with calls and visits from insurance adjustors, environmental testers, and coming soon, abatement companies.

None of us have formal training in these pieces. What we all have done is, as mentioned before, just do it. Things need to be done and so we push on.

Too often we get ourselves stuck with what we think we need to do in certain circumstances, and the fears of self-doubt – “what if I do it wrong?” Well, there is always a risk in everything we do. Even if we have training and experience and all of that in our back pocket, there is always a risk that we will mess things up. That’s the reality of bringing our flawed humanity to real situations. That’s where I, and we, should be thankful for the idea of forgiveness. All we can do is use the best of our education, experience, insight, and care to respond to certain situations. When we do that we are being faithful to our desire to serve to the best of our abilities in any context.

I can assure you that your staff team is working hard to help us navigate through this current blip in the season of Lent ... one that we never expected and haven't experienced in quite this way before. We are, for lack of a better phrase, "just doing it." What things are in your midst that you are holding back on because of fear or worry or concern or apprehension? Perhaps you might do well to "just do it." Maybe, just maybe, you'll see that God has prepared you in ways you didn't quite expect and might be overwhelmingly pleased by what can happen when faith and trust and action collide.



On Monday February 13, 2023 there was an accident at LABC where a vehicle ran into the Jones side wall of the sanctuary. I have shared updates since then through our church email list but I wanted to share a note about what we understand to be the steps moving forward that we will have to undertake to get us back into our sanctuary with a fully repaired wall.

From the point where the car hit the wall, we have done a number of things that are worthy of note (and to give you some framework of our steps thus far).

- 1) the car was removed from the sanctuary
- 2) our heating and air conditioning company (JB Mechanical) turned off the boilers to stop the flow of water through the radiators into the sanctuary
- 3) Emergency Enclosures enclosed the hole in the wall
- 4) our Insurance Broker was notified (Emery and Webb) started the claim
- 5) we have spoken to the Insurance provider (Guide One) to ensure the claim is in motion
- 6) Paradigm Environmental Testing (ironically, the folks who purchased and renovated Webster House and our immediate neighbors) were contacted and have conducted environmental testing
- 7) a local adjustor with Guide One came to the church and conducted his assessment of the damage for his report
- 8) we have received the report from Paradigm Environmental Testing
- 9) there is asbestos in one of the materials (vermiculite) and so abatement will be needed
- 10) have contacted three abatement companies for quotes

Next Steps

- 11) after meetings with the abatement companies and receipt of their quotes and timelines (sooner the better) we will select a company and they will work with Paradigm to get an "emergency variance" from the state that will allow work on the abatement to begin
- 12) the abatement company will cap the radiators and we will be able to get our water back on into the building and heat to flow through the radiators
- 13) we will receive the report from the adjustors which will indicate what they will cover in the repairs
- 14) we will identify a preferred contractor who will provide an estimate for the job (if there are differences between what the contractor recommends and the insurance company will cover they will negotiate between themselves to ensure things are covered appropriately)
- 15) wall repairs will be started and, in due time, completed

So where do we go from here for LABC

- Once the asbestos abatement is taken care of and it is deemed appropriate for us to be in the building (wherever in the building that is) we will be able to move things back on site
- we just ride out the next steps as we move through them, patiently and in time

There are a lot of things that are in our control, but just as many that are not in our control until we receive reports and estimates and make decisions about next steps that we choose to take. Sadly, timelines are not clear as of yet.

Our hope is to get the space safe, heat and water back on (we can't be a public building without water and it's just not nice to be without heat), and then open in some way for our rentals and community groups. Our staff will work off site until then and we will worship online. Once we are able to worship within the building we certainly will (even though it likely won't be in the sanctuary for some time forthcoming).

Please know your leadership is working on this and we appreciate your patience. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me, Pastor Michael, or our Acting Moderator, Laura Tubbs.

FROM THE DESK OF REBEKA FERGUSON-LUTZ, OUR DIRECTOR OF NEXT GENERATION MINISTRIES

I'd like to think that I'm pretty cool, and I suppose that I am, relative to other 43-year-old adults. But one of the things that I learned long ago is that I can never be cool enough to compel young people to come to Jesus Christ. Even Justin Bieber hasn't been successful in that regard.



I am under no illusion about what draws young people to church and church programs: it's the **feeling of connectedness to one another**. Young people want to spend time with other young people who share their faith and their doubts, their joys and concerns. They want to be both silly and serious both, in equal measure. They want to talk about the things that they cannot talk about at school or with the soccer team. Ultimately, they want to feel that they are a part of something larger than themselves. Our responsibility as adult mentors is to help youth understand their membership in an *ecclesia* that exists beyond the four walls of the church where they have spent their Sunday mornings throughout childhood.

I came to this conclusion after I spent two semesters interning at the University of Rochester's Interfaith Chapel, in fulfillment of the supervised ministry requirement for my degree at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School. In my time there, I noticed that the most successful and active campus ministries (using the metrics of student attendance and participation) on the University of Rochester campus are the Newman Community, the congregation of Roman Catholic students, and Hillel, the organization for Jewish life. I thought a lot about why these ministries had such great student investment. I attended a few of their events. I talked with their staff. I conducted a highly unscientific study with an extremely small sample size and methodology that would make any research scientist squirm, but I ultimately concluded that the robustness of their ministries is in large part because **Roman Catholic and Jewish have been doing collaborative youth ministry for years**. Jewish congregations are mostly independent entities that work collaboratively with other Jewish congregations; they don't have a denominational structure as we do. Similarly, most Roman Catholic congregations now do youth ministry at the



diocesan level, perhaps because of the closure of many Catholic churches and the challenges of finding qualified educators and leaders. It seemed to me that the students who are active in Newman and Hillel came to the U of R campus already comfortable with multi-congregational youth ministry programs that extended beyond the walls of their individual congregations and cities.

How do the young people of Lake Avenue Baptist Church situate their religious identities? How do they define themselves in terms of faith? Do they understand themselves as part of a community of faith at the microscopic, macroscopic, and global levels? That connectedness to the larger church does not happen a dozen adult leaders representing 5-7 churches – some Presbyterian, some non-denominational, some an, and some American Baptist. naturally; it must be fostered. For this reason, every month or so, I take the youth of Lake Avenue Baptist Church to ecumenical youth events sponsored by the Presbytery of Genesee Valley. (The “presbytery” in the PCUSA is equivalent to the “region” in the American Baptist Church. The local

presbytery includes about 60 churches in Monroe and surrounding counties.) We gather at parks, churches, or museums around the presbytery, rotating our meeting locations from Monroe to Livingston to Ontario to Orleans counties in order to balance commute times for all the youth. The attendance varies at each event, depending on lacrosse tournaments and cheerleading competitions and family obligations, but we typically have 20-25 youth and half

In just a few short weeks, for example, we’re going to Mendon Ponds Park for an afternoon of bird-themed fun and faith formation. We’ll take a tour of Wild Wings, the rescue center for injured and ailing birds of prey, then take a walk along the Birdsong Trail and feed the chickadees from our hands, just like Cinderella! We’ll wrap up the afternoon with a debrief discussion about what this teaches us about God and Holy Spirit, which are repeatedly described with bird imagery throughout Bible.



By Lee Foster

Both recent and current Choral Scholars have numerous accomplishments under their belts:

Gabriel O'Shaughnessy recently sang in two operas in Houston - *The Marriage of Figaro* by Mozart and *Sweeney Todd*. *Sweeney Todd* was already familiar to Gabriel as he and Ali Hotz were both cast in the Eastman Opera when the initial COVID lockdowns occurred and prevented the production. Critics noted that Gabriel's "was a voice to watch."

Ali Rose Hotz recent played the lead in Handel's *Alcina* and has done well in auditions from the Metropolitan Opera in New York and from Eastman Opera.

Ekaterina Gorlova is and EMT, cantor at the Catholic Cathedral in Houston, and also appearing in *The Marriage of Figaro*.

Migle Zaluikaite-Limontas continues to sing, currently in the Boston area where she, her husband Martynas and their two young sons live. For a time they were in Vilnius, Lithuania, but with the war in Ukraine so close, they returned to the USA.

Elizabeth Healy will be singing in *Florencia en el Amazonas*, in Kodak Hall at the end of March and first weekend in April. Stay tuned for the specific dates

José Benjamin Escobar has produced at least two albums of songs, some to his original poetry. Click on this link to hear some of the hauntingly beautiful songs: <https://josebenjaminescobar.bandcamp.com/>

Ashlee King served on the stage crew for *Alcina* - very complex staging with a setting in the 21st century with all of its technological possibilities of social media, mobile phone, TikTok, etc

Ken Setera has achieved the status of being the oldest choral scholar in the Chancel Choir and grandfather to the other choral scholars. Way to go Ken!

Lenten Supper and Something We will be having our Supper and Something every Wednesday Evening during Lent (March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29) from 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

During the season of Lent we will be gathering (online on Zoom only due to the temporary building closure) for a time of supper (feel free to eat during our time together) and something. That something this year will be a conversation about how some of the themes of Lent, our preparation for Easter, lend themselves to conversation about environmental issues. It is an opportunity for us to learn, grow, fellowship, and develop as people of faith.

We look forward to all who can attend. And if you are only able to join us for one or two of the weeks, that's entirely ok. The weeks do not build on one another so you won't be "missing out" on anything if you can't be there ever week.

Join me as we journey toward Easter together.

Zoom links are available on the church website at lakeavebaptist.org

MISSION NEWS

From Karen Brokaw

Even though our church building is closed, we continue our mission to BE THE CHURCH as Jesus called us to do. On Valentine's Day, Jane Grant delivered 120 treat bags to staff at #5 School. Thank you, Jane, for making and delivering these gifts for us. Just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a lot of staff to educate a child. We are thankful for the teachers, librarians, custodians, administrators, food servers, etc., for all they do! Karen Brokaw continues to tutor at the school and is loving it!! If you are interested in finding ways to help with this partnership, please see Karen to let her know.

During February break, Becca took a couple of youth, Julia and Gloria, to help Mother's In Need Of Others to pack up for their big move to the FOODLINK building on Mount Read. MINO goes through a lot of supplies each month so another way we are helping is to collect dishwashing liquid for the cleaning supply kits. MINO provides approximately 96 bottles of dishwashing liquid per month to needy families. We determined that we are capable of collecting enough for one month and we are 60% there!! Keep helping by donating and keeping it at home until church opens back up.

If you are interested in seeing pictures of what we do for Missions, please check out the Lake Avenue Baptist Church Facebook page. Thank you for your support and keep that dishwashing liquid coming.

LILLY'S CHRONICLES: "JOY" AND "HAPPINESS"

[John 15:11](#) *These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.*

In the Bible, joy and happiness are two different things. **Joy is a much deeper emotion than happiness**, and it comes from **within us**. Happiness, on the other hand, is often a fleeting feeling that can come from outside circumstances.

When I give my dog Lilly a special treat, like a beef flavored dental stick, she will take it from me, go several feet away, drop it on the floor, lay next to it and pat it with her paw, pick it up again, drop it in another place, smell it, pounce on it, move it to another place and finally eat it. During all this time her tail is wagging furiously and you can tell she is indeed happy. But once it is eaten, she scurries off to her bed, very content, and calmly lies down. It's not unlike a child or adult receiving a birthday cake. There is immediate happiness. My granddaughters will immediately run to it, stick their fingers in the frosting and lick it off and then wait for the cake to be cut and dished out. As adults, we are delighted when someone brings us a birthday cake on our

birthday. We smile, we thank those who brought it and thank them for thinking of us. It is indeed a happy event. And our happiness continues when someone presents you with a gift. But after the candles are blown out, the cake is eaten, and the gift is opened, our happiness wanes. Three months after this event, will we remember the cake, or the gift that was given? Or will we remember the people who were present, how happy they were in celebrating your day and the warmth that surrounded us? This is the joy that remains with us.

For myself, I have felt happiness many times in my life but much fewer times have I truly felt joy. It's like Christmas. As Christmas comes closer, I begin to feel happier. I put on my Christmas socks, decorate the house, bake cookies for that special day, and go out to shop for presents for the special people in my life. But the joy of Christmas comes when you attend the church service with your many church friends, and share dinner on Christmas day or Christmas Eve with those close to you, the people you love and those who you know love you. That is what we remember and hold deep in our hearts. It's like the times I spent with my grandparents at Christmas when I was a child. I remember their smiles, the warmth of their house, the bright lights all around, and the smells of the wonderful food my grandma was cooking. But most of all I remember the hugs and kisses. It's strange, but I don't remember the gifts I received or what the meal was. They made me happy at the time but they were transient...fleeting moments. The love being shared with my grandparents on Christmas will always be one of my fondest memories and they are memories that fill me with joy.

I often wonder if Lilly feels joy. Maybe she feels "joy" when she jumps on the chair that I am sitting in and squeezes her little body between me and the cushioned arm of the chair. I know that makes me feel joy and, because she repeats this action regularly, is it possible she's feeling that same joy too? Anyway, it's nice to think she is.

EVENTS IN OUR LARGER COMMUNITY

A MUSICAL CELEBRATION OF GRCC-FAITH IN ACTION 100th ANNIVERSARY

Some of you know that in 2019 GRCC celebrated its 100th anniversary. Part of the celebration was a collaboration between GRCC and the Telos Trio, of which I'm a member, to commission a musical work by Rochester musician and composer Cary Ratcliff. The piece, *Fresh Winds for Our Sails*, captures the essence of GRCC's work and witness over a century. The Telos Trio premiered it at an October 2019 anniversary event at Third Presbyterian.

The Telos Trio is performing *Fresh Winds for Our Sails* again on Friday, March 3 in the Hochstein School's Performance Hall. The concert starts at 7 pm and is part of the Spotlight on Faculty series. Tickets are \$10.

Also on the program are two other works written or arranged for the Telos Trio by Miguel del Aguila and Gwyneth Walker, as well as a piece by Alex Shapiro. All the music is colorful, evocative, full of story and meaning. The concert is bookended by pieces that depict the coming together of people despite difference. Another treat is a guest appearance by Susan B Anthony in a piece about the Women's Rights Convention of 1848 in Seneca Falls and the continuing need for equality for all.

I hope that many of you will be able to attend and hear (again) the music that pays tribute to GRCC, that lifts up the work we do together for justice, and bears witness to the emergence of new life.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 12-3 P.M. Join us for the event ***How to Be an Ally to Indigenous Peoples***. Meaningful allyship begins with empathy. If you care about the native people of our region and you want to learn more about the experiences of the Iroquois over the last 500 years, this is the perfect event for you! The Witness to Injustice / KAIROS Blanket Exercise™ is an interactive simulation led by elders from the Onondaga Nation and non-native allies from Neighbors of the Onondaga Nation (NOON) in Syracuse. This event is open to those ages 14 and older and is free of charge. To learn more about this event and to register by April 15, contact yyamwg@pbygenval.org. This special event will take place at the Presbyterian Church in Geneva, 24 Park Place, Geneva, NY.

AN INVITATION FROM GRCC: You have a very exciting opportunity to engage the topic of religious nationalism and how to stand against it with an expert in the field. On March 12 at 5 pm, Katherine Stewart will be speaking at Third Presbyterian Church, Rochester, as the guest of a wide consortium of local faith

organizations including GRCC. The event is free but registration is required via the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/MeetingTheThreat>.

Noting the aftermath of the Jan. 6, 2021 attack on the Capitol, the rise of rhetoric classifying some Americans as "Other," the broadened use in the public square of concepts such as spiritual warfare, and the appointment of activist judges, Stewart asks, **"What can people of faith do to meet the threat of religious nationalism?"**

Stewart is an investigative reporter who has covered religious liberty, politics, policy, and education for over a decade. She is the author of a new book *The Power Worshipers: Inside the Dangerous Rise of Religious Nationalism*.

This is an important event and one you don't want to miss. Please register to attend and spread the word to your network and friends.

THE NEW OPEN AIR DESIGN FOR THE CHURCH TO ALLOW AIR CIRCULATION IN THE SUMMER MONTHS!

