

The Luther Memorial News April 2022

*We are a
Reconciling in Christ Congregation.*

All are Welcome!

*A community committed to making
Christ's disciples, dedicated to worship,
study, and prayer while serving all in need.*

Rev. Monica L. Weber, Pastor

Rev. Libby Pfaff, the Well Pastor

Amy Cowan, Interim Choral Director

Gail King, Interim Accompanist

Michael Spencer, Custodian

Marcia Barrow, Office Manager

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A Quick look at April:

April 03: Rainbow  Connection
Gathering – 4pm: Fellowship Hall

April 06 & 13: Lenten Midweek Worship – Noon:
Chapel

April 06: Lenten Midweek Worship – 7pm: Shiloh
Lutheran Church



April 10: Palm Sunday
Congregational Meeting – 11am: Sanctuary

April 14: Maundy Thursday Worship & Holy
Communion – 7pm: Sanctuary



April 15: Good Friday Tenebrae Service
Blacksburg Fellowship – 7pm: SMLC



Sunday, April 17th



Pastor Monica available for conversations, counseling and spiritual direction. To make an appointment with Pastor Monica, please call her at 540-951-1003, or email pastormonica@lmlc.org

From your pastor:

As a clergy member representing the New River Conference in the Virginia ELCA Synod, I attended a Synod Council meeting in Richmond last month. In addition to conducting routine Synod business, my Synod Council colleagues and I participated in an excellent Diversity, Equity & Inclusion workshop led by The Virginia Center for Inclusive Community. Through a series of brief self-awareness exercises, my colleagues and I all quickly recognized that every person holds unconscious bias: the circumstances of each individual's birth, life, vocation and environment all contribute to influence our brains as we make instant judgments about the world around us.

For example, if I experienced a very turbulent airplane ride, my future willingness to fly may be influenced by the negative memories of past trauma from the turbulence, and I might rush to judge airplane travel as 'terrible.' That would be my unconscious bias against flying. Likewise, every person's brain sorts people, places, experiences and situations into categories such as 'good and safe,' 'dangerous and bad,' 'like me' or 'unlike me.' Our brains employ this instinctive human survival tool to navigate the world and assess threats that could threaten us.

Unconscious bias is unique to each individual, and while this bias is not always negative, it often leads us to make automatic, negative judgments about people based on race, ethnicity, physical attributes and abilities, socio-economic status and other criteria. When we learn to be self-aware and recognize our own unconscious bias, we can slow down, practice attentive listening, and make informed judgments based on facts, rather than on our personal, unconscious assumptions.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion work is important for everyone, but it's especially critical for Luther Memorial members as part of a Reconciling in Christ congregation. When visitors enter our Sanctuary for worship, we should never make assumptions based on their appearance or behaviors. We should never assume that a woman prefers the pronouns "she/her" or that a man identifies as 'he/him': labeling people before we have a chance to hear their story is an example of how unconscious bias can end a relationship before it even begins.

I look forward to sharing more about this Diversity, Equity & Inclusion work with you in the coming months, as together we strive to be more self-aware, to make fewer assumptions about our visitors and each other, so we may welcome all people as equals in the Body of Christ. —Peace to all here,
Pastor Monica

Congregational Council Corner

2022

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April Council Meeting: 24th, 11:30am-Fellowship Hall. Staff & Council members please submit your monthly reports to Marcia Barrow in a PDF file no later than Monday, April 18th. Packets will be distributed by email.

***From the Finance Committee:**

We are still in good shape financially. Thank you for your continued generosity.

***From the COVID Task Force:**

The council voted to ease the mask requirement for our building to be “recommended but not required.” We will continue to monitor the number of cases in our area and may need to require masks again if the situation warrants it.

***Organ Maintenance:**

Evaluations of needed maintenance of our organ continue. Members are encouraged to donate to the “Organ Fund” to ensure money is available to make sure our organ is in excellent condition.

***Von Bora Haus:**

We expect new tenants any day. Thank you to members who have worked hard to make it ready for them and to people who have donated items to furnish it.

***Campus Ministry:**

We enjoyed wonderful fellowship with The Well students and Pastor Libby on our work day to rake, mulch, and weed our grounds. We appreciate their taking time away from their studies to help beautify our outside space.

***New Ministry, Rainbow Connection**

Luther Memorial will begin a new ministry on Sunday, April 3, to provide a safe place for LBGTQ+ persons to meet for fellowship. The Rainbow Connection will occur once a month at 4 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

***Congregational Meeting:**

We will meet on April 10th after worship for our second vote on approving the constitutional bylaws. Save the date!

Council Corner Council Corner Council Corner Council Corner Council Corner Council

New Mask Guidance from the COVID Task Force

Based on the recommendations from LMLC’s COVID Task Force, Council voted on March 20 to relax the mask policy at Luther Memorial. If you are fully vaccinated and boosted, face masks are recommended but not required for entry into our buildings or during worship. Unvaccinated/boosted individuals should continue to wear a mask at all times when inside or in worship services, following CDC guidelines. Our kitchen remains closed. **This policy may change based on new virus variants;** the COVID Task Force continues to monitor local virus spread and will offer guidance to Council as warranted.

Congregational Meeting: Second Vote on Proposed Revisions to Bylaws

Please plan to attend a special called Congregational Meeting at Luther Memorial on **Sunday, April 10**, immediately following worship. The sole purpose of this meeting is to conduct the required second vote on proposed revisions to Luther Memorial Bylaws. The first vote was conducted at our annual congregational meeting on November 14, 2021, and the revisions passed. This final vote is required by our Constitution. To review the proposed Bylaws revision document, **click here:**

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ezKikQeQKQMPprnEIBFhIpVyxovQD_cR/view?usp=sharing

HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Please join us for these special Holy Week Services:

Sunday, April 10: Palm Sunday Procession & the Passion of Christ Reader's Theater

Wednesday, April 13: Chapel Prayer Service, Noon

Thursday, April 14: Maundy Thursday Worship with Holy Communion, Luther Memorial 7pm
Special Music by the Choir with Cello accompaniment

Friday, April 15: Private Confession & Prayer by appointment in Chapel, noon-2pm
Contact Pastor Monica to schedule

Good Friday Tenebrae Service: St Michael Lutheran, 7pm

The Blacksburg-Radford ELCA Fellowship combined choirs will present
"In Calvary's Shadow," a cantata with soloists

Sunday, April 17: Easter Festival Worship with Holy Communion, 10am at Luther Memorial



God's Work Our Hands

Thanks to your generous support, the following assistance was provided to persons in need in March:

- Change for Change \$175 to RSVP Senior Center
- Purchased \$500 in Kroger cards for distribution to persons who request assistance
- 35 lbs of food donated to Micah's Mini-Pantry
- 85.5lbs of food donated to Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry

In addition, First-Quarter Benevolence donations were made by LMLC to these local agencies:

- \$1,125 donated to MCEAP
- \$1,100 donated to Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry to purchase canned chicken, soap
- \$1,750 donated to Community Health Clinic of the NRV
- \$1,600 donated to Women's Resource Center
- \$500 donated to Habitat for Humanity

May God bless all who receive assistance and all who provide it!



Undie Sunday April 10!

Again this year Luther Memorial members are asked to provide packages of new underwear for the clients at the Women's Resource Center in Radford. The WRC provides emergency shelter and assistance to women and children who are victims of domestic abuse. Typically, a woman flees a violent situation with her children at the first opportunity, with only the clothes on their backs. Your donations help make their transition to safety much easier.

Please bring **new, unopened packages of underwear** for Women (all sizes) and Children (all sizes) and place your donations in the blue Food Pantry wagon. We will "bless the Undies" during worship, then Pastor Monica will deliver the donations to the WRC.

Change for Change for April 2022: NRV Cares

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. In recognition of this, the April Change-For-Change recipient is NRV CARES, whose vision is a New River Valley free of child abuse. As both a member of Luther Memorial and an employee of NRV CARES, I am pleased to have the opportunity to share with you about the very important work being done by this local agency!

NRV CARES is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to protecting children and strengthening families. Our services are available to all citizens living in the counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski, and the City of Radford. We, with the help of the New River Valley community, strive to improve the lives of the smallest and most defenseless members of our society, while helping to support an environment where families can thrive.

There are three main program areas at NRV CARES:

- 1. CASA** (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of the New River Valley recruits and trains volunteers to provide advocacy for children who are involved in Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court proceedings due to court-founded cases of abuse and/or neglect. Our volunteers are appointed by the courts and serve as the "eyes and ears" of the judge to help children find a safe, happy, healthy, forever home.
- 2. Our Parent Education program** provides education and support for parents and caregivers throughout the New River Valley. Working with trained class facilitators, we offer three programs: Circle of Parents, Parenting through Separation and Divorce, and Parenting Young Children.
- 3. With our Community Education programs**, NRV CARES aims to educate the community about the existence of child abuse and its traumatic effects, as well as to support children and families in the community. This area of programming includes our Stewards of Children training, which helps adults learn to recognize, appropriately respond to, and prevent child sexual abuse.

Although the pandemic changed how many agencies did business, NRV CARES has been fortunate to be able to make adaptations such that we could continue to offer services across all our program areas. For example, in Fiscal Year 2021, our Parent Education programs, although still entirely virtual, served 238 parents and caregivers. Also in Fiscal Year 2021, our 27 active CASA Volunteers provided 1,752 hours of advocacy work to 73 local children.

Lastly, as you drive around our New River Valley during the month of April, keep an eye out for pinwheel gardens! Part of our annual "Pinwheels for Prevention" campaign, these pinwheels celebrate healthy, happy childhoods in the New River Valley. "Pinwheels for Prevention" represents our effort to focus on communities that support families and prioritize child abuse prevention right from the start. Shining in the sun, the pinwheels are reflective of the bright future all children deserve!

If you have questions or would like more information, please reach out to me by email at Leah@nrvcare.org. You may also visit our website (<https://www.nrvcare.org/>) or follow us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/nrvcare>) or Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/nrvcare/>) for regular updates and announcements!



Music notes from Amy Cowan, Interim Choral Director

April is a busy month for the LMLC Choir! We'd love you to join us on Wednesday night rehearsals at 7 any time. We will be singing so much during Holy Week, starting with Palm Sunday, and joined by Jay Crone and Andy Hansbrough on brass. On Maundy Thursday, we'll be joined by Genevieve Cruikshank on cello. Come hear the choir sing the Tenebrae service "In Calvary's Shadow" with other area church choirs and pastors at St Michael Lutheran on Good Friday at 7pm. Then Easter morning will be filled with joyful organ, choir, and hymns! Wednesday rehearsals will end with an extended practice on April 27. May you be filled with a joyful noise this Lenten and Easter season!



Musician Search Update

The Worship & Music committee wishes to express deep gratitude to Gail King for serving as our worship organist and pianist since February 6. Gail will play through April 24, then we will be joined by Jan Blumenthal who will play piano for worship services from May 1-June 5. The search for a permanent organist/accompanist continues; please hold LMLC in prayer that God will send us a new accompanist!

We are thrilled to announce that Interim Choir Director Amy Cowan has agreed to become our permanent Choir Director! Amy will direct the choir through June 5, the Feast of Pentecost, then the choir and Amy will take a break for the summer as usual. Practices and Sunday anthems will resume in the fall. We give thanks that God has blessed us with Amy's talented leadership!

We also give thanks for our faithful choir members, and for the musicians in our congregation who share their talents with us to make a 'joyful noise' unto the Lord!

New Ministry: The Rainbow Connection

On March 20, the LMLC Council voted to announce a new ministry at Luther Memorial, to address a significant need in the Blacksburg community. This new ministry, The Rainbow Connection, will provide a safe gathering space for LGBTQIA+ persons and allies to make friends, network and share their concerns. Since September, Luther Memorial has seen a high number of visitors to worship who identify as LGBTQIA+ or who are allies in search of an affirming church. This new ministry represents an important aspect of living into our Reconciling in Christ affiliation, as we invite, welcome and embrace all people of God just as they are, created in God's holy image. The first Rainbow Connection gathering will take place on **Sunday, April 3 at 4pm in Fellowship Hall**, as the kickoff for Hokie PRIDE Week. If you are an "ally" and would like to participate, please join us!



Volunteers Needed for Roanoke's PRIDE in the Park Festival May 1

Luther Memorial's Reconciling in Christ team will sponsor a booth at the **"PRIDE in the Park"** Festival in Roanoke on Sunday, May 1st from noon-6pm. We will distribute information about the Reconciling in Christ welcome offered by Luther Memorial and The Well, including our new Rainbow Connection ministry.

Please contact Lois Voss to volunteer as follows:

- Provide 1 "tailgate tent" canopy for sun/rain protection
- Setup tent/tables/chairs for our booth at 11am
- Greeters to work our booth from Noon-2pm; 2-4pm and 4-6pm plus tear down

Honoring Graduates

In worship on **Sunday** college seniors, plus Master's degrees and graduate this spring, the church office, so we can include them in the prayers for all graduates.



May 1, we will honor all graduating high school and those from our congregation who will complete PhD programs. If you have a relative who will please share their name and degree with Marcia in

Dear Pastor Monica and Congregation,

Thank you (and LMLC) for the warm and generous welcome we received while visiting and attending worship on Sunday. We appreciate you and pray that God continues to bless and energize you for ministry.

In Christ's Love,
and our Rainbow Connection,

Pastor Haley Vay and campus ministry students from University Lutheran Church in E. Lansing, Michigan

Service Assistants for April:*

	04.03	04.10	04.17 Easter	04.24
Lector	Rev. Libby Pfaff	Mark Barrow	Bill King	Jim Lang
Usher/greeter	Don Holmstrom	Glenn Buss Diane Catley	Jennifer Freeman	Carol PapilloOn
Usher/greeter	Marcia Barrow	Jennifer Freeman	Marcia Barrow	Don Holmstrom
Teller	Mark Barrow	Rick Howard	Teresa Cassell	Mark Barrow
Teller	Carla Liversedge	Diane Catley	Rick Howard	Teresa Cassell
Livestream				
Council Point Person	Andy Hansbrough	Elaine Belay	Ed Vigen	Jay Crone
Altar Flowers	Lent	Lent	Stephens-Oosterhuis	

*If you cannot serve on your day, please find a member to fill your spot. If you can fill an open spot, please contact the office. Thank you!



April 07

Mary Jane Pettersen

April 08

Mike Deisenroth
Tim Larson

April 10

Gary Buss
Amy Widner

April 12

Glenn Buss
Marty Oosterhuis

April 14

Sue Fugate
Kathy Parrott

April 20

Kevin Widner

April 28

Bertha Crabtree



Glenn & Nelsa Buss; April 02

Charlie & Zelma Harris; April 10

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church
600 Prices Fork Road
Blacksburg, VA 24060



STEWARDSHIP NUGGET FOR APRIL 2022

“We should travel light and live simply. Our enemy is not possessions, but excess.” *John Stott*