

LABC NEWS

DECEMBER 31, 2015
VOLUME 79, ISSUE 1

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWS IS
JANUARY 20, 2016

Lake Avenue Baptist Church, 72 Ambrose Street, Rochester, NY 14608
www.lakeavebaptist.org lakeavebaptist@rochester.rr.com, 585-458-5765

Lake Avenue Baptist Church

E-MAIL:

lakeavebaptistchurchoffice@gmail.com

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday
10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

SUNDAY SCHEDULE:

10:00 am: Worship for all.
(Communion every first Sunday of the month.)

11:15 am: Fellowship
11:45 am: Adult Education
12:00 pm: Karen Worship
Burmese Worship

CHURCH STAFF

Sr. Pastor
Michael Ford

Associate Pastor
Debbie Bennett Reynolds

Church Moderator
Tom Argust

Music Educator, Chancel Choir
Director and Organist
Lee Foster

Music Educator, Gospel Spirits
Director and Pianist
Isobel Davies

Refugee Coordinator
Hkadin Lee

Karen Lay Pastor
Day Chit

Burmese Lay Pastor
Simon Kui

Office Manager
Ken Setera

Custodial Services
Lloyd Cuyler



LABC SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Sunday, January 3, 2016: Epiphany Sunday 10:00 am Worship & Communion for all, Sunday School for children and youth; 11:15 am: Fellowship; 12:00 noon: Karen Worship, Myanmar Worship.

Sunday, January 10, 2016: 10:00 am Worship for all, Sunday School for children and youth; 11:15 am: Fellowship; 11:45 am: Adult Education; 12:00 noon: Karen and Myanmar Worship.

Saturday, January 16, 2016: Karen New Year Celebration, Sanctuary and Social Hall beginning about 9:00 am.

Sunday, January 17, 2016: Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday Guest speaker Rev. Michael Ware. 10:00 Worship for all, Sunday School for children and youth; 11:15 am: Fellowship; 11:45 am: Adult Education; 12:00 pm: Karen and Myanmar Worship Services

Sunday, January 24, 2016: 10:00 am: Worship for all, Sunday School for children and youth; 11:15 am: Fellowship; 11:45 am: Adult Education; 12:00 pm: Karen and Myanmar Worship.

Sunday, January 31, 2016, MEEK Sunday: 10:00 am Worship for all, Sunday School for children and youth; **Congregational Meeting;** 12:00 pm: Karen Worship, Burmese Worship.

LABC ENGLISH ADULT EDUCATION FOR JANUARY

Sunday, January 10: A video presentation of a TED talk by Iman Faisal Abdul Rauf, "Lose your ego, find compassion." Iman Rauf combines the teachings of the Qur'an (Koran), stories of Rumi, and examples of Muhammad and Jesus to talk about compassion from a Sufi Muslim perspective.

Sunday, January 17: An Interview with Michael Ware, our guest preacher for the day, who is pastor of Webster Baptist Church, and one who always claims Lake

Avenue Baptist Church as his home church. Michael Ware and his wife Barbara Lacker-Ware were very active here when he felt God leading him into pastoral ministry, and this church ordained him. This is a chance to hear from Michael about his spiritual journey.

Sunday, January 24: A Forum on our 2016 Budget, led by Trevor Ewell, Chair of Resource Support Ministry

Sunday, January 31: Congregational meeting to vote on the 2016 budget (immediately following worship)

Supper & Something – Wednesday, January 13, 6 p.m.

Join us for a potluck meal and a time of sharing together from our spiritual journeys. Bring an entrée, pot of soup, salad or dessert to share if you can. Drinks & bread provided. This month's reflection and sharing will focus on Epiphany: Where do we see God's light breaking in? Who, like the magi, are the unexpected messengers of God's salvation to us and our world? We will close with a time of Prayer for Peace.

Our Pastor's Article

I enjoy the New Year. Not because I go to any special parties or have any significant ways I celebrate the advent of a New Year, but rather because of what it represents to me. It is an opportunity to look back on the year that was, and to take pause in preparation for the year to come. It is a time to give thanks, and to look forward with great excitement to the potential of the year that lays ahead.

Looking back I cannot help but give thanks. 2015 has been a wonderful year for me personally and for LABC in general. In 2015 I got engaged, celebrated some wonderful vacation time with family and friends, and got married. One of the most important and memorable things for me will be standing at the front of the church watching Lara walk down the aisle toward me, with my son Holden standing beside me. It was an honor to share that special day with so many of you, and I appreciate the support and love you have shown to me and continue to show to Lara and Holden and me as we share our lives together.

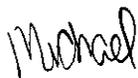
As a church, 2015 has been busy. From the ebb and flow of the church year to some significant activities and events it has been an exciting year. In addition to our weekly worship services we have made some important decisions as a community. We have approved a new set of bylaws that express more accurately who we are as a church, and have embarked on another strategic planning process to decide together where we feel God is calling us in the future. We have celebrated births, birthdays, and saints who have been called home. We have been filled with joy and pain, but we have done these things together. We continue to grow into the community that God is calling us to be.

2016 is stretched out before us. As a pastor it is exciting to see what God is doing through each of us, and to help us to find ways to use these gifts and abilities in God's service here at LABC and beyond. It is a privilege to serve as a servant leader amongst you and I am privileged daily to be called to this task. I know that LABC will continue to do great things in the year to come.

We will undoubtedly face challenges and loss and pain. However, we will not be as those without hope, because we will face these things together. We will support one another and lift one another up in faith. We will pray for and with one another.

God is still working and active in our church. Let us continue to serve God together and may 2016 be a blessing to you and yours.

Blessings,



A NOTE FROM ASSOCIATE PASTOR DEBBIE BENNETT REYNOLDS

Dear Friends,

I am enjoying the quiet of “Christmastide” - these 12 days of Christmas in the church liturgical year that this year, since we are not travelling, are letting me relax and catch my breath. I am grateful for all the special activities and worship services of Advent and Christmas we have shared together.

I want to share one special event that happened this December most of you know nothing about. A couple weeks ago Pastor Michael got a call. A woman in the neighborhood, Charlene, had died somewhat suddenly, and her family wanted a memorial service. A year or two ago Pastor Michael had done a memorial service for someone else in the extended family, and he and Ken have had other contacts with the family. Of course, Michael said he would do the service. So, on a Monday ten days before Christmas the family and friends began to gather.

Michael, seeing the number of people growing and hearing how emotionally upset some of the family were, asked Ken, Hkadin and I to come provide some additional presence and support. These were Edgerton neighborhood people – white and black, poor people who have led hard lives. You could see it in their faces and in their clothes. Michael led the service with prayers and scripture readings and then invited family and friends to share. Their words were full of emotion and thankfulness: “She didn’t have nothing, but she would give you whatever she had. Food, a place to sleep, anything she could.” Choking back his tears one young man said, “I just got out of prison and heard she was in the hospital. When I heard she died I couldn’t believe it. She was the only grandma my brother and I ever had. We were best friends with her grandson and she took us in all the time and fed us and let us stay there.” Again and again they shared what a good woman she was and how she gave love to all she knew. The proof of their words was in the 80 people who gathered on a Monday afternoon at 1 p.m. and in the obvious love they felt for Charlene.

After the service, I found one of them had left me a note asking if we might be able to help their family with a little food for Christmas. Their grandson was stabbed this summer and died 2 months later. They had to pay for a funeral service and so lost their apartment, and they were just now getting back into a place to live. I went to take them a Tops gift card and found the great grandmother in a wheel chair, the grandmother, the young man’s girlfriend and their baby, probably about 4 or 5 months old. The girlfriend left high school to take care of the baby. They showed me a table top full of photos of the young man who had died from violence; they have no idea why he was attacked. I left feeling the grief and pain that lives in this neighborhood as I slowly drove down the street where their grandson/boyfriend was stabbed. Next week when I go to the Northwest Safety Net meeting, a meeting of city and county service providers and church folk like me, I hope to find some more resources for this family.

From that same Safety Net group, I also learned of a homeless family of 8 right before Christmas who were trying to get some clothes and school supplies. Not toys, just clothes to wear and school supplies. Because of White Cross Offering donations from American Baptist Women’s groups, I had new school supplies and a Walmart gift card to share so they could shop for what they most needed.

I share these stories because I want all of us as LABC to pray for our immediate neighborhood and to be helped to SEE our neighbors for who they are. Tough people who live hard lives, people with much grief and pain, and yet people who love deeply - and some who give in amazing and generous ways.

I also know that some of you sometimes are afraid our focus on refugee outreach may mean we are no longer meeting needs in our neighborhood. I want you to know that is not true. As your staff, we are very involved with some of our immediate neighbors, and LABC is still seen as a place to turn for spiritual care and physical help by many in our neighborhood.

I hope you will pray for us as a staff here in the office on a day to day basis as we try to respond to the needs of those who come to our door and to be faithful to the many other parts of our ministries as a church community. Knowing the best ways to help is often not easy. I also hope you will give to our Fellowship Fund when you can. Your giving allows us to help our own church members and participants in times of financial needs, but we also use this money to help our neighbors when we believe it can make a difference. Let’s keep praying that we may be able to be good neighbors, agents of God’s love, in our community.

Blessings to you now and in the new year,

Debbie

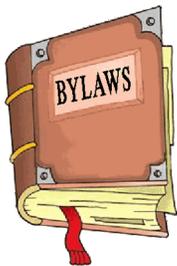


KAREN NEW YEAR CELEBRATION YEAR 2755 (2016)

**Saturday, January 16,
2016 beginning around
9:00 am.**

All are invited and welcome to attend!

NEW BYLAWS - NOW WHAT?



A month or so ago we at LABC approved a new set of bylaws. After a year of hard work the Vision Coordinating Council (VCC) approved the changes and brought them before the congregation for your approval. We had an excellent congregational meeting and they were approved unanimously. And I'm sure you're all asking yourselves the same question (or will be once I finish this sentence) ... what has changed ... I mean really, in a practical sense, what is so different now that we have new bylaws?

I'm glad you asked.

There are a few things that have changed.

First, we now call the VCC the "Church Council." This is pretty basic but important. For a few years we have been stumbling over the phrase VCC. Considering that most people still called it the church council even under the new name, we decided to return the name to "Church Council." With any luck we'll all get the terms right in the next day or so and no longer be saying "VC ... I mean Church Council."

Second, we added a formal way to recognize our Fellowship Groups. The Karen and Myanmar Fellowship groups are important parts of our LABC community. It was important that there be a way to formally recognize both groups. Both Karen and Myanmar Fellowship groups are now represented on the Church Council. Which leads to ...

Third, we expanded the voting members of the Church Council. In addition to the Karen and Myanmar

Fellowship groups having a voting position on the Council, the Moderator and Clerk may also now vote. This better represents the size of our congregation and the number of people working to make decisions on the council.

Why did we do these things? We wanted to make it very clear that LABC has a bright future ahead of us. However, it will take all of us working together to see that happen. LABC is often described as an umbrella under which various groups worship and work together as a community. We are one church with many faces. Together we will continue to work in relationship with each other to serve God faithfully.

And so I present you with a challenge. When you look at one another with different languages, skin colors, cultures, sexual orientations and any other of the markers that seem to make us distinct from one another, I encourage you to hear my voice and a mantra welling up within you. "WE ARE LABC ... TOGETHER." As we journey forward, may we be reminded that "WE ARE LABC ... TOGETHER."

MICHAEL AND LARA FORD SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

Thank you so much to everyone who contributed to the Michael and Lara Ford Scholarship at LABC. When Lara and I announced that we were getting married we knew that we wanted to do something that would benefit our community here at LABC. We have so many bright young people who want to go on to post-secondary education of various sorts, and one of the biggest challenges with such aspirations are the price tags attached. Instead of accepting gifts for ourselves we invited anyone who was interested to make a donation to this scholarship fund ... and many of you did. Thank you so much. Money is still coming in, but at this point we are around \$6000! Thank you for your generosity and on behalf of the young people who will benefit from these funds in the years to come ... thank you so much!



We have a growing number of 6th-12th grade students coming every week for Tutoring on Mondays from 4:30-6:00 p.m. We are now up to 18 to 20 students. We really need more tutors in all areas, most especially in math and science. The young people do a great job helping each other, and we

also spend time discussing topics and playing games when homework is done. This group has become a vital part of our youth program and a great place where mentoring is occurring. If you could possibly help with this, please prayerfully consider committing to this great group of young people! If you know someone who might be interested, please let them know of the need and encourage them to be in touch with Debbie Reynolds. Please help us spread the word!

In addition, some needs for a few younger students to get extra help have come to our attention. If you would be willing to give some one on one time to an elementary student who needs extra help, please talk with Debbie Reynolds.

Beneath the dangling sword
the nations rage and snarl and starve
while inept men debate

the means of peace . . .

It is not just hating war,

despising war,

sitting back and waiting for war to end.

It's not just loving peace,

wanting peace,

sitting back and waiting for peace to come.

Peace like war is waged.

Peace plans its strategy and encircles its enemy.

Peace marshals its forces and storms the gates.

Peace gathers its weapons and pierces the defense.

Christ has turned it all around

I am to love my enemy . . .

do good to those who hate me . . .

turn the other cheek.

I am the peacemaker.

From "The Peacemaker" by Walker Knight

The Waging Peace Prayer Group has begun meeting every Wednesday, 7:00-7:25 p.m. in the social hall to pray together for peace. Prayer, in silence and in words, is at the heart of working for peace. Come join us as much as you can and commit to pray with us even if you cannot be here at the church. Bill Reynolds, Coke Stewart, and Doris Perket have committed to share responsibility for convening the group each week.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

● **Shirley Lindner** and **Alison Jameson** are both recovering from surgery and are doing well.

● **Marian Cogger** is on a mission trip to Nicaragua from January 1st to 13th. She will be doing Bible activities with kids and distributing the eyeglasses that were collected here at LABC.

● **Edith Abell** passed away peacefully on December 7, 2015 at the age of 102.

● **Maria Wetenhall**, mother of Paul Wetenhall, passed away on December 6, 2015 at the age of 90. Maria's life was remarkable for her strong faith in God that sustained her during incredible hardships of her younger years in the Ukraine and then Germany. Following WWII and as a displaced person, she and her family arrived in New York harbor in September 1951. Maria's life story in the context of the tragic events of Eastern Europe is the subject of a Princeton history thesis entitled "*No Ordinary Story: A Chronicle of Suffering and Survival in Soviet Ukraine and Nazi Germany*" written by her grandson John Wetenhall.

● Congratulations to **Nah Naw Htoo** and **Ta Do Do** on the birth of their son **Leo Governor** on December 14th.

● **Baby Blessings:** On Sunday, December 27th we were pleased to introduce, dedicate and bless the following babies: **Christian Tullay** (son of Jenneh), **Daniel Hardy Htoo** (son of Nan Nan Htoo and Rinah Htoo), **Grace Paw Wah** (daughter of Taw Wah and Ben Paw) **Hserhser Than Tong** (daughter of Hey Naysoe Tong and Ri Nah Say).

● **Vern Thayer, A True Hero of the American Red Cross:** Our long time member, Vern Thayer, began donating blood at the Red Cross at the age of 26. He is now 99 years old which means he has been donating blood for 73 years! During this time he has given 399 whole blood donations and 434 platelet donations. Potentially, through his platelet donations, he could have saved over 1,300 people and through whole blood nearly 1,200. In other words, Vern could have saved approximately 2,500 lives! As stated by one of the staff of the Red Cross of Rochester, "Not all heroes

wear capes. Sometimes they wear flannel and a smile. Thank you (Vern) for everything you've done for us over the years." And Lake Avenue Baptist Church says "Amen!"

A REQUEST FROM FAIRPORT BAPTIST HOMES:

The Fairport Baptist Homes Chaplains are looking for volunteers to assist with the religious programs. Volunteer alone or with a group once, weekly, monthly or a few times a year. We welcome a helping hand whenever you are available!

We need volunteers to:

1. Help bring residents from their rooms to the Chapel for Bible Study. Volunteer would bring residents to the Bible Study, participate in Bible Study and then help bring them back to their rooms.

Time commitment Thursday 10AM-12PM.

2. Help bring residents from their rooms to the Chapel for Worship. Volunteer would bring residents to the church, sit with them during the service and then help bring them back to their rooms.

*Time commitment, Tuesday 1:30-3:00PM
(Catholic Mass) or Sunday 1:30-3:30PM
(Protestant Service)*

3. Provide Music at Sunday Worship Service. Volunteer would play piano /another instrument or sing at the Sunday worship service.

Time Commitment Sunday 1:30-3:00 PM

For more details please contact: Rev. Jennifer Streeter at [585-388-2336](tel:585-388-2336), or email her at jstreeter@fbhcm.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 	2 10:00 am: Karen Youth Rehearsal, Sanctuary
3 EPIPHANY SUNDAY 10:00 am: Worship & Communion for all & Sunday School; 11:15 am: Fellowship; 12:00: Burmese Worship and Karen Worship	4 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place; 4:30 pm: Tutoring, SH;	5 11:30 am: English Tutoring, Maplewood Library; 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place; 7:00 pm: Vision AA, SH and Gospel Spirits Rehearsal, Sanctuary	6 10:30 am: Staff Meeting; 11:30 English Tutoring Maplewood Library; 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place; 7:00 pm: Waging Peace Prayer Group, SH; 7:30 pm: Chancel Choir, Sanctuary	7 11:30 am: English Tutoring Maplewood Library; 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place	8 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place	9 10:00 am: Karen Youth Rehearsal, Sanctuary
10 10:00 am: Worship for all & Sunday School; 11:15 am: Fellowship; 11:45 am: Adult Ed. Conf. Rm.; 12:00: Burmese Worship and Karen Worship	11 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place; 4:30 pm: Tutoring, SH; 7:00 pm: Church Council Meeting, Conf. Rm.	12 11:30 am: English Tutoring, Maplewood Library; 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place; 7:00 pm: Vision AA, SH and Gospel Spirits Rehearsal, Sanctuary	13 10:30 am: Staff Meeting; 11:30 English Tutoring Maplewood Library; 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place; 6:00 pm: Supper and Something, SH; 7:00 pm: Waging Peace Prayer Group, SH; 7:30 pm: Chancel Choir, Sanctuary	14 11:30 am: English Tutoring Maplewood Library; 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place	15 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place	16 9:00 AM: KAREN NEW YEAR CELEBRATION
17 MLK Jr. Sunday 10:00 am: Worship for all & Sunday School; Michael Ware preaching; 11:15 am: Fellowship; 11:45 am: Adult Ed. Conf. Rm.; 12:00: Burmese Worship and Karen Worship	18 Church Office Closed. , Mary's Place; 4:30 pm: Tutoring, SH; 7:00 pm: Nurture and Care Ministry and Mission. 	19 11:30 am: English Tutoring, Maplewood Library; 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place; 7:00 pm: Vision AA, SH and Gospel Spirits Rehearsal, Sanctuary	20 10:30 am: Staff Meeting; 11:30 English Tutoring Maplewood Library; 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place; 7:00 pm: Waging Peace Prayer Group; 7:30 pm: Chancel Choir, Sanctuary	21 11:30 am: English Tutoring Maplewood Library; 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place	22 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place	23 10:00 am: Karen Youth Rehearsal, Sanctuary
24 10:00 am: Worship for all & Sunday School; 11:15 am Fellowship; 11:45 am: Budget Discussion, Conf. Rm.; 12:00: Burmese Worship and Karen Worship	25 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place; 4:30 pm: Tutoring, SH; 7:30 pm: Invitation and Welcome, Conf. Rm.	26 11:30 am: English Tutoring, Maplewood Library; 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place; 7:00 pm: Vision AA, SH and Gospel Spirits Rehearsal, Sanctuary	27 10:30 am: Staff Meeting; 11:30 English Tutoring Maplewood Library; 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place; 7:00 pm: Waging Peace Prayer Group; 7:30 pm: Chancel Choir, Sanctuary	28 11:30 am: English Tutoring Maplewood Library; 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place	29 1:00 pm: Refugee Outreach, Mary's Place	30 10:00 am: Karen Youth Rehearsal, Sanctuary
31 10:00 am: Worship for all & Sunday School Congregational Meeting. 11:30 am: Fellowship; 11:45 am: Adult Ed. Conf. Rm.; 12:00: Burmese Worship and Karen Worship	Notes: ABBREVIATIONS: SH: Social Hall Conf. Rm.: Conference Room					

