

The First United Methodist Church of Lowell Tele-Christian ~ April 2021 Edition

**The mission of the United Methodist Church is to
make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.**

Mark's Remarks.....

April 4 is Easter. On this day and the days preceding, we remember Christ's work on the cross and His triumph over death through His Resurrection. I hope you spend some time reflecting on Jesus' sacrifice for you before Easter. Read the Gospel accounts from the Last Supper through the Resurrection. Try to see all of the wonderful benefits that Jesus has given you through these events.

If you want an even bigger picture of sacrifice, reflect on Jesus agreeing to come to earth in the first place. "In the beginning was the Word (Jesus), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1. From infinity past, Jesus existed as the Father's Word. Another translation is the Father's Logic. Jesus was part of the creative process that brought all things into being. Jesus was with the Father in all of their Glory. It is beyond our comprehension.

"Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross." Philippians 2:6-8. It is an incredible sacrifice that Jesus was willing to become human. He gave up much of the power of His Godhead in order to be human. Can you even begin to picture that sacrifice? Nothing God could ask of us can compare. Even if God asked us to become a slug, it is not equivalent. However, it is a tremendous gift for all humanity. The gift for us is that, as a human, Jesus can fully relate to everything we go through as a human. Jesus understands our fears, our pain, our temptations, our emotions, our fallibility, our sin. It is this deep understanding that allows Jesus to mediate for us before the throne of God.

The sacrifice continues as you reflect that Jesus did not come to earth as a human to rule, to build, or to receive honors but instead He came to suffer and to die. It was not just any death though; it was the death of a criminal, a public execution of extreme brutality. How much love did the Father and Jesus have in heaven at the foundation of the earth for you? God knew His only Son had to be sacrificed for your sin and for mine. Jesus was willing to set aside His glory and to die for you and for me.

The more you consider sacrifice, the more you will learn about what Jesus has already sacrificed for you. What will you do for Jesus? It is almost a relief that we can never repay what Jesus has done for us. Anything we do should be out of gratitude and joy. Anything we give is only giving a portion of what God has given us. Reflect on sacrifice this Easter season. I pray that it increases your excitement for what Easter means to us this year!

April Sermon and Scripture Schedule

April 4 ~ Easter

Scripture ~ John 20:1-18

Sermon Title ~ *'Rolling Stones'*

April 11 ~

Scripture ~ John 20:19-29

Sermon Title ~ *'Doubting Thomas'*

April 18 ~ Guest speaker Rev. Dr. Saneta Maiko

Scripture ~ John 3:1-12 & Isaiah 61:1-8

Sermon Title ~ *'You Are a Dear Child of the Risen Savior'*

April 25 ~

Scripture ~ John 10:11-18

Sermon Title ~ *'The Good Shepherd'*



Worship News

Linda Hayden & Trudy Corning, Co-Chairs

We hope you are having a meaningful Lenten journey. Holy Week is here!

Palm Sunday, March 28:

Children and adults waved palm branches celebrating Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

Maundy Thursday, April 1:

Celebrate the Last Supper at 6:00 pm in the sanctuary for a service with communion.

Good Friday, April 2: A service of shadows at 7:00 pm in the sanctuary.

EASTER Sunday: Come celebrate our Risen Lord!!

Sunrise Service at 7:00 am in the sanctuary.

Worship celebrations at 8:00 and 10:30

The Easter flowers ordered by the congregation will fill the sanctuary with beauty and wonderful fragrance! 'Thank You' to everyone!

Please bring a flower, real or artificial, to church on Easter morning. At the direction of Pastor Mark, we will be placing our flowers in the cross where we have laid our stones this Lenten season.



Music Notes

Michelle Mishlove, Music Chairperson

The various music groups of our church are in full swing for the month of April! For the safety of everyone, we are following all safety protocols including the proper wearing of masks and social distancing during rehearsals AND worship services. This will continue for at least a few more months.

Holy Week:

There will be "special music" on both Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Come enjoy these meaningful worship services with us!

Easter Sunday, April 4 -- Our Chancel Choir will sing at the 10:30 AM service.

Sunday, April 11 -- You can hear the joyful sounds of Godsbells at the 10:30 AM service.

Sunday, April 18 -- Both Chancel Choir and our Children's Choir will be singing at the 10:30 AM service.

You can hear the Praise Team on Sunday, April 25 at the 10:30 AM service and at the LYFT service on April 29.

Psalm 150:6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!



A Few Words from the Staff/Parish Relations Committee

In every United Methodist congregation, the staff/pastor relations committee focuses on building strong relationships between the church staff and the congregation and between the congregation and the district superintendent. Our staff/parish relations committee met on March 8 to continue this important work for 2021.

Each staff member is assigned a liaison from the SPRC to nurture relationships and facilitate communication. The following liaison assignments have been approved for 2021:

- Pastor Mark – Charlie Haberlin
- Administrative Assistant Kim McGinley – Laura Eller
- Custodian Susan Wells – Donna Nadolski
- Choir Director Michelle Mishlove – Nancy Lain
- Organist David Schoon – Kevin Bailey
- Bell Choir Director Patrice Martin – Elaine DeVine

District Superintendent Rev. Dr. Saneta Maiko recently shared recommendations for staff/pastor relations committees and their congregations. He reminded us to:

- Help our pastor with his needs and his family's needs;
- Refuse to listen to or engage in gossip;
- Pray for our pastor and his family; and
- Encourage the pastor to take vacation with his family, away from the parsonage.

Please keep our pastor, our church staff, and our volunteers in your prayers!

Charlie Haberlin
SPRC Chair

FUMC and COVID April 2021

Our FUMC Covid safety precautions are still in place. The Lay Leaders met on March 9 and made the decision to continue all of our Covid protocols through the end of May. We want to get through the period when a possible 'post Spring break' surge might occur. This also allows time for more of our church family to complete their vaccinations. We continue to monitor Lake county statistics and keep aware of guidelines from the CDC. We also receive guidance in communications from our Bishop and our Conference leadership. Our main concern continues to be making FUMC a safe place for **ALL** of our church family and guests.

Currently we are allowing church meetings to take place, primarily in our largest classrooms and the Fellowship Hall. We have allowed outside groups to resume using our space, with a limit of 25 people. We are not allowing food to be served in the church, therefore the Fellowship Hall is not being rented to the public, or even used by our members, for bridal or baby showers or parties.

The safety procedures must be followed for **all** activities that take place in our church or on our property – worship services, all church group meetings, practices or gatherings, and all meetings & activities of outside groups using our building.

So, please continue to

Wear face masks in the church.

Practice social distancing. Those living in same household may sit together.

Use hand sanitizer upon entering the building.

Clean your personal space with the provided disinfecting wipes after worship, any meeting, or other activity.

When changes are made to our safety procedures, you will be informed in announcements, emails and the newsletter. We appreciate your understanding and your cooperation with our efforts to keep our church family healthy and safe.



Church Family,

We will be having my daughter Mary Kampenga's Celebration of Life on Saturday, April 10, 2021. It will take place in our sanctuary at 11:00am. Dave Patterson will be leading the service as he knew Mary in the youth group and officiated at her wedding to Kevin. The celebration will be live-streamed. This will enable my siblings and Mary's out of state friends the ability to see it as well. If you would like to watch the service, it can be viewed exactly like the weekly Sunday services. If you choose to attend in-person, please wear a mask and practice social distancing!

Your sister in Christ,
Nancy Lain

Celebrating the Life of a Vibrant and Healthy Church

As you walk into the colorful backdrop of the Lowell United Methodist Church sanctuary you cannot but notice the beauty that surrounds the serenity of God's presence. The magnificent enormously colored stained-glass windows are a work of creative and festive history. By the way, have you ever sat during the service and enjoyed the reflection of a bright sunlight warming your soul, casting rays of hope through those windows that warm your spirit and inspire your relationship with God you as you listen in comfort and joy to a devotion guiding our prayer, our thoughts, and our daily choices? God's house is preparing us for our weekly life journey.

We are the church, a family that has witnessed the tremendous presence of giving back what God has provided for us to build up the church and extend the Kingdom of God.

We borrowed approximately \$155,000.00 from the Conference: to be paid in five years. Because of our church family's generosity in tithing to the church Capital Project Fund, we were able to complete the payments TEN MONTHS EARLY! A considerable savings to our church.

The Capital Projects Fund made it possible to repair those beautiful stained-glass windows, tuck point outdoor brick, clean the brick on the outside of our church home, paint the sanctuary, paint the bell tower, and purchase a new sound system all carefully crafted under the guidance of trustee chairperson at the time Sharon Sanders.

On April 18 at both the 8:00 and 10:30 service our superintendent the Rev. Dr. Saneta Maiko will speak to our congregation as we celebrate the life of our church. We will witness a fun filled "note-burning" ceremony.

Burning a paid-off mortgage document is a celebratory event that often includes a moment of what one can define as the significant glory of our God working through the hearts of family and friends. Lowell United Methodist Church is about to celebrate paying off its debt — ahead of schedule — and invites everyone to the celebration.

Finance Committee



Calling all Graduates!

Parents! Grandparents! This is a chance to brag about your sons, your daughters, or your grandkids. Do you have a graduate in your family? We would love to hear about them. We plan to recognize all of the graduates in our church family, including those getting high school diplomas, college degrees, and those who have gotten certification from a trade or technical school in the past year.

Please call or e-mail the office with your graduate's information!

MINISTRY IN ACTION

Spring Food Drive

From Susan Wells, Mission Committee

For the past several years our Worship Committee has sponsored a Food Drive for our four local food pantries during the Lenten season. Our church family brought in specific food items each week and filled a large set of shelves in our narthex. This year the Missions Committee is sponsoring a food drive during the month of May. The goal of this food drive is to help stock the pantries specifically for the families with children home for the summer.

Throughout the pandemic the Lowell school system has offered a food pick-up program which was funded through a government grant. When all schools were closed in the initial months of the pandemic, the program served 1000 to 1200 students per week. This school year they have still served 90 to 100 families each week. The decision to hold a Food Drive was made when the Mission committee became aware that the school lunch food pick-up program will end when the schools dismiss for summer break.

Watch for further details about the May Food Drive in emails and the May newsletter.



College Box Ministry

By Kim Newlin

It's that time again. Let's help our college students with the stress of finals! We have 14 students who could use our prayers, treats, and notes of encouragement! With all the modifications due to the Coronavirus pandemic, I am sure they will welcome our support.

We have cards listing the items we would like donated for care boxes. These donation cards are on the large table in the narthex. We invite you to pick up a card or two. All items are due back by April 18, which is the day the care boxes will be packed. The boxes will be shipped that week.

If you have a college student who just started this semester and would like him/her included in our care box ministry, please contact Kim Newlin at 219-669-9078 or Trudy Corning at 219-613-1787, or you can call the church office at 219-696-9219.

Thank you for your support. We truly are the hands of God.

Prayer Blanket Ministry

By Trudy Corning, Congregational Care

During the month of March, our church received a very generous donation of handmade blankets for our Prayer Blanket ministry. Some of you may have seen the overflowing bags containing 43 crocheted blankets in our east entryway!! God is good!!

We will be praying over these blankets on Sunday, April 11 during both services. Once they have been prayed over, the blankets will be ready for delivery to those who are in need of feeling God's love. Receiving the gift of a prayer blanket can wrap a person not only in physical warmth & comfort, but it can also offer spiritual and emotional support. Notice the responses we received from two recent prayer blanket recipients in the 'thank you' section of this newsletter! The blankets bring community, love, cheer and more to the recipients!

You are welcome to be a part of this ministry that touches people with God's Love. The blankets can be delivered by you, not just our committee. If you know of someone in need now, there are prayer blankets ready for delivery in the church library. Just add the recipient's name to the list and follow the easy directions posted with the prepared blankets.



Trudy Corning & Lauren Jansma

As the weather begins to warm up, we begin to think about fresh fruits and vegetables. Here are a few helpful tips to healthy eating!

- Try crunchy vegetables instead of chips with your favorite low-fat salad for dipping.
- Keep cut vegetables handy for mid-afternoon snacks, side dishes, lunch box additions or a quick nibble while waiting for dinner. Ready-to-eat favorites: red, green or yellow peppers, broccoli or cauliflower florets, carrots, celery sticks, cucumbers, snap peas or whole radishes.
- Top a baked potato with beans and salsa or broccoli and low-fat cheese.
- Make a veggie wrap with roasted vegetables and low-fat cheese rolled in a whole-wheat tortilla.
- Microwave a cup of vegetable soup as a snack or with a sandwich for lunch.
- Get saucy with fruit. Puree apples, berries, peaches, or pears in a blender for a thick, sweet sauce on grilled or broiled seafood or poultry or on pancakes, French toast or waffles.
- Mix up a breakfast smoothie made with low-fat milk and frozen fruit – try strawberries and banana, or mango with pineapple or peach.
- Dip: Whole wheat pita wedges in hummus, baked tortilla chips in salsa, strawberries or apple slices in low-fat yogurt, or graham crackers in applesauce.



Education Committee

You may be asking yourself, "When did we get an education committee? Last fall, Pastor Mark suggested that the children's council be "rebranded" as the Education Committee to have a group where anything related to education can be discussed and represented. The Education Committee will consist of the children's council, youth council, and adult council.

For those of you who have been on the children's council, this committee is in place of our meetings as children's council. We will continue to plan and discuss items related to the children such as Sunday School, VBS, Children's Sermons, etc. We just have a new name.

For those of you who are on the Youth Council, you are welcome to join us so we can expand what we are doing for our youth of the church.

Those on the Adult Council are welcome to join us whenever you need to.

The Education Meetings will be held on the last Tuesdays of the following months at 7:00 pm in the library. We did not meet in January due to the shut down, so our first meeting of the year will be next Tuesday, March 30. We will also meet on April 27, July 27, Sept. 28, and Oct. 26.

Children's News

When the church opened up in February, Sonshine Express started back up. Sonshine Express is our children's Sunday School Program. We meet downstairs at 9:15.

Kids from 4 years old to 5th grade are welcome to come, learn, and have a good time!



Do you like sharing your faith with children? We are always looking for volunteers to teach Sunday School or give the Children's Sermon during the 10:30 service. If you are interested in serving with the children, please contact Kathie Stoner @ kmstoner85@gmail.com or 219-552-4485.



Adult Sunday
School



Three adult discussion groups meet each Sunday morning at 9:15. ALL ARE WELCOME!! Stop in and visit any of the classes. Their studies are short-term and you may join in at any time and you may also rotate between classes for various studies that interest you.

WINGS class study: “Unexpected” March 28, April 4, 11, 18

In this 5 session DVD Bible study, bestselling author Christine Caine shows that while most of us have been trained to fear the unexpected and want everything "under control", God wants us to anticipate the unexpected with a faith-filled perspective rooted in trust. God has never been taken by surprise!

We can move from a life filled with fear, control, and feeling stuck to one full of hope, faith, and trust. In an age of upheaval, we can always know that God is good and wants good for us. We can trust God in the unpredictable circumstances of life by welcoming and even embracing the unexpected.

This group meets in room 300 with Al Martin.

F.R.I.E.N.D.S. April/May Study begins April 11: “Forgiving What You Can’t Forget”

Author Lysa Terkeurst shares the following, “In my own life as a Christian I was supposed to forgive. I may have even whispered a faint prayer using the word *forgiveness*. But truly understanding how to forgive? I wasn’t sure.”

In Lysa’s study titled Forgiving What You Can’t Forget Lysa guides us into listening, reading, and reflecting upon incredibly rich passages throughout scripture to offer truths found in the Bible about forgiveness. A “forgiveness” that our souls desperately need. Best of all God Himself modeled how to do this even when it feels impossible.

We will be viewing and discussing the video during class time. If you would like an even more personal and in-depth study, there is a study guide available for this study with daily activities coordinating with the weekly videos. This can be purchased on-line from Christianbooks.com or churchsource.com. Look for “Forgiving What You Can’t Forget Study Guide” by Lysa Terkeurst. “Forgiveness is not made possible by our determination. Forgiveness is made possible with what God has already done for us.”

This group meets with Don Bales in room 303.

FOM class is doing an 11 week DVD series called “Revealing the Mysteries of Heaven” by Dr. David Jeremiah. They meet in room 301 with David Schoon.



Lowell Church Mouse

I'm the church mouse. I see all that goes on in the church and I love to gossip about it. Of course being a Christian mouse, I only say positive things.

Boy, the Trustees have been busy. Three new Trustees came on in January. They all have jumped in with both feet. Dave Bauman has been up on the flat roofs tracking leaks and changing plugs. He worked with Chuck Wilson to change ceiling tiles. Mike Hayden worked with Kirk McQuiston to change light bulbs in the entryway. Have you noticed how nice and bright it is now? The pastor changed the bulbs in the narthex so it is nice and bright in there.

Kim Newlin is already planning care boxes for our college students. Be looking for the announcement about that.

I don't gossip about bad things, but I do want to say that I'm praying for Natalie Manier. She broke her ankle. She is one of our youth who lights candles on Sundays. I pray she gets better quickly.

Be careful when you do good work for the church. I'm watching and just waiting to share that gossip.



Pastor's Comic Corner

In case you haven't noticed, I love humor.
Below are a couple of comics that I've come across. Enjoy! Pastor Mark



WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday - *Worship* ~ 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. (in Sanct.), *Sunday School for All Ages 9:15*: F.O.M. (301), WINGS (300), FRIENDS (303) Youth (library) Children (downstairs)

Monday - A/A 12 p.m. (rm. 303)

Wednesday - A/A - 8 p.m. (Fellowship Hall), AI/Anon - 8 p.m. (library)

Thursday - Dulcimers 10 am (303), Godsbells 4:30 p.m. (300), **LYFT** Worship 6:00 p.m. (Fellowship Hall), Chancel Choir 7pm (sanctuary)

April 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Maundy Thursday Service 6pm (sanct.)	2 Office Closed Good Friday Service 7pm (sanct)	3
4 Easter Sunrise Service 7 am (sanct)	5 Office Closed Tri-Kappa 6:30pm (basement)	6	7 Girl Scouts 3:45pm (303) UMW Exec. 4:30 (bsmt)	8	9 Alpha/Barbara May 1:30 pm (library)	10 Mary Lain memorial service
11	12 Congregational Care 6pm (bsmt)	13	14 Music Comm. Mtg. 7pm (300)	15	16	17
18	19 Staff/Parish Mtg. 6pm (303)	20	21 Girl Scouts 3:45pm (bsmt)	22 Girl Scouts 4pm (bsmt)	23	24
25	26	27 Education Meeting 7pm (library)	28	29	30	