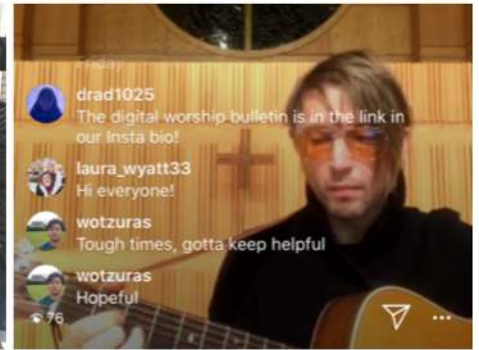




LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY TWIN CITIES

SPRING 2020



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Campus Pastor

Michelle Greene
Administrative &
Development

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Musician

Bergen Nelson
St Paul Outreach Intern

Dana Rademacher Hansen
Program Associate

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PASTOR'S REFLECTIONS

Dear Ones,

As I write this, the world is in a state of flux. Our economy is unstable, our hospitals preparing for an influx of patients, and everyone has gone inside. You all are no doubt self distancing - I pray that by the time you receive this newsletter, we're moving closer to understanding this virus and out of our isolation.

I also pray that this newsletter might be both balm and hope for you (which is my prayer for every letter I write to you where we tell stories of our ministry). It is full of stories of young people leading the way, finding new ways to connect with and love their neighbors, support one another, and draw near to God. In some ways, campus ministry is made for this moment. We're always being pulled outwards, into the community, to find new ways of connecting with people and proclaiming the good news of God's love and mercy.

In this season, that call is pulling us online into social media spaces - but in deeper, more consistent and creative ways than we have been before. We are gathering together for worship using Instagram Live - a space which allows for a musician to share the screen, and for students to interact with each other and me during worship - in all the ways that are familiar to them. They still ask good questions about scripture, offer prayers of the people, and joke around a lot during our announcements time. It's really quite beautiful.

At LCM we also work hard to nurture and support our student leaders - and they have again shown up to consider what it means to be church in this time and place. They've organized to reach out to their peers, checking in with friends and strangers to help ward off isolation, anxiety, and loneliness. They're hosting weekly small groups, much like they do on campus, but using an online tool called Zoom. And, they've recorded their sermons to be shared online at area congregations for LCM Sunday. They're modeling authenticity and curiosity in our online spaces, and they are being church where they are, reaching out to elders and finding ways to be of service in their local communities and within their families.

This pandemic experience will certainly be seared into our hearts for the remainder of our lives, and that is true for these young adults as well. **In this uncertain time, we must walk with them**, bearing witness to the love and mercy of Christ, as known through the creativity, warmth and good humor of an online Christian community.

As they grow in life and leadership in our church and world, we trust that they will take this experience with them, shaped and formed by it, and empowered to be co-Creators with God in building a newer, kinder, more just and merciful world.

Continued on page 3

LCM-TC WELCOMES NEW PROGRAM ASSISTANT!



We, at LCM-TC are proud and excited to introduce Dana Rademacher Hansen as our newest team member. She joined our staff as Program Associate in January.

Dana is a graduate of the University of Minnesota (Ski-U-Mah!) and brings deep knowledge of the institution, impressive social media prowess, her own young adulthood, and most importantly a fierce love of the Gospel. She is most excited to get to know all of the students and hear their stories, and to help share and spread God's expansive love on campus in new, creative ways.

Dana is married to John, dog and cat mom to Theo and Rosie, and is a lover of board games, tea, and yoga. She is currently enrolled at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, pursuing her Master of Divinity as she discerns her path to rostered leadership in the ELCA.

As Program Associate, Dana coordinates the work we do to welcome and gather students, including our outreach, social media, service and justice, and community building work. This is no small task! Please join me in welcoming Dana into this thriving community.

THE LOVE OF GOD IN COMMUNITY

STUDENT REFLECTIONS

by Grace R.

As a concept, "love," has always been foreign to me. As a child, I loved Valentine's Day - the cards and decorations and school lunch that included pink strawberry milk. I loved seeing the color pink all over, especially in the cold wintery weather of February - but I didn't get it. I understood that love existed because of movies and that I was told that my family loved me, but love as a concept was always out of focus, alien, and foreign. When I was a smaller child, I believed everyone thought the way I did - not understanding complex emotions like love. Turns out, that's because I am autistic. My understanding of emotions was limited to happy and sad, and sometimes angry.

When I was 8 years old, I was taken to a strange doctor's office for two days of testing to see if I fell somewhere on the autism spectrum. I remember the neuropsychologist holding up pictures of people at a picnic, pointing at a person in the picture, and asking me what emotion they were feeling. I was at a loss. It was in that moment I realized that my experience of the world was different than everyone else's. I felt ashamed and scared.

At the time, the most recommended

treatment for high functioning autism like mine was "passing." Passing is a therapy where through counseling and medication, autistic people can appear to be neurotypical, and which assures people that nothing is "wrong with me". My family and I trusted the doctors - they were doing what they thought was best for me. I learned quickly to not put up a fight during treatment, as the doctors altered my personality and tailored my speech and physical mannerisms. If I didn't follow along, I would never achieve my goals. Anything that marked me as different was seen as broken and wrong. My fidgets were to be played with under my desk so no one else would see. I learned to blend in. I fell in line and became someone that I wasn't in order to appear less fundamentally broken. But deep inside, I felt empty - like I was wearing a mask.

By the end of high school, I realized I was not content "fitting in," but I did not know how to make a change. I didn't know who I was. When I came to college my freshman year, I maintained a very carefully designed personality so that I might be able to find friends at a big public university.

But, the moment I got plugged in at LCM, something changed. My walls started to come down, and I realized I

could be myself because other people were also practicing authenticity. The community at LCM taught me that I was deserving of love regardless of what was broken in me or not. I learned to become my true self, and I currently have a better understanding of who I am because of the welcoming love I received at LCM.

Recently, I realized that that the idea that I was broken at all was a complete fallacy. I thought my friends at LCM didn't care that I was broken, but in reality, I wasn't broken at all.

This was the moment my faith changed - I understood God's love and the word agape in true form. I was made perfect according to God's will. I am known completely and loved in every form by God. I was never broken, just different. And this difference was deliberately created by

Continued on page 3



CROSSING BOUNDRIES & BORDERS



In January, Lutheran Campus Ministry-Twin Cities traveled to Tucson, AZ to learn from and walk with people at the border. We were hosted by Pastor Mateo and Annette Chavez, and the people of San Juan Bautista; welcomed into their lives, and the lives of the people living and serving in Tucson. We were also fortunate to travel across the border in Nogales, MX, witness the work Fronteras Cruzando (a joint ministry of the ELCA and ECUSA), and meet migrants who were waiting for asylum hearings at the shelter.

Our group returned inspired by the abundant hospitality of our hosts, eager to continue to engage with the stories and lives of immigrants and asylum seekers, and advocate for a more just and merciful process for those seeking refuge.

As our students shelter in place, they're continuing this learning and relationship building via an online Zoom book group with the people of San Juan Bautista.

LCM-TC LAUNCHES NEW ENDOWMENT



In January, Dr. Donald H. Nelson made a generous gift to Lutheran Campus Ministry-Twin Cities. He graduated from the U of M school of Dentistry in 1957 and was an alum of LSA (Lutheran Student Association). The intent of his gift is to inspire generosity in alumni and others through the creation of the LCM-TC Endowment so that the ELCA can continue to be "On the Campus for Good." We are beyond grateful for Dr. Nelson's generosity and look forward to working together so that the Lutheran church will always have a thriving presence among the many young adults that will continue to gather at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. If you are interested in joining Dr. Nelson with a gift to LCM-TC's new Endowment, please contact pastorkate@umnlutheran.org.

PASTOR'S REFLECTIONS – continued from page 1



Last of all, as with your congregations and other non-profits, we are grateful for your generosity and support during this uncertain time. We rely on the generosity of you all to be church in the midst of this amazing group of young adults. Our work continues, and we are relying heavily on your generous financial support. If you have capacity to make a first-time gift, continue your giving or increase your gift if your work is stable, we are grateful.

God is always making us new, and this point in time is no different. My prayer for each of us, and for our church is that we emerge from this time ever grateful, creative, hopeful, and trusting. You will be in my prayers and LCM welcomes yours as well.

Peace to you, and good courage,
Pastor Kate

LOVE OF GOD IN COMMUNITY - continued from page 2

God to make Their creation more perfect. This is agape. God's love for us made manifest. And because of my belovedness in the eyes of God, I am learning to love myself and all the differences that make me a unique and needed child of God.

Every day, I remind myself that I am beloved. That God looked at the mountains and the seas and the stars and decided that the world needed one of me too. That's how much God loves me. That's how much God loves every single one of us. This is the kind of love I never understood as a small child on Valentine's day, but God's love and the love experienced in Christian community goes beyond Valentine's day, beyond culture, beyond individuals and permeates through our lives. We can rest in the fact that we are truly known and loved by God because of who we are, not in spite of this. And thanks be to God for that.

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November 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020

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We are grateful to the following individuals, organizations, and businesses for their gracious support of Lutheran Campus Ministry – Twin Cities.

We apologize for any errors or omissions that may have inadvertently occurred. Please report them by emailing info@umnlutheran.org.

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LCM SUNDAY ONLINE



Each year, we are proud to send out student preachers into congregations around the Minneapolis and St. Paul Area Synods to proclaim the Gospel and share stories of Christ's love made known in and through LCM-TC. Sunday March 22nd would have marked LCM-TC's 4th Annual LCM Sunday where 13 congregations were prepared to welcome students, and to lift up our ministry. And like many of you, our best laid plans came to an abrupt halt as congregations and the University of Minnesota moved online.

Working with partner congregations, LCM-TC quickly found ways to honor the hard work of our preachers and lift up our vital ministry in the midst of chaotic times. Some pre-recorded their sermons, others were a part of a live stream, and still others are waiting for the time when congregations will gather again - to preach in person. And still, the impact of our student preachers won't be the same.

Not only is it a loss to connect in person with our friends and partners, LCM-TC will experience a financial loss as well. In past years, individuals in our partner congregations have generously donated on this day to support our ministry, and we will be missing that outpouring of support this year. We invite you to go online and check out our LCM Sunday page. Please take a few moments to hear the sermons prepared with love, compassion and wisdom by our students, and consider making a financial gift while you're there. Please visit: <https://umnlutheran.org/event/lcm-sunday/>

SOCIAL MEDIA MINISTRY

When program associate, Dana, started working with LCM-TC in January, she was excited to share her gifts and passion for creating community in digital spaces. She knew then what we're all discovering now - social media can be a fertile and holy ground for community building and meaning making. Though it certainly can't replace in person gatherings, in the ever-changing reality of Covid-19 and social distancing, social media allowed us to quickly adapt and allows us to continue to gather students from our scattered corners of the world - all in the name of being the Body of Christ in the world.

Every Wednesday at 8 p.m., the LCM-TC community gathers on Instagram Live for *pause @ home*. We pray together, hear the Word of God, and continue on with our critical and compassionate conversation around scripture. At first, there were many questions and unknowns. Will this feel like worship? How will the technology cooperate? Who will join us for worship? Will students find meaning and rest in this chaotic time?

As we're still figuring all of this out, trying to catch up to the Holy Spirit, we have been joyfully surprised at the ways the LCM community, across generations, can connect and care for one another in these new spaces. Not only are students and staff robustly engaging in worship, but we've been joined by parents, siblings, alumni, friends, newcomers. The Body of Christ is vast and "just as it is one and has many members, so it is with Christ." We invite you to join us in this new experiment of digital worship. You can find our most recent digital bulletin and more information about *pause @ home* at umnlutheran.org/get-involved/pause-at-home.

COMMUNITY THRIVING IN ALL FORMS



Ashes-to-go on campus

*Worship continues on
Instagram Live*



Servant leader meetings



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RETREAT INTO CHRIST'S DEEP PEACE

When Holden Village introduced new rules for entry in response to COVID-19, LCM-TC made the hard choice to cancel our Spring Break trip to Holden Village. It was disappointing to students and leaders alike, but with quick thinking and adaptability, we planned an alternative Spring Break trip to the ARC Retreat Center in Stanchfield, MN.

The retreat was a time for students to escape the busy-ness of University life and reconnect with their identity as a part of God's whole creation. We began and ended each day with

student-led worships that grounded us in God's peace. We explored scripture through an eco-faith Bible Study, took walks through the surrounding woods and each created an art piece, picture, collage, or poem to express how we relate to God through nature. The project challenged students to be vulnerable with themselves and one another, and it built a deep trust among our small community.

In this world that defines us by what we do, we spent three days focusing on how Christ loves and accepts us for who we are. Although, this was not the place we expected to go, these LCM students and leaders were blessed with a chance to pause and recall that God has created us and set us free to love the world, one another, and ourselves, no matter where we are or where we go.

THANK YOU SSF!

We would like to extend a big thank you to the U of M Student Service Fees for providing funding for a variety of our activities. Each year student leaders apply for funds to support our student group. This year they partially funded the following activities: welcome week and outreach, fall retreat, leader retreat, worship supplies, Faith & Leadership, and some operational supplies.

Your support makes our ministry happen!
To learn how please visit our website at www.umnlutheran.org/support.