

Lake Avenue Baptist Church, 72 Ambrose Street, Rochester, NY 14608
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Lake Avenue Baptist Church

E-MAIL:
kenadmin@rochester.rr.com

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday
10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

SUNDAY SCHEDULE:

10:00 am: Worship for all
11:15 am: Fellowship
11:45 am: Karen Worship
Burmese Worship
Adult Education

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 Pastors
William Lahtaw & Simon Kui

Office Manager
Ken Setera

Custodial Services
Lloyd Cuyler

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE



March 29, 2015: Palm Sunday 10:00 am Worship for all; 11:15 am: Fellowship; 11:45 am: Karen Worship, Burmese Worship. On Palm Sunday, our elementary-aged children will experience the events of Holy Week, beginning with waving palms in the worship service. Other Holy Week events will be re-enacted during Sunday School.

April 2, 2015: Holy Thursday. Join us at 7:00 pm for a service of worship and communion as we remember Jesus' last supper with his apostles.

April 3, 2015: Good Friday: We will once again gather for a Tenebrae Worship Service beginning at 7:00 pm. The sanctuary will be darkened for this service as we recall the final hours of Jesus and his crucifixion. Music will be performed by the Chancel Choir. We hope you will be able to join us for this meaningful service.



April 5, 2015: Easter Sunday: He has Risen! Rejoice with us at our Easter Celebration Worship Service at 10:00 am. We will also be celebrating communion and believers' baptism. Following service there will be an Easter egg hunt for the children and an extended time for fellowship in the social hall. 11:45:

Karen Easter Service, Sanctuary and Burmese Easter Worship in the downstairs sanctuary.

April 12, 2015: First Sunday of Easter: 10:00 am: Worship for all, Sanctuary; 11:15 am: Fellowship; 11:45 am: Adult Education, Conference Room; Karen Worship Service in the Sanctuary and Burmese Worship Service in the downstairs Sanctuary.

April 19, 2015: Second Sunday of Easter: 10:00 am: Worship for all, Sanctuary; 11:15 am: Fellowship, Social Hall; 11:45 am: Adult Education, Conference Room; Karen Worship, Sanctuary; Burmese Worship, downstairs sanctuary.

April 26, 2015: Third Sunday of Easter: 10:00 am: Worship for all, Sanctuary; 11:15 am: Fellowship, Social Hall; 11:45 am: Adult Education, Conference Room; Karen Worship, sanctuary; Burmese Worship, downstairs sanctuary.

UPCOMING ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, March 29, 2015: We continue our Lenten Bible Study with the discussion of the lectionary readings used during worship.

Easter Sunday, April 5, 2015: There will be no adult education.

Future adult education classes are currently in the planning stages and will be announced in upcoming church bulletins.



Lily Order for Easter Sunday

As in past years, we will be decorating the chancel with Easter lilies. If you would like to order one or more lilies the price per lily is \$8.00. Because we need to place the order no later than Friday, March 27th, please either send an email to kenadmin@rochester.rr.com or call the office at 585-458-5765 to place your order. Don't forget to indicate whether the lily is in memory of or honor of someone and who it is from.



On Easter Sunday, our Easter Egg Hunt for preschool through elementary-aged children will take place at the end of Sunday School time. Donations of plastic eggs filled with small toys or treats and small Easter baskets will be gratefully accepted! You can also volunteer to help fill eggs with items we provide. We need to plan for 60+ children so we need 300 -350 plastic eggs. Please contact Debbie B Reynolds if you will bring eggs or are willing to help fill eggs!

A NOTE FROM PASTOR MICHAEL

Each year I get to spend part of my son's March break with him. We learned last year that the Rochester school break calendar is quite different from the one where Holden lives. This means that when Holden is off from school, the kids in Rochester are still busily learning away. What that also means is that when Holden and I take to the slopes for a day of snowboarding the hill is virtually deserted.

Last year Holden and I had a wonderful day of snowboarding at Swain. It was a warm spring day and we spent most of our time on the smallest hill. Holden was just learning to snowboard and I was getting reacquainted with the sport after almost 20 years off the hill. It was a great day away but we were both quite sore after our escapades.

This year we went to Bristol Mountain and got out of the car to a parking lot full of Canadian vehicles with blue and white Ontario plates. Clearly this was a March Break destination for Canadians. After we got our lift passes we donned our helmets and took to the top of the hill. It was a rainy day but our spirits weren't dampened nearly as much as our bodies. As we got to the top of the hill we moved over to look at the hill map to determine our route to the bottom.



"Let's take the black diamond, dad," Holden enthusiastically shouted. For those of you who are not familiar with downhill skiing or snowboarding, hills are graded by different colors and shapes. Green circles are the tamest and easiest to go down. Blue squares are a bit more challenging. Black diamonds are the most difficult (double black diamonds are just that much more ... well ... fear inspiring). Holden's statement caught me off guard. Last year we were on runs one small step up from a flat surface, and this year he wanted to go on a black diamond run.

"Are you sure?" I asked. "Yes, I've been practicing. I can do it!" he said. And so we strapped in and started down the hill.

And he was right, he could do it. He was spot on ... he had been practicing. I was amazed at the improvement I was able to see in him after only one year. It was remarkable.

On the ride home I asked him how he managed to improve so much in one year (which he answered just before he fell asleep due to sheer exhaustion). He told me that when he decided it was something he wanted to get better at, he chose to focus on it and practice and get better. He said he knew it wouldn't be overnight but that with time he could see improvement and that made him want to keep improving. I was, and am, so proud of him.

In our lives there are so many opportunities to explore new things. We have to step out and try new things to decide if they are things we want to add to our storehouse of skills and abilities, likes and passions. When we find things we want to do, we then have to decide to commit ourselves to constant improvement. Things may not come to us overnight, but when we dedicate our time and energy to improving, oftentimes we see improvement, even if it is small and seemingly incremental steps.

Seeing the outcomes of Holden's dedication to snowboarding and his improvement over just one year, I spent some quiet time in the car thinking (remember, he did fall asleep after all ... an option not available to me behind the wheel). I thought about my life and the things that I am already quite good at, but also the things I'd like to work on myself. I thought about the things I'd like to explore and the ways I'd like to dedicate myself to new and challenging things, improving at them, and improving myself each and every day.

What areas are you feeling called to explore as a person, as a community member, and as a Christian? What have you dedicated yourself to that you want to improve at? And what steps are you taking to both improve and monitor your improvement? Is it a new skill, a new hobby, and new challenge? May this be a season of challenge and improvement ... for me ... for you ... for us all.

Blessings, *Michael*

NEW BY-LAWS TO BE APPROVED

Article by Our Moderator, Tom Argust

Six years ago our congregation approved new rules to guide the way we work together and govern ourselves. These are called "By-Laws." At that time, the congregation approved these rules for "*an interim period not to exceed three years.*" The church was in-between pastors then and yet wanted to have updated rules until the future direction of the church became clearer.

Now that we have two Pastors in place and a growing congregation, the Church Council felt that it was time to develop a new set of By-Laws (church rules) to guide our promising future.

The proposed By-Laws were developed by the Moderator, the Senior Pastor, the Associate Pastor and the Church Council over a period of six months. Much prayer, thought, effort and debate went into creating the new Rules. Many items have stayed the same. However, there are some changes.

Now is the time for our entire congregation to get involved in discussing the proposed by-laws. We will have conversations with the Myanmar and Karin fellowships.

And we will hold a **Church Forum during the church school hour on Sunday, April 26.** We will then have a congregational meeting in May to approve the new By-laws.

I hope everyone will make every effort to attend the April 26 Forum. mark your calendar now.



WHAT IS IT LIKE TO PLAN WORSHIP AT LABC?

In previous newsletters I have written about worship. I have handled topics such as "What is Worship?" and "Art in Worship."

My goal in these articles is to help us get a better understanding of the role of worship and the practices of worship in our very diverse congregation at LABC. One of the questions that comes up from time to time is "how do we plan worship at LABC?" I thought I'd spend a few lines of this newsletter to fill you all in on how we prepare our corporate worship experiences for our 10:00 a.m. English worship service.

Typically the person who is preaching on a particular week will choose the scriptures that they will preach on. On a weekly basis we often follow the lectionary which is a three year cycle of readings that include an Old Testament reading, a Psalm, an Epistle and a Gospel reading. We do not always use all of these readings, but often choose one or two, and all four influence the theme and tone of the service.

Once the preacher chooses their scripture reading(s) they will form the basic outline of the service including any responsive readings they wish to have. Then, we meet on Wednesday at staff meeting and go over the structure and content of the service (we often try to work many weeks ahead so you can assume we do this regularly with many services on the go at any one time). In that meeting we (myself – Pastor Michael, Pastor Debbie, Lee, often Izzie and Ken) look at the service and any other elements that we wish to have incorporated into the service including choirs, readers, special themes or presentations, and then look at the music that fits the service. Lee will bring suggestions based on the scriptures chosen for the week. We will look at his suggestions and at our own, including which hymns best fit the theme of the services, and which are available in other languages that we can use to maximize our inclusiveness. After we have made suitable selections we will return to the service throughout the week and make any adjustments necessary until it is printed on Thursday or Friday and ready for Sunday.

The place where we are a little different at LABC than at many other churches is the diversity of languages. What we are working on is being more inclusive in our worship planning processes. We have tried many things in the past with great success (and a big thank-you to Susan Maybeck who helped a great deal during the pastoral transition process in helping to develop some strategies that we have returned to time and time again). At the present time we have quarterly meetings with the various communities who are largely represented in our 10:00 a.m. worship services (English, Burmese, Karen, and Chin). In these meetings we affirm our regular rotation of worship participation and confirm that things are going well according to all involved. In the past couple of weeks we have embarked on a new journey.

At various points in the church year (Holy Week, Summer, Advent, and other special services like

Pentecost) we will be bringing together a diverse team of worship leaders from across our demographic to plan specific services. It is very important to the leadership at LABC that we have very active participation not only in leading worship, but also in planning worship. There is no set formula for doing this and it will undoubtedly be a trial and error process, but one we are dedicated to taking on for the good of our church community.

There are a few things that you can offer to this process. First, whenever you have feedback, please share it! Music and Worship and your pastors want to know how you experience worship and what is meaningful within our community. Please give us a call or send us an e-mail and share with us (remember, you must put a name on it – your own – we are not in the business of accepting anonymous feedback). Also, when there are times that we ask for participation, please participate. Whether it is a group forum on worship like the one that was held in March and was very well attended, or if it is a chance to help out on one of these worship planning groups we need your participation. Finally, please pray for our congregation. We need to have people who are dedicated to prayer for those planning and leading worship, and for those who have gathered in community to worship God together. We are all part of this community we call LABC, and we need a total commitment of us all in worship for the good of our community and the good of the Gospel!

YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

YOUTH ROLLER SKATING OUTING



The youth will be enjoying a roller skating outing on Wednesday evening, April 1, 2015. If you are interested in attending, please see Bill Gibbs for the details.

GOOD FRIDAY CROSS WALK: On Good Friday, April 3, our LABC youth will be participating in the Seventh Annual Good Friday Cross Walk for Solidarity Against Poverty and Violence. The purpose of the walk is to “make holy” through prayer and recognition, places where there has been violence and to also acknowledge the community groups who bring hope and healing. During the walk we will reflect on the Seven Last Words of Jesus. We will meet at Holy Apostles Roman Catholic Church at 530

Lyell Ave at 8:45 am. The mile and a half walk will be in the Lyell-Otis Street neighborhood, the scene of several homicides and an area of significant urban poverty. The walk takes approximately an hour and a half. All who would like to can take part in this walk.

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE AMERICAN BAPTIST HOMES

The women's Service Board of the Baptist Homes is having their annual luncheon on Saturday, April 18th at 2:00 pm at the Penfield Country Club, 1784 Jackson Road, Penfield. We are having some wonderful appetizers, such as mini beef wellingtons, bacon wrapped scallops, and a chocolate fountain with wine to pair with the different foods. There will also be a violinist and harpist, door prizes and a silent auction including a round of golf at Oak Hill Country Club. The cost is \$40.00 per person for wine and food or \$30.00 per person for non-alcoholic punch and food. If you are interested in attending, please call Lois Brooks at 585-671-8247 for reservations and more information.



The Game of Thrones

Resource and Support has made the decision that now is the time to replace all of the toilets in the LABC building. Many of the existing toilets are at least 20 years old and are incredibly inefficient. In addition to their inefficiency

there have been many issues with ongoing plumbing issues they are causing. With how much our church building is being used (and as a result how much our toilets are being used) it made the most environment, financial, and plumbing sense to replace them all at once and to do so using funds from the sale of Webster House that are allocated to church building maintenance and improvements. Be on the lookout for new toilets in the next few weeks (and yes, we will still keep the child sized toilet in the women's bathroom – we thought we'd mention that because it seems to be the most common question we get when we tell people about this capital improvement).

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

•The English Language class at the Maplewood library sponsored by Lake Avenue Baptist Church enjoyed a "field trip" to the Sibley's Balloon Manor in March. This five story creation of 40,000 balloons featured under water sea creatures plus a ship, waves and a small row boat complete with a balloon dog. The toddlers particularly enjoyed all



the fanciful creations as well as the thrill of riding the escalator. Many English words were practiced by children and adults - turtle, shark, jelly

fish, shell, treasure chest, mermaid, octopus, and so on. Thanks to Tom Argust for driving the LABC van for this outing.

• We extend our sympathy and prayers to **Dave and Valerie Ketchum**. Dave's father passed away on Monday, March 16.

•We continue to keep in our prayers **Roy Shafer** who remains at the Episcopal Home.

•Please keep the family of **Jeff Wilson** (our interim Gospel Spirits Director when Izzie was on maternity leave) in your prayers. His father passed away unexpectedly on Monday, March 16.



•On Sunday, March 15, 2015, the LABC Karen Fellowship presented to the entire LABC congregation a beautiful cross adorned with the image of Jesus lovingly made by **Day Chit** and **Sha Paw**. Thank you for your efforts and for thinking of our LABC family with your thoughtful and meaningful gift.

•We are happy to announce that **Jean Bartlett** has returned home from rehabilitation and continues to recuperate from a broken pelvis.

•**The American Baptist Women of LABC will have their next meeting and program on April 21, 1:30 pm at the church.** The guest speaker will be Sally Dodgson who will

be discussing a book with the group. Remember, all women are invited. Please bring a friend!

A NOTE FROM AWAB

(The Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists)

The following article was sent on Monday, March 9 from AWAB:

“(MILFORD, NH) On March 5, 2015 a press release was issued by the National Baptist Fellowship of Concerned Pastors expressing “deep concern” for the American Baptist College in Nashville, TN, a predominantly African American college with ties to the National Baptist Convention, at its invitation to Bishop Yvette Flunder to participate in this year’s Garnett Nabrit Lecture Series.

The action, instigated by Pastor Wm. Dwight McKissic, Sr. of Cornerstone Church, in Arlington, TX and Pastor Randy Vaughn of Mount Sinai Missionary Baptist Church in Port Arthur, TX centers around the fact that Bishop Flunder is “legally married to a woman” and that the American Baptist College and National Baptist Convention, USA by association are endorsing same-sex marriage.

The March 5, 2015 press release states that:

“For a Baptist college president to invite a lesbian bishop legally married to a woman, to be a guest speaker and worship leader on a Baptist college campus is irresponsible, scandalous, non-biblical, and certainly displeasing to God.”

In responding to the statement AWAB Executive Director Rev. Robin Lunn said,

“To say that Baptist schools do not invite legally married same gender loving faith leaders to speak is to deny the reality that currently exists. Many Baptist affiliated schools from across the traditions have invited LGBTQ faith leaders to participate in various programs, to lecture and preach as professionals in their fields. I applaud Dr. Harris and the American Baptist College Board of Trustees for fostering a rich educational and religious environment that allows for a broad range of beliefs and practices.”

In response to the press release put out by the National Baptist Fellowship of Concerned Pastors and the

Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists, members of the Samuel Dewitt Proctor Conference and faith leaders from across the Baptist and other Christian traditions have joined together to issue a statement of support for Dr. Harris, the Board of Trustees of American Baptist College, for Dr. Jerry Young and the Board members of the National Baptist Convention, USA.

It reads, in part:

“We applaud the wisdom, prophetic courage, and commitment to intellectual honesty and academic integrity that Dr. Forrest Harris had demonstrated as President of American Baptist College by inviting Bishop Yvette Flunder of California to preach and lecture at American Baptist College later this month. A few vocal opponents to equality for persons who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender are trying to force Dr. Harris to “dis-invite” Bishop Flunder because she is a lesbian who married her same sex partner. Those critics also are displeased that Dr. Harris invited Dr. Allan Aubrey Boesak of South Africa and Pastor Delmon Coates of the United States to preach and/or lecture at American Baptist College because Dr. Boesak and Pastor Coates are effective advocates for equality and are equally effective in exposing the injustice of homophobia.”

If you would like to read the entire statement it can be found at <http://awab.org/statement-of-support-for-dr-forrest-harris-and-the-american-baptist-college.html>. If you would like to add your name to the statement go to: <https://www.change.org/p/statement-of-support-for-american-baptist-college-president-forrest-harris-do-not-un-invite-bishop-flunder-dr-bosaek-and-pastor-coates-as-speakers-for-this-year-s-garnett-nabrit-lecture-series>.

Pastor Michael has added his signature to this statement in support of the American Baptist LGBTQ community and AWAB.

MISSION NEWS

NO TO IMPUNITY FOR RAPE AND MURDER OF KACHIN WOMEN!

Yangon: Local Christians and organizations such as “Christian Solidarity Worldwide” condemned the rape and murder of two Kachin women in their church compound and called on the government of Burma to “immediately stop its military offensive and bring the perpetrators of sexual violence to justice”.

The two women, Maran Lu Ra, aged 20 and Tangbau Hkawn Nan Tsin, 21 were teachers from Myitkyina, working with the Kachin Baptist Convention as volunteers in the village of Shabuk-Kaunghka in Shan state, in the north-east of Myanmar. They were attacked during the night of January 19 by Burma Army soldiers, gang-raped and murdered. According to CSW's sources, Burma Army troops came into the church ground where the girls were sleeping and raped and then beat them to death. Villagers nearby heard the girls screaming and when they went to check they saw Burma Army boot prints and the raped and bloodied bodies of the dead girls. The church members went to the Burma police in this area, but the police have taken no action. The violence perpetrated by the military against the civilian population often remain unpunished. The Kachin Women's Association Thailand has documented over 70 cases of gang-rape against the Kachin population by Burma Army troops since the Burma Army broke a 17 year ceasefire with the Kachin Independence Army in June 2011. The Women's League of Burma published a new report last year, titled "If they had hope, they would speak" which documents 118 cases of sexual violence by the Burma Army since 2010. The government of Burma signed the Declaration to End Sexual Violence in Conflict last year, but has failed to implement its provisions.

The note of CSW concludes: "This tragic rape and murder of two young Christian Kachin teachers is yet another example of the continuing severe violations of

human rights in Burma, the prevailing culture of impunity for the military. We call on the government of Burmas to end the war against the Kachin people and engage in a genuine political dialogue and peace process".

OUR LARGER COMMUNITY



•You are invited to a practice US Citizenship interview with a USCIS officer to learn more about what to expect during the naturalization interview process. This special event will be held on Tuesday, April 7 from 1-3 pm at the Catholic Family Center, 87 N. Clinton Ave. If you are interested in attending, please call (585) 546-7220 x4730

•As part of the post-Easter convocation at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, Dr. Patrick Cheng will give the annual lecture in the series "Christian Faith and LGBT Experience." His topic is "Tending the Gardens of our Lives: Queer Temporality and Pastoral Care." Dr. Cheng is Associate Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, MA. He will speak at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 9 in the Ithaca Auditorium at CRCDS. His lecture is free and open to the public.

**Have You
Locked
The Door?**

LABC is a very well used building. It is also a large building with a lot of doors. We have had a number of instances lately where doors are being left unlocked or not fully closed when individuals and groups have left the building. Please be reminded that if you are using the building you are also responsible for making sure that it is **locked** and all of the doors are **closed**. It is a good practice to close the doors behind you and then give them a pull to see if they open up again (and if they do please lock them again). Also, if you are in the church and your group has all arrived please close the door and lock it so that we don't have any issues with unexpected individuals

**Make Sure
Door Closes Behind You**

wandering in when staff are not here. Thanks for your attentiveness.

