

Lake Avenue Baptist Church, 72 Ambrose Street, Rochester, NY 14608
www.lakeavebaptist.org; Phone: 585-458-5765 Fax: 585-458-5766

CHURCH CALENDAR: To see the most up-to-date calendar of church events please visit www.lakeavebaptist.org.

Lake Avenue Baptist Church

E-MAIL:

lakeavebaptistchurchoffice@gmail.com

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday
9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

SUNDAY SCHEDULE:

10:00 am: Worship for all, Sunday School Children & Youth (Communion first Sunday of the month)
11:15 am: Fellowship
11:45 am: Adult Education
12:00 pm: Myanmar Worship

CHURCH MODERATOR

Laura Tubbs

CHURCH STAFF

Senior Pastor
Michael Ford

Music Educator, Chancel Choir Director
and Organist
Lee Foster

Gospel Spirits Director and Pianist
Isobel Davies

Refugee Coordinator
Hkadin Lee

Director of Youth and Children's Ministry
Austin Pettigrew

Myanmar Christian Fellowship
Simon Kui, Lay Pastor

Bonaventure Moulougho
Church Accountant

Office Manager
Ken Setera

Custodial Services
Lloyd Cuyler

JANUARY 2018 WORSHIP AT A GLANCE

Sunday, January 14, 2018: Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday 10:00 am: Worship for all, Sunday School for Children and Youth; 11:15: Fellowship, Social Hall; 12:00 noon: Dedication of the Karen Baptist Church in Parma, NY; 12:30 pm: Myanmar Worship, Downstairs Sanctuary

Sunday, January 21, 2018: 10:00 am: Worship for all; Sunday School for Children and Youth; 11:15 am: Fellowship Time, Social Hall; 11:45 am: Adult Education Class, Conference Room; 12:30 pm: Myanmar Worship, Downstairs Sanctuary

Sunday, January 28, 2018: Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering Received: 10:00 am: Worship for all; Sunday School for Children and Youth; Congregational Meeting; 12:30 pm: Myanmar Worship, Downstairs Sanctuary

JANUARY ADULT EDUCATION OFFERING

In January the adult education class will return to the topic of racism. Some of our past classes led by Pastor Debbie helped us take a look at individual racism and we looked at ways that unconscious bias affects our behaviors and issues of overt racism. Now our focus will shift to institutional racism; the racism we are all immersed in because of the structure of our society and culture. We will look at this together by listening to a podcast produced at Duke University's Center for Documentary Studies called "Seeing White". This podcast series explores the concept and history of institutional racism by focusing on Whiteness, how we define it and how it has impacted US history, law, and culture. We will listen to one of the podcasts and then spend time discussing it together. I am looking forward to sharing this with you, moderating our discussions, and learning from your thoughts and insights. Please join us as often as you are able.

Our Senior Minister's Article

Well that was fun now wasn't it?

When Lara and I got married in November 2015, we looked at the day as an opportunity to celebrate with friends and family. We didn't want gifts. We weren't starting out in life, getting married young and needing to establish a household where gifts would be appreciated (and necessary!). However, we were quickly told that people would want to get us a little something, and if we didn't direct that giving in some direction we would be at the whim of the

giver! And so we decided to set up a scholarship fund so that young people at LABC could access those funds to help with their educational endeavors. And wow did you respond!

By the time our wedding was over, we had received over \$6,000 to that fund! Your generosity allowed our scholarship committee to help out a few students this past year, and we trust that they will do the same in the years to come. Our only caveat was that the money be used. We didn't want to put conditions on the fund so that it would sit and gain interest. We knew that students needed the money now (as students often do!). Long story made short, the fund has been used, and is being used, and thanks to so many of you, young people are getting some much needed assistance.

Fast forward to this fall. Early December there was an image floating around Facebook of a very tacky Christmas suit.



A member of our congregation jokingly posted that it would be the perfect suit for me on Christmas. That simple post led to something I couldn't have imagined. Realizing that I was probably going to end up wearing that suit somehow anyway, I decided to grab the reigns before they slipped out of my hands for good. I challenged people on Facebook. If we raised \$100 for the Michael and Lara Ford Scholarship, I would buy the suit myself (using my own money), and wear it on Christmas Eve morning (the morning of the 24th). If we raised \$200 I would wear it on the morning of the 24th and the morning of the 31st. A simple little challenge that got some traction.

As the funds began to roll in, Lee joined the fun and agreed to wear an equally tacky suit. By the end of this we raised over \$1,000 for the scholarship fund! Thank you so much for your generosity. Lee and I, as promised, wore the suits on the 24th and 31st. Simon joined the fun too so we were all decked out in our Christmas finery.

I tell you this story as a word of thanks, and a word of explanation for anyone who hear about our exploits and wanted the backstory in a little detail. I also tell the story because I think that demonstrates something so profound about LABC: your commitment to causes bigger than yourselves, and your generosity. We see it time and time again with your giving: time, talents, and treasures. You do not simply "talk the talk, but walk the walk."

Over the Christmas break, in addition to this little fundraising effort, you gave to the Rice Project put on by our Mission Committee, raising a few hundred dollars! Chuck Theis and many volunteers put on another Christmas dinner for the community. You've invited the church to serve as the home for the Rochester Deaf Refugee Task Force programming, and so many other important initiatives. There are so many other things that I could list, and many others that I am simply no aware of because they go on behind the scenes.

Thank you for modeling the meaning of Christmas: giving. You give from your hearts, and you make it a pleasure to serve as your pastor. I do not need to motivate you to give, I simply need to help to provide opportunities to do so, or to encourage the opportunities you discover that reflect how God is moving in your hearts.

I am excited about 2018. God is moving at LABC, and I encourage you all to go along with me for the ride.

Blessings and Happy New Year!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR MODERATOR

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! It is common in the United States for people to make New Year's resolutions. People make a promise to themselves to do something different in the New Year. Some common promises are to lose weight, to exercise more and to get more organized (I have made all of these particular resolutions myself in the past!). I read an interesting article recently about New Year's resolutions. Most of the resolutions that we make are to try to improve something we think we are doing poorly or failing at. The author felt that focusing on how we have failed or fallen short led to feeling worse about ourselves rather than better. She suggested that our New Year's resolutions should focus on doing more of the things we do well or do right. What are you good at doing? Could you do more of it? I

liked this idea and it led me to think about what we do well as a church. What do you think we do well? What would you choose if we were to make positive New Year's resolutions as a congregation? I hope you will give this some thought and share your ideas with each other. I hope that focusing on what we do well will encourage us to do more, make us feel better about ourselves as a congregation, and help keep those post-holiday blues away!

With gratitude for all the things we do well together,

Laura Tubbs

A NOTE FROM YOUR DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

It's the most wonderful time of the year! This Advent Season has been particularly interesting for me here at LABC. You see, I did not grow up learning about the Advent Calendar in the church I grew up in. I've learned that the wreath represents God's infinite love. The candles, one for each week, represents Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. I think about what these represent in the life of each of us and the life of the church. These are good reminders for this time of waiting, of expectation for the coming of Jesus, but I wonder...will we allow these things to transform us? We serve a God who infinitely loves us. How are we living out that love, through an understanding of hope, peace, joy and love? May we, in this season of focusing on the birth of Jesus--be that witness to an infinite love to those around us who need it the most--the poor, the misunderstood, the mentally ill, the imprisoned, the downcast, the depressed, the hurting and alone.

I had the opportunity to be a part of the youth's Christmas party. It was a great time of hiking, eating, fellowship and gift-giving. I am continually amazed and thankful for all of our volunteers, the time and creativity so many bring to make such wonderful programs for our children and youth. From the Sunday School program, parties and special events to arts and crafts time during Adult Ed. I thank you all for your time and talents.

Austin Pettigrew, Director of Youth and Children's Ministry

OUR 2018 PLEDGE CAMPAIGN UPDATE

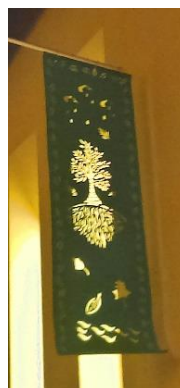
by Mike Donatucci, Resource and Support Chair

Happy New Year! We are currently wrapping up our 2018 pledge campaign and your response to this is deeply appreciated. This successful pledge campaign will result in accomplishing our mission to the greater community. Our initial review shows an increase in the number of contributors over last year! If you haven't done so, please submit your 2018 pledge as soon as possible. If you need a pledge card, please contact the church office. We also ask that if you contribute by check, please use the memo field on the front of the check to identify the purpose of the contribution.

The Church Council is busy putting together a responsible, progressive budget for 2018 and will present it at our annual congregational budget meeting (Sunday, January 28th) for approval.

NEW BANNERS IN CHURCH

In the church sanctuary you will see two new green banners hanging on either side. These were painstakingly created by Lee Foster, our Music Educator, Organist and Chancel Choir Director. The banners are for the season of Epiphany that occurs between Christmas and Lent and are green in color representing the liturgical color for this time of year. The following are notes from Lee Foster regarding these banners:



"The banner on the left side of the sanctuary focuses on the Tree of Life in the center, the clouds drop the rain of Living Water upon the Tree of Life whose roots hold fast in the earth. Below the roots are waves of the sea that evaporate to form clouds to fulfill the cycle of life. The border is formed of leaves, the new growth made possible by the rain. To quote the refrain of the hymn, "Rain Down," by Jaime Cortez, 'Rain down, rain

down, rain down your love on your people. Rain down, rain down, rain down your love, God of life.'

The banner on the right centers on the Star of Bethlehem with stars and planets of creation representing the Light of the World that gives us life. Or to quote an Inuit poem, 'Perhaps they are not stars in the sky, but rather openings where our loved ones shine down to let us know they are happy.' "



●We continue to pray for **Craig Raisner** as he continues with rehabilitation at Monroe Community Hospital. Craig would appreciate receiving cards and notes from the congregation. His address is Monroe Community Hospital, 435 East Henrietta Road, Faith Hall, Rm. 4C32, Rochester, NY 14620

●We welcome our two newest members **Melissa Vega** and **Soe Gay Win** who joined the church through Christian Experience on Sunday, December 17, 2017.

NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST WOMEN UNION (NABWU) CONFERENCE

Report by Hkadin Lee.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY



On Sunday, January 7, 2018, we had the privilege of sharing in a service of ordination for Pastor Simon Aung Kui. Simon is the lay pastor of the Rochester Myanmar Christian Fellowship at LABC. Over the past four years Simon has completed his M.Div. from Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, and has completed all of the required steps for ordination within the American Baptist Churches of the Rochester Genesee Region. Following a successful permanent council on ordination which was held in early December, we were invited to hold a service of ordination.

This was a wonderful celebration with friends, family, local clergy, and our broader church family. A special thank you to all who made this service such a success. Also, thank you to the Rochester Myanmar Christian Fellowship for providing a lovely meal following the ordination.

We wish to extend a special congratulations to Pastor Simon (now Rev. Simon), his family, friends, and the entire LABC community on this exciting event in the life of our church.

It is our prayer that God will continue to bless Pastor Simon as he serves God in faithfulness and love!

●**In Memoriam:** We mourn the passing of long time member **Vern Thayer** who passed away on December 22 at the age of 101. The family is planning a memorial service to be held sometime during the spring months. An announcement will follow once a firm date has been established.

●Our healing prayers are with **John Eysvogel** who is in rehabilitative care at the Kirkhaven Transitional Care Facility, 254 Alexander Street, Rochester, NY 14607.



Last Oct 19-22, 2017 Khatom Lamai Sorrels, Eh Moo Paw and I were able to attend this women's conference. Khatom and I were sponsored by LABC Mission & Eh Moo Paw was sponsored by Rochester Karen

Baptist Church. Also, the Myanmar Christian Fellowship was able to help with Khatom's lodging. The Conference was held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada and organized by NABWU which is a women's network that reaches throughout Canada and the United States, encouraging and engaging Baptist women from 17 different member bodies. The American Baptist Women's Ministries of the American Baptist Churches in USA is one of them. We were honored to represent not only LABC but also ABWUSA.

It was a great learning experience for all of us to meet sisters in Christ from different countries and learn from them as we shared our stories. Even though there were many learning opportunities at the conference, we each could only choose to attend a few of them. The Conference was focused on Isaiah 43, verse 19 – "See, I am doing a new thing".

Among all the panel discussion sections, I found the mentoring discussion very informative. In it, I learned much about myself and realized the importance of active listening.

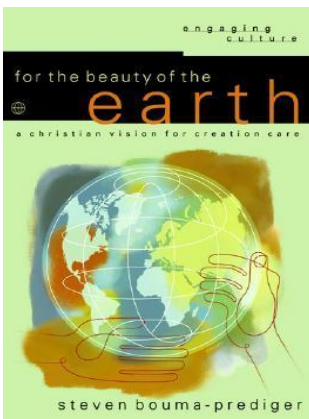
Thank you to the LABC Mission Ministry, the Myanmar Christian Fellowship & Rochester Karen Baptist Church for giving me and the others this opportunity. We all appreciate your continued support.



What does it mean to be part of God's great creation? How do we live in a way that reflects our desire to respect and honor what God has created? How do we participate as part of a community of faith that seeks to care for creation? These are the types of questions that we will be struggling with as LABC moves into a congregational-wide exploration of Creation Care.

Throughout 2018 (and beyond!) we will be focusing on Creation Care. In the fall of 2017 your Church Council approved the implementation of a congregational-wide focus on Creation Care and we are kicking this off in true Baptist fashion with the creation of a steering committee to help guide us through the year. Each Church Council committee has been asked to appoint a volunteer to this group to help ensure we have some "cross pollination" of committees and areas of responsibility. However, there is always room for more!

If you would be interested in serving on this committee, please let me, Pastor Michael, know as soon as possible. Our first meeting will be in later January so we can get to work!



MID-WEEK BOOK STUDY

As part of our Creation Care initiative, we will be beginning a mid-week books study. The first of our books will be "For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care (Engaging Culture)" by Steven Bouma-Prediger.

Thomas Aquinas once stated that "any error about creation also leads to an error about God." At a time when it seems humans have erred much in their treatment of the planet, this book explores the relationship between Christianity and the natural world in the most thorough evangelical treatment available on a theology of creation care. An esteemed scholar of ecology and theology, Steven Bouma-Prediger claims that "authentic Christian faith requires ecological obedience." This substantive yet accessible book argues that true Christianity acknowledges the responsibility and privilege Christians have been given as

stewards of the earth. Sure to provoke dialogue, "For the Beauty of the Earth" will be welcomed by professors and students of theology, ecology, and contemporary culture.

Please let Pastor Michael know if you are interested in joining this discussion, so that we can arrange a day and time that works for the majority of people.

Copies of the book will be provided.

The Lord Has Done Great Things for Us, and We Rejoice

My name is Eh-Moo-Paw. I have been a member of LABC for the last 6 years. While I have been a member, I felt very important, made friends, felt very welcomed, and supported by members of LABC. I wanted to take some time to show my appreciation and thanks to Pastor Michael, the committees, and all of the members of LABC. First, I have a Bible verse to share with everyone as a blessing, which expresses my thanks. Numbers, Chapter 6:24-26. "The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord makes his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lifts up his countenance upon you and gives you peace."

While I am the one talking, these words and thanks come from every member of Rochester Karen Baptist Church community. By the Grace of God many of us who were refugees from Thailand, Malaysia in communities and countries

that gave us temporary refuge were all brought together here in Rochester, New York.

Since the first families started coming and looking for a place to worship, LABC has welcomed us with open arms and helped us to grow into the amazing community we are today. Since 2006 we have had the opportunity to be helped by 4 fantastic pastors: Pastor Peter, Pastor Debbie, Pastor Gordon, and Pastor Michael Ford.

They helped us not only with our spiritual needs but also with whatever personal needs we had. Driving to doctor appointments, or helping with the children's school. Especially, Mary's Place has been very helpful for our community. We could always count on both LABC and Mary's Place for help. Once again, Hkadin Lee is our North Star. We are very grateful to have her, and we love her.

The spiritual guidance that the pastors provided our children and young adults has helped them to become outstanding people and has helped to strengthen their relationship with God. With your help, our members have been able to accomplish so much. From graduating college, or getting married, or even those still in school have benefited from your help. Others have been able to become citizens, buy a house, or even get a job because of your help and your belief in them. I think that Psalms 67:6 and 7 show what your help means to us. "The earth has yielded its increases, God, our God, has blessed us; may God continue to bless us let all the ends of the earth revere Him. "

In 2012 the Rochester KBC came together and decided that we wanted to continue to grow and have a place of worship we could call our own. In 2014 we began to collect offerings from the community to help to secure a place of our own.

Our goal has been to maintain the faith that Adoniram Judson brought to us during his time as a missionary. Our ancestors shared their faith with our children and they will continue to grow the faith. The KBCUSA, ABCUSA and LABC have worked together to support us. LABC has been our Mother Church and has helped us to grow and learn as a community of faith. Even though we are leaving this place we will never forget the lessons that you have taught us and the help that you have given us.

I also want to take the opportunity to thank Pastor Alan Newton who has led LABC and many others in supporting our growth as a community and in faith. We believe that it is God's will for us to continue to chase our dreams, grow, and reach our goal to move into our own church building. Proverbs 31:8 says, "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves."

I hope you all would love and appreciate the effort and the help that was giving to us, I hope that the future of our community would grow and stay strong, to help and to love.

Genesis 31:49-50 says, "The Lord watches between you and me, when we are absent one from the other. If you ill-treat my daughter, or if you take wives, in addition to my daughter, though no one else is with us, remember that God is witness between you and me. May you be blessed with warmth in your home, love in your heart, peace in your soul and joy in your life"