

The Luther Memorial News January 2022

*We are a
Reconciling in Christ Congregation.*

*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

Juanita Smoot, Director of Music Ministry

Michael Spencer, Custodian

Marcia Barrow, Office Manager

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A Quick look at January:

January 09: Baptism of Our Lord, Worship & Holy Communion, 10am. Receive New Members in Worship. Un-decorating Sanctuary & Narthex; following worship

January 12: LMLC Knitters @ 1 -2pm: Fellowship Hall

January 16: Luther Forum resumes @ 8:45am

January 19: Choir Rehearsal resumes @ 7pm

January 23: Council Meeting, Fellowship Hall immediately following worship

January 31: Deadline for Congregational Annual Report info from all Council Conveners/Committees due to Marcia Barrow

January 31-Feb 2: Midwinter Power in the Spirit. Stay tuned for Registration details!



From your pastor:

In 2022, I resolve to...***not make any resolutions!*** The word “resolution” is defined as, “the determination to do or not do something.” Most of us probably have experienced a burning desire to do or not do certain things when January first rolls around each year, but if you’re like me, by January 6th or 7th, I’ve usually failed at what I promised myself to do or not do!

New Year’s resolutions can be great motivators, but they can also lead us to experience guilt and disappointment before the first few weeks of the new year have passed. It’s good to have goals, but usually our ‘resolutions’ involve major changes in behavior that may not be feasible or realistic. It’s important to remember that God loves you **just as you are, today**, whether or not you make or keep New Year’s resolutions. What matters most to God is the relationship you have with God in Christ Jesus. We are each blessed with unique gifts, talents and skills that God gives to us, so we may share ourselves in ministry, as we resolve to love God and love neighbor.

God also blesses us with free will, to determine how we may best serve this world, modeling Christ’s love and servanthood. This year, instead of setting yourself up for an “epic resolution fail,” I invite you to take an inventory of your gifts, talents and skills, and then prayerfully consider how you can share them, by participating in new ways at Luther Memorial. There are many places where we need people to participate: we need hosts for coffee fellowship; a Kitchen coordinator; members to serve on the Evangelism committee; an Altar Guild (can you believe we don’t have one??); and folks to do all kinds of simple but important tasks in our congregation. If you’d like help discerning and identifying your unique gifts, talents and skills, please reach out to me: my door is always open for conversation, brain-storming and exchange of ideas, as we work together in ministry. I wish you all good health and great joy in Christ Jesus in this new year. —Peace to all here,

Pastor Monica

Congregational Council Corner

2022

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Linda Libey

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January Council Meeting: 23rd, 11:30am-Fellowship Hall. Staff & Council members please submit your monthly reports to Marcia Barrow in a PDF file no later than Monday, January 11th. Packets will be distributed by email.

November by the numbers:

General treasury receipts: \$29,586 (– \$ 5816.52 from last month)

General treasury expenses: \$27,470 (+ \$3,618.79 over last month)

Net, general treasury: **+ \$2,116.63** (– \$9,435.31 from last month)

Accounting checking balance 11/30: \$218,384.56 (+ \$106,235.77 from last month)

Actual Bank checking balance 11/30: \$117,792.69 (– \$21,655.87 from last month)

Actual Bank checking balance 12/17: \$ 224,803.16

Approved Pastor Monica's recommendation that Jan Buss become a member of the congregation. She will be welcomed on January 9, 2022.

The finance committee reported:

- Income from pledges exceeded the amount pledged
- Expenses are on track based on the revised 2021 Ministry Funding Plan.
- A projected positive balance of approximately \$80,000 will carry us into the New Year. This balance includes \$49,279 from the forgiven Paycheck Protection Loan we received in April.

Students used the Campus Center as a safe, quiet space for study during the semester, particularly during finals week.

- Students appreciated the snacks/refreshments and are looking forward to electing new members to the leadership team next semester.
- Pastor Libby continues to develop her role as campus minister and is looking forward to a new semester of learning, fellowship, and service with the students.

Regarding the newly established Pipe Organ Fund

- Recent gifts provide sufficient funds to address the regulation of humidity in the organ chamber.
- A goal of \$11,000 for early in 2022 will enable the congregation to care for needed repair of organ pipes and additional access to ensure proper tuning of the instrument.

Approved the recommendation from the Future Planning Committee to adopt a motto for congregation:

All Are Welcome. This motto will be included in publications, bulletins, and the website.

Approved a recommendation from the Future Planning Committee to establish a Capital Campaign 2.0 Committee.

- This group is charged to bring a fully developed Campaign Plan to the Congregation for their approval at a Congregational Meeting to be held in the Spring of 2022.
- The plan will include a prioritized list of projects to be included and a target amount for the required funds.

Approved a Church Facility Use Policy and two forms to be completed by groups using the church facilities, a Facility Use Request Form and a Hold Harmless Agreement.

Accepted with gratitude a gift of \$100,000 from the Thomas Wilson Trust. A tithe of \$10,000 is placed in the Mission Endowment Fund. The family has specified a distribution to support Valley Interfaith Child Care Center, Jim and Betty Wilson Scholarship Fund, LMLC Seminary Debt Reduction Fund, the purchase of new choir, crucifer, and acolyte robes, and upgrades to furnishings in the Fellowship Hall.

Recognized value to increase visibility of our ministry through the von Bora House, while maintaining confidentiality. Opportunities could include, in addition to the annual report, quarterly updates to council, blessing in worship those quilts donated to the residents of the house. Mara Knott continues as the liaison between the congregation and Montgomery County Social Services.



Let Your Light Shine with New Star Words

Happy New Year! By now you should have received a card in the mail from Pastor Monica containing your 2022 Star Word. This little paper star displays your "Star Word" for the new year: you are invited to display it in a place where you can see it every day, to be reminded of how God may be speaking to you through this word. The tradition of Star Words evolved out of Epiphany celebrations; Epiphany is observed on January 6, marking the 12th day of Christmas, and to remember the Three Wise Kings who proclaimed the arrival of the Christ Child to the whole world, their 'epiphany' or discovery of Jesus' love for all people. May your Star Word inspire you this new year, as you discern how to increase your faith, grow closer to Christ, and serve God's people. If you did not receive a Star Word, please contact Pastor Monica.

Calling All Knitters!

If you enjoy knitting or would like to learn, please join us on **Wednesday, January 12 at 1pm in Fellowship Hall**. This is a BYOK event: "bring your own knitting" including yarn and supplies. Pastor Monica will gather us together to share tips and techniques, enjoy fellowship and flex our God-given creativity. We hope to begin this as a monthly activity to resume LMLC's Prayer Shawl ministry, so please don't be shy! Even if you've never knit a single stitch, we can teach you. You can also find How to Knit videos on YouTube if you're anxious to begin. Did you know that knitting is a wonderful calm activity that can help lower blood pressure? For more info [email: pastormonica@lmlc.org](mailto:pastormonica@lmlc.org).



God's Work Our Hands

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

\$1,525 distributed through the Good Shepherd Fund to assist 2 persons with COVID-related past-due rent payments.

\$100 in Kroger cards distributed to persons in need.

110 lbs of food donated to the Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry.

100lbs of food donated to the Micah's Mini-Pantry by our members and by the CASE organization at Virginia Tech.

\$50 paid for past-due electric bill to 1 person.

VICCC total: \$8324

Thanks to all of the LMLC members who volunteered for shifts for game day parking in the fall - Lois Voss, Ed Vigen, Emma Sparks, Ray Riggin, Mary Hansbrough, Bill King, Jay Crone as well as Jody Smiley, Campus Ministry Committee member from St. Michaels. We couldn't have had such a successful year without your enthusiastic willingness to help! - *Carol Papillon*

Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry and Micah's Mini-Pantry



From October to November, there was an increase of 60 families coming to the Food Pantry. November is traditionally the highest demand month at the Pantry but numbers have been increasing steadily throughout the fall. Micah's Mini Pantry has been a success. Supplying it will be an ongoing project. There are posters available in the Narthex that suggests items to bring monthly for the Food Pantry and the Mini-Pantry. Please pick up one. The Food Pantry has noticed a recent uptick in the number of families coming for food aid.

A Word of Special Thanks

We give thanks for all who give their time, talents and treasures to serve the people of Luther Memorial and our community. A special thank-you goes to:

Bennet Cassell, Gail & Bill King, Tim & Marti Larson, Marty Oosterhuis for setting up the 2 Chrismon trees in the main building.

Marcia Barrow for the extra work involved with Advent "Mothers of Jesus" worship bulletins and for watering our poinsettias!

The LMLC Choir, Dr. Jay Crone and Nita Smoot for the beautiful Advent & Christmas Eve music.

Anne Devenport for faithfully editing our weekly worship live-stream services for posting online.

Wava Vigen, Teresa Cassell and the Social Ministry team for their fantastic work supporting To Our House and VICCC Christmas Outreach!

Our members for your financial contributions to our ministry, and for supporting the Food Pantry and the Micah's Mini-Pantry.

Rev. Don Holmstrom & Rev. Rachel Larson for providing emergency pastoral care and preaching during Pastor Monica's vacation.

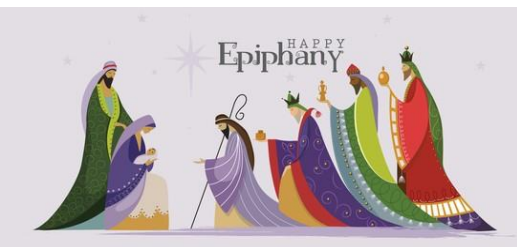
Thank you Thank you Thank you

We raised \$8,323.76 for Christmas Outreach. I am blown away by the generosity of our members. I had the privilege of meeting with VICCC families with Pastor Monica on December 16th to handout the letters, letting them know that we were providing \$400.00 of financial assistance. Our assistance was greatly appreciated by the families. I also handed out gift bags to all the children at the center. While the financial help is important, I also was reminded that to children, receiving a book, a coloring book, crayons a bag of goldfish crackers, bag of fruit chews and a candy cane can be just as joyful. I want to thank Gail King for providing the books for the gift bags. We will be providing at least one month of books for the center as well as other programing. Again, this project would not be successful without the generosity of the members of Luther Memorial Lutheran Church. Thank you again.

In Peace,

Teresa Cassell

Don't forget the Epiphany Diaper Drive



We will be collecting diapers for the NRV Diaper Pantry through **Sunday, January 9th**. They need all size diapers - infants and toddlers as well as adults. You can also donate wet wipes. Please leave your donations near the Food Pantry wagon in the Narthex. Diapers will be delivered following Epiphany Sunday.

Thank you to Blacksburg Baptist Church and Luther Memorial Lutheran Church for purchasing a storage shed for the Food Pantry. We would also like to thank Steve Cass, Keith Davis, and Vincent Stevens for assembling the shed. The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets painted the shed. Finally Wayne Thompson and Vern Simpson built the shelves. This was truly a community project.



Food Pantry Year-End Review

First of all, a big thank you to the volunteers who work at the Food Pantry. Erin Peterson has worked at the Pantry every Wednesday throughout the COVID crisis and continues to do so. Our second Wednesday of the month team includes Elaine Belay, Diane Catley, and Sandy Hagman (with occasional backup from Terry Hagman). The fourth Tuesday Food Lion order pickup team is Charlie Harris, Bill King, and Sandy and Terry Hagman with substitutes Diane and Dennis Catley.

We could use a couple of more volunteers on the Tuesday team. We work from 10:00 am until 11:30 am every second Tuesday of the month. Your total commitment is about two hours. Our primary job is to assist customers in the shopping process but we also help stock shelves, and prepare bags of foods for customers who do not wish to shop inside the Pantry. If interested, please contact Sandy Hagman (sandy.hagman@comcast.net or (540) 951-0270).

Luther Memorial accomplished a lot for the Food Pantry in 2021.

1. We purchased 46 cartons of Ivory soap. LMLC is sole provider of soap for the Pantry.
2. In April and August, when the Pantry was running low on Marconi and Cheese, we purchased a total of 1,350 boxes.
3. In September, the congregation donated cake mix, frosting, candles and Change for Change monies to create 50 birthday bags for the children of customers. If a child had a birthday during the month, they were given a bag with cake mix, icing, candles, napkins, plates, cups, coloring books and crayons for a party of eight. These bags have been extremely popular.
4. In October, the congregation donated \$1,000 towards the building of a small storage shed outside the Pantry. This will store seasonal and rarely used items which in turn help to keep the Pantry streamlined so there is more clearance for work and shopping and less chance of an accident.
5. In November, the congregation purchased 250 cans of cream of mushroom soup for the Holiday bags give away.
6. The grand total in pounds of food donated throughout the year came to 1,810 for a monetary value of \$3,131.30.
7. The food pantry is also part of our benevolence budget for \$4,000.

Our total monetary contribution to the food pantry for 2021 was \$11,308.67. Luther Memorial can be proud of their commitment with time, talent, and monies to feeding the hungry in our community.

Sandy Hagman, Chair Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry Advisory Board

Opportunity for Advocacy



The writer of Proverbs tells us in Chapter 31:9: “speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.” And Jesus tells us through a parable in Matthew 25:40, that what we do for the least of his brothers and sisters, we do for him. We are called to advocate for the voiceless, the disenfranchised, and the marginalized. We often don’t know where to start or how best to attempt this work. During the week of January 17-21, the Virginia Interfaith Center and Virginia Interfaith Power and Light will host a hybrid (virtual and in -person) gathering to learn about advocacy, meet with one another, and speak to our representatives in Richmond about the most pressing issues confronting our fellow Virginians.

Guest speakers will help inform us about these issues and how we can help. There will be a variety of workshops to choose from. On Wednesday, people of faith from all over Virginia will gather for in-person workshops, rallies, and fellowship. There will be time to speak with our representatives in the state Senate and House. Your presence will show others that people of faith are willing to speak up and take action for others. Join your siblings in faith in being a voice for those who are unable to speak out.

You can register at:

<https://virginiainterfaithcenter.ourpowerbase.net/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=170>

If you would like to know more, you can contact Sandy Hagman (sandy.hagman@comcast.net or 540-951-0270)



NITA'S NOTES

As we look forward to the New Year of 2022, I am first thankful for the many blessings of 2021 with you at LMLC. Despite the challenges of the changes Covid has initiated in our world and church, our choir continued to find its voice when safe to do so. I appreciate the faithfulness of our choristers and their willingness to rediscover known anthems as well as learn new ones. We have passed through uncharted territory and arrived in our present place with an even greater love for one another and a more profound joy in sharing the gift of music through worship. Thanks be to God!

Thank you all as a congregation for your generous Christmas gift of cash. It will be applied to my current living room transformation project at the farm!! I appreciate the opportunity to serve you through the many facets of our music ministry. Through the amazing grace and love of God, we journey together in this time and space. And, as we embrace the unknown of 2022, we walk by faith, not by sight, trusting in the goodness and mercy of the God we know and love. Throughout this new year may you surround yourself with the healing sounds of nature, open your heart to joyful songs and lift your voice in refrains of praise and thankfulness. Yes, thanks be to God!

Joyfully yours,

NITA

Save the Date! Midwinter Power in the Spirit: January 31 – February 2, 2022



For more information:

<https://www.vasynod.org/power-in-the-spirit/>

New Recycling Program at Luther Memorial

The Alleghany Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), meet in the Luther Memorial fellowship hall the first Thursday of each month. For a community service project this coming year we are taking part in a recycle program offered by the Trex Company. The project is to collect 500 pounds of plastic film packaging which is typically not recycled by the local community recycling program. Once we send in 500 pounds of these plastics, the Trex company will send us a bench made from recycled material. Other organizations in this area have participated in this program with great success.

The box for this collection has been placed in the back of the fellowship hall near the closet for the tables and chairs. Below is a list of items that qualify for recycling in this program. Items should be clean and dry. If you would like more information about it, contact Diane Catley, dwcatley@gmail.com, or see the Trex website. <https://recycle.trex.com/view/educate#materials1>

Examples of plastic film items for recycling are:

- produce bags
- grocery bags
- bread bags
- over wrap from tissue paper or paper towels
- dry cleaning bags
- bags from items that come through the mail, bags that have the recycle symbol of 2 or 4

See if the package will stretch when you pull it. If yes, it can be included. If it tears like paper, then please don't put in the bin.

Also, it was my understanding that plastic rings that fit on canned drinks qualify, but they do not.



Reconciling In Christ Sunday, January 30

As part of the congregation's 2003 commitment to be a Reconciling in Christ congregation that welcomes all persons, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual preference, our annual Reconciling in Christ worship will take place on Sunday, Jan 30th at 10am. In recent months, Luther Memorial has been blessed by many visitors who have seen the rainbow flags flying on our campus; the majority of these visitors have attended multiple worship services with us, and have expressed to Pastor Monica their desire to participate in a congregation that is welcoming and affirming of all persons, just as they are, made in God's image. Thanks to the RIC Chairpersons, Lois Voss and Carol Reynolds, for their constant support of our RIC welcome. If you'd like to participate in the RIC worship service, or for more info about our RIC welcome, please contact Pastor Monica.

Heart Felt Thanks!



Dear Siblings in Christ,

Again this year you have blessed me and the staff with your generosity, through the special Christmas gift collection. I give thanks for each of you, and for our ministry together as the Body of Christ. I pray that our Gospel proclamation of Christ's unconditional love and mercy for all people will be strengthened in 2022, as we continue to meet and rise above the challenges that we face together due to the pandemic. It is a privilege and a blessing to serve as your pastor, and I'm excited about the possibilities and opportunities that 2022 will bring.

Thank you and may God bless you richly this Christmas season, ***Pastor Monica***

To the faith community of Luther Memorial Lutheran Church

Greetings in Christ.

Happy New Year all! I want to take a moment to express my gratitude to this beautiful community for inviting me to come to the New River Valley to serve as the campus minister of The Well. Though we are living in uncertain times, I can bear witness to the active presence of the Spirit in this community and I am truly blessed to be a part of it. I also want to thank you all for the very generous gift I received from you this Christmas. Your kindness is deeply appreciated and your gift is one more expression of the welcome and hospitality I have received since arriving here.

May God continue to shine a light on Luther Memorial that its gifts of kindness and generosity may be used to grow the kingdom and share the Gospel through service, worship and love of neighbor.

Peace and Blessings,

Pr. Libby Pfaff

Dear Fellow Congregation Members and Friends,

Greetings for a Happy & Hopeful New Year. My family and I have been members here at LMLC for almost 30 years and I have been on staff for 3.5 years and I am continually impressed by the giving hearts of Luther Memorial. Once again you have given me a generous Christmas gift and I am truly appreciative and deeply grateful to be in your service in Christ's name.

Peace, Justice, and Mercy,

Marcia Barrow

Dear Pastor Monica Weber and Luther Memorial Church,

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Our son attends Valley Interfaith Childcare Center. We want to thank you for your kindness and generosity for the gift we received from you! May Jesus bless you as you have blessed our family.

Love, a VICC Family

Service Assistants for January:*

	01.09	01.16	01.23	01.30
Lector	Linda Libey	Jim Lang	Gail King	Bill King
Usher/greeter	Jennifer Freeman	Marcia Barrow	Carla Liversedge	Jennifer Freeman
Usher/greeter	Carol Papillon	Don Holmstrom	Glenn Buss	Marcia Barrow
Teller	Tim Larson	Rick Howard	Teresa Cassell	Mark Barrow
Teller	Teresa Cassell	Marty Oosterhuis	Tim Larson	Marty Oosterhuis
Livestream				
Council Point Person	Karl Perdesen	Carolyn Howard	Jay Crone	Ed Vigen
Altar Flowers				

*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!



January 01

Harvey Peterson

January 03

Bennet Cassell

January 08

Jan Gilbertson

January 09

Bill Crabtree

Mandy Wilson

January 14

Aaron Howard

January 18

Nelda Buss

January 20

Rachel Peterson

January 22

Whitney Akers

January 23

Barb Shifflett

January 31

Phil Gilbertson



Bill and Bertha Crabtree; January 15th

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



STEWARDSHIP NUGGET FOR JANUARY 2022

People go through three conversions: their head, their heart
and their pocketbook. Unfortunately, not all at the same time.

Martin Luther