

Newsletter of the Lake Oswego United Methodist Church LOUMC: A Place to Connect—to God, to each other, and to the World Thanksgiving/Advent 2024

Worship with Us

In November

9:00am Fellowship Hall & Online

> 10:30am Sanctuary

In December

9:00am Fellowship Hall

> 10:30am Sanctuary & Online

December 29 5th Sunday 10:00am Combined Worship

In January

9:00am Fellowship Hall & Online

> 10:30am Sanctuary

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It almost seems as if the stores and media moved directly from Halloween into Christmas, completely skipping over the season of Thanksgiving (Have you tried to find a Thanksgiving napkin at the store?!) Thanksgiving *IS* late this year. But we have much to be thankful for at LOUMC!

A few of the items on the list are a *beautiful new parking lot*, *insurance* and the people who know how to (and are willing to put in the time to) arrange the work and obtain the policies. We are thankful for *new Youth and Children's Ministry leaders*, new nursery workers, for *children who love their church home*, and for our *14 most recently joined Church family members*.

We are thankful for *Worship Team members* who prepare our worship spaces and for *musicians* who share their talents and the *technicians* who support the sound and take the video, so that people who are unable to visit in person can watch online and still be a part of worship services. We give thanks for those who are willing to serve in leadership positions on *the Board* and for those who do so many things *behind the scenes* around the church and in the community; greeting, making coffee, serving lunch, collecting food for food banks and so much more!

We have the opportunity to serve God, to serve others and to serve alongside each other, and for this, we are *VERY* thankful!

So take a breath and give a prayer of thanks! And then let the preparations begin! Advent begins on Sunday, December 1! It's almost time! Read on!

A Word from the Pastor

A Weary World Rejoices – Worship in Advent & Christmas

Advent begins with the first Sunday of December this year. (In many years, Advent begins on the last Sunday of November.) As we anticipate the joy of preparing for and celebrating the birth of Christ, you might also be feeling a bit gloomy. Or maybe even sad. And perhaps hopeless. I certainly have felt that way at times.

And yet, it is precisely in darkness that the light of Christ shines brightest.

Our worship theme for Advent, "A Weary World Rejoices," will remind us that God's hope and peace show up in the most unexpected ways and places. What a gift! What Good News, indeed!

I pray that as your days and nights fill up with holiday preparations and celebrations that you'll encounter moments of hope, peace, joy and love. And I pray that you are a source of hope and beauty for the people you encounter throughout the busyness of this season.

I am so grateful to serve alongside you as we connect with God, with one another, and with the world. See you in worship!

Peace,

Clay

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Good Social Media?

Is there such a thing as GOOD social media? YES! Curating a social media feed of good, interesting, and insightful social media resources can connect us to good people doing good work. AND by following and engaging with this type of content, we can help encourage more great social media content. So, let's find great stuff together. I'll suggest some great follows, and I hope you'll tell me about the great content you're finding so that we can tell others about it. Sound good? Great. Here's my first few suggestions:

Dan McClellan is a biblical and religious scholar who teaches about the nitty gritty details of the Bible, Christian tradition and who debunks lots of other bad social media videos. Dan is as accessible as can be for anyone wanting to know some nuts and bolts of biblical scholarship. (Instagram: maklelan)

Rethink Church is a UMC social media presence offering reflections, prayers, and other helpful spiritual practices. (Instagram: Rethinkchurch, Facebook: Rethink Church)

Valarie Kaur is a Sikh author and a leader in the civil rights movement. She wrote "See No Stranger" and continues to create a movement for radical love and inclusion of all of God's people. (Instagram: valariekaur, Facebook Valarie Kaur)

Prayers

We have been keeping the following people in our prayers:

Jerry Woods had successful surgery for a broken hip and we celebrated his CT showing no signs of cancer in September.

Former LOUMC pastor **David Albright** passed peacefully on September 4 in New Mexico. **Henry Richard** took a fall, breaking his leg just below the hip. He had a successful surgery on September 8. **LaRayne Kisky** broke her hand in September.

Linda Driscoll has been undergoing chemotherapy for lymphatic cancer and appreciates your prayers and phone calls.

Mark Clemo ruptured his quad muscle and appreciated your prayers. Liz Whitson's mother was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer and passed away on October 14, surrounded by family and friends.

We prayed for our siblings across the East Coast affected by Hurricanes Helene and Milton and hosted Sally Harmon's October 20 concert to benefit the victims through UMCOR. Knox Stiven had a second surgery to restore his hearing.

LOUMC parents celebrated our new Youth Director, Heidi Chang and our new Children's Ministry Leader, Liz Whitson by donating a food basket. Rev. Danna Drum had an unexpected appendectomy on October 22nd. We have been keeping Larry Eischen in our prayers as he deals with ongoing health issues.

Jerene Evans passed away in September.

Jim and Donna Wilson's 42 year old nephew, **Clint Wilson**, passed away on October 17.

Watch Your Mailbox for Stewardship Mailings!

If you haven't already received one, you should be receiving one soon!

Please be sure to read the included information carefully and prayerfully. Then fill out your commitment card neatly (so our financial secretary can read your name!) and return to the church by mail or drop it into the offering box at church.

Pledges are kept confidential and filling out your commitment card helps our finance team budget for the year ahead.

Welcome New Board Members

At the November 17 Church Charge Conference, LOUMC elected three new Board members: Peter Brown, Wende Milner, and Connelly Woody. Their term begins January 1, 2025.

Please be in prayer for these new servant leaders as they step into their new roles.

A huge prayer of thanksgiving for the Board members who are ending their terms on December 31 of this year: Jenny Cook, May Anne Lewis, and Jeff Mattern!

Watch the Quick News for more info about newest Board members and updates on the Board's work to lead our congregation.

Peace,

Clay

LOUMC Calendar

December (continued)

Benefit Concert

24 Christmas Eve

25 Christmas Day!

2:00pm Sanctuary

5:00pm Sanctuary

22 Fourth Sunday in Advent

Sally Harmon and Friends

Family Service with Children's

Spontaneous Christmas Pageant

Traditional Candlelight Worship

7:30 & 9:00pm Sanctuary

November

- 23 Youth Friendsgiving Potluck 6-8:00pm Heidi's House
- 24 Advent Gathering/Hanging of the Greens4-7:00pm Fellowship Hall
- 25 Lunch Bunch Thanksgiving 12:00pm Fellowship Hall
- 27/ Thanksgiving Holiday
- 28 Church Office Closed December
- 1 First Sunday in Advent
- 7 Home for the Holidays Bazaar 9:00am-2:00pm
- 8 Second Sunday in Advent
- 14 Mancakes 8:00am Fellowship Hall
- 15 Third Sunday in Advent Christmas Concert & Reception 5:00pm Sanctuary
- 16 Lunch Bunch Christmas Buffet 12:00pm Fellowship Hall
- 19 Blue Christmas Service 7:00pm Chapel

Sundays

Mondays

Pickleball

Tuesdays

Men's Group

Knitting Group

(2nd & 4th)

Sunday Soul Food

Probers

29 5th Sunday Combined Worship 10:00am Sanctuary
January
1 New Year's Day Church Office Closed
11 Mancakes 8:00am Fellowship Hall
20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Church Office Closed 27 Lunch Bunch 12:00pm Fellowship Hall

Regular Weekly Small Groups & Classes

9:00am

10:15am

7:00pm

8:30am

2:00pm

Wednesdays

Indoor Play Park 8:30am Craft Group (1st& 3rd) 9:30am Quilt Group (2nd & 4th)10:00am **Thursdays** Open Hearts 10:00am Pickleball 7:00pm **Fridays** Friday Bible Study 10:00am

Finance Matters

YTD Financial Report	Actual		Budget		
Income					
Pledges	\$	361,873	\$	386,173	
All Other		49,071		43,525	
Total		411,732		430,598	
Expenses					
Facilities and Equipment		91,584		120,543	
Staff		257,982		264,620	
Apportionments		52,692		51,225	
All Other		26,709		36,252	
Total		429,437		472,641	

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Build Connections: Small Groups & Classes

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Monday, December 16 12:00pm

Join the Lunch Bunch for a delicious meal and some great company! Be sure to contact <u>Nan Olson</u> or call the Front Office to make your reservations! \$5 per person All are welcome!

Pickleball Come and Play!



Craft Group

The Craft Group meets on 1st and 3rd Wednesdays (changing to Tuesdays in January) to make handcrafted gifts for the Annual Home for the Holidays Bazaar, as well as special dolls, called "Rag Dolls 2 Love" and "Cardiac Hearts" to comfort children and adults around the world!

Quilt Group Makes Warm Fuzzies for Those in Need

The quilt group will resume on 2nd and 4th Tuesdays in January to make personal quilts for children entering foster care with the Oregon DHS, as well as quilts for pregnant moms residing at the Road to Hope home for mothers in need.

Circle of Purls Knitting Group



Join the ladies who knit on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month from 2:00–4:00pm in the Conference Room!

Bring your personal projects and/or work on items for the bazaar, prayer shawls, hats for preemies or any other items you wish!

Contact Marty Stiven with any questions.

mstiven@stivenplanning.com

Mancakes Breakfast and a Speaker



MANCAKES is generally on 2nd Saturdays at 8:00am! Join Jon Gice and the LOUMC guys for breakfast and a speaker. As always, please let Jon know if you can attend so he can plan food quantities. jon_gice@sbcglobal. net.

Probers Meet Sundays Online!

The Probers class has been discussing many topics related to religion for over 30 years at LOUMC! What does it mean to be a Christian in this complex modern world?

They study foreign policy every winter. All are welcome to join the discussion sunday mornings at 9:00! Contact Susan Ford, tsuzef@msn.com for the Zoom link.

Men's Group

Men's Group meets Tuesday mornings at 8:30 in the Conference Room. They do Bible studies, book studies and video discussions. Currently, they are studying different contemporary issues on each Tuesday.

On September 17th, they will begin a study of *Desire of the Everlasting Hills, The World before and after Jesus*, by Thomas Cahill.

Contact John Milner (johnwilliammilner@gmail.com) if you have any questions or would like to join them.

Sunday Soul Food Begins a New Study

Sunday Soul Food meets on Sundays at 10:15 in the **Conference Room**. Grab your coffee after church, socialize for a moment, then head on down! They are beginning a study of Adam Hamilton's *Prepare The Way For The Lord* for Advent. Meetings will be November 24, and December 8, 15, and 22. Go ahead and order your own book and Contact Deb Gice if you plan to attend or need more info: debra_gice@sbcglobal.net

Open Hearts

Open Hearts is a women's study group that has been meeting on Thursday mornings at 10:00 for many years. Join them in the Conference Room. They are always happy to welcome new women to the group! *All* church women are invited! They next Open Hearts book study will be on *Big Magic* by Elizabeth Gilbert, beginning November 21. The books are available on Amazon. Questions? Ask Ann Hageman hagemanann@gmail.com

Pull-Out Advent Calendar



The Spotlight -Advent 2024

Advent Events and Activities

Advent Festival

Sunday, November 24, 4:00pm– 7:00pm

Join us for:

*Fun crafts *Cookie decorating * Yule log & advent wreath making *Hanging of the Greens *The Christmas Story

** Potluck at 6:00! **

In an effort to reduce waste and be earth friendly, we are asking everyone to bring their dishes from home (cups, plates, flatware), and take them home with you after the festival to wash. <u>Here is a link</u> for reusable and affordable, dishwasher safe plastic plates.



Enjoy a gift from our LOUMC Musicians!

Sunday, December 15 5:00pm

in the Sanctuary

A Variety of Music including Choir, Handbells, Praise Band, Small Groups, Soloists





Blue Christmas Service Thursday, December 19 @ 7:00pm

The holidays do not always feel "jolly and bright" and that is ok. Reminders of loved ones lost; too much on our plates; crowds and houseguests; loneliness; sometimes these things can make us feel blue.

The Blue Christmas Service is a quiet, reflective service for those who could use some comfort and healing during this busy time of year. This service accepts us as we are, even if that is not cheery and bright, and brings hope, comfort and healing for those who seek it. Join us in the Chapel on December 19 at 7:00pm.



Outreach Opportunities

Reaching Out with the Outreach Ministries Team!

We are working hard to inform you about the many places we support, and hope that the weekly "moments of generosity" in worship have been helpful. Some of you have asked how to go about volunteering. There are many ways to help at The Father's Heart, Family Promise, Phoenix Rising, Road 2 Hope, West Linn Food Pantry, Hunger Fighters, Habitat for Humanity, Tualatin Food Pantry, and the Gleaners (who pick up donations at stores and coffee shops and deliver them to the food pantries). There are lots of possibilities. If you would like to help, contact Linda Noel and she can

Thank you for your generous donations of hearty food for the West Linn Food Pantry. John Oleyar , who volunteers there, delivered our collection. That 245 pounds collected will help to feed many families in need.

We are collecting toys for Black Santa. Please bring an unwrapped toy to help us fill up the sleigh. You can also donate with a check to LOUMC with Black Santa

on the memo line. Black Santa gives the toys to foster children, children of color and those in need. Every child should have a toy for Christmas.

Gifts of Hope is coming soon. The catalogue will be on line and mailed to you. There will be a table at the Christmas Bazaar about Gifts of Hope. If you have questions stop by and see us.



Gifts of Hope Begins in December

LOUMC's 16th annual Gifts of Hope collection is fast approaching. It has become our Christmas tradition, to recognize the true spirit of the season, to contribute to worthy philanthropies that help those in need. All of the organizations in the catalog are actively supported by members of the congregation throughout the year. Look for the Gifts of Hope catalog in the mail by Thanksgiving and we will provide three ways to make contributions to your favorite philanthropy:

1. The Outreach committee will have a booth at the Home for the Holidays bazaar on Saturday, December 7, from 9 am to 2 pm and will be prepared to take your checks or credit cards for donations.

2. You can write a check and fill out the paper "order form" included with your catalog - to indicate the organizations you want to contribute to - and mail that check and form to the LOUMC office.

3. You can contribute online by going to the LOUMC website or by using the QR codes included in the catalog.

We will take donations throughout the month of December. Those who would like to make a contribution to honor a family member or a friend can use the letter included with the catalog to tell them of your donation. This Christmas season, please help children and adults in need, as hunger and homelessness hurt in our community, and as man-made and natural disasters wreak havoc around the world. The Gifts of Hope collection hopes to honor the words of Jesus: "... Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." (Matthew 25:40).

Care Partner Ministry

1 Peter3:8 Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. NIV

Showing love for our congregation and being a part of the Care Partner Ministry at LOUMC is a wonderful way to serve and receive much in return.

This January there will be an opportunity for those wanting to explore if this is their calling. Guidance will be offered to either refresh your existing experience, or if new, learn some of the best practices around visitation, listening, communicating, and sharing of loving, caring ways to be in relationship with a member of our church family. This will be the perfect time to learn more about this one on one ministry.

More info will follow, but please save the date now: **January 15 at 9:30am** in the church Conference Room.

Thank you, thank you, thank you!!! To LOUMC's amazing Care Partner Ministry Team: Linda and Mark Davis, Bobbie Dennet, Deb Gice, Jon Gice, MaryAnn Kooning, Emilie Kroen, Kay Lutze, Jeanie Mattern, Jennifer Stickler, Becky Tripp, and newest members, LaRayne Kisky and Susan Speer.

We'd love to talk to you or answer any of your questions. Blessings and peace to you! Jeanie Mattern 503-740-3102 Emilie Kroen 503-312-4138

Other Outreach

Sally Harmon Christmas Benefit Concert

Sally Harmon has generously offered to play another Christmas benefit concert this year! The concert will be on *Sunday, December 22 at 2:00pm* in the Sanctuary.

Donations will benefit <u>Hunger</u> <u>Fighters Oregon</u>, a small local food bank serving those in need in the LO vicinity! Hunger and need know no boundaries! There is need in our own backyard. The concert is free and open to the public! **Hope to see you there**!





Our own Scott Way being "framed" while working at the King City **Habitat for Humanity** site last Friday. Want to join Scott and others from our Church who help Habitat provide affordable housing? Please contact jon_gice@sbcglobal.net to learn more! And this is not a male only mission!! *ALL* are welcome to come help.

Children's and Student Ministries

Indoor Play Park Most Wednesdays

Our Lake Oswego Indoor Play Park is open *most* Wednesday mornings from 8:30 until 11:30!

Children ages 0-4 with their parents or caregivers are welcome to come and enjoy playing in our clean, dry fun play space with lots of large and small motor areas to explore! Many thanks to the volunteers who set up and watch over the Play Park!



Youth Group News

The Youth enjoyed their first "Service Sunday" this month! They served as liturgists, sound technician, ushers and communion servers during the 9:00 worship service on November 3rd! They did a great job!

Youth will have a "Friendsgiving" potluck at Heidi's from 6-8:00pm on November 23. Heidi and Josh will prepare ham and turkey, so bring a yummy side or dessert to share! And feel free to bring a friend!

On November 24 at 4:00pm, the Youth will be a part of the Advent Celebration, manning 2 tables and enjoying the fun decorating, food and crafts!

Trustees

Trustee Helpers Corner

2024 is coming to a close, and despite the recent insurance snag, the trustee ministry teams (building, grounds, and parsonage) have been hard at work.

Huge thanks to the **grounds ministry team** for getting our parking lot repave to the finish line! I know *I've* been admiring the "curb appeal" a new parking lot (and lots of new curbs) has brought to our space.

Though the grounds work party had to be postponed, the team kept busy building the list of tasks (leaves anyone?) to do as soon as we can schedule another one! Did you know the parsonage got painted this fall? Thank you **parsonage** ministry team for checking many needed projects off the list: painting, roof maintenance, soffit repair, rewiring in the garage, and interior updates. Thanks, also, to the Andrew family for being flexible and for taking great care of the parsonage! Our **building ministry team** has created a very handy to-do list with month-by-month maintenance tasks. Through the participation of many, they keep our church building in great shape! We've had a number of expected and unexpected projects come up this year. The team met in early November

year. The team met in early November to check on and discuss the to-dos, pending projects, and potential projects for the coming year.

Finally, a brief note from Jenny Cook – outgoing Trustee Operations board member: I made the decision this fall to close my time on the simple governance board as the trustees' operations person. This is partly because Keegan will be moving into his senior year of high school in 2025, my 'day job' has required more of my time, and because I also served on the COVID re-entry (continued p.9)

Celebrating Our Connections

Spotlight On Richard Waggoner

This is a shout out and a huge "thank you" to Richard Waggoner who has been the Financial Secretary for LOUMC for several years. Richard and Holly Gosewehr (many thanks to Holly as well!) volunteered religiously every week, counting, entering into our database (for your tax purposes) and depositing your donations into the bank. Richard also created and organized your statements for pickup and mailing each quarter. While this job will now become part of a staff position done by Kelly Bradley, Richard has done a great job at it for years and we appreciate all of his hard work and headaches! He continues to be our Thursday afternoon volunteer in the office (he is an expert with the bulletin printing and cutting!) and stand in livestream operator, as needed! Thank you, thank you, thank you,



Trustee Helpers Corner (continued from p.8)

team and simple governance board transition time. I prayerfully considered my roles in our church family and felt that it was a good time for me to depart my board position to allow for some fresh leaders with new and, I'm sure, exciting ideas to join the board. It has been a heavy lift to make this transition over the last few years, and I thank you all for your kindness, grace, and willingness to walk this path with us all. I look forward to still seeing you all when we gather to worship, but also in the many opportunities we take to scatter and serve our world. Peace In Christ, Jenny

Fourteen New Members Welcomed to the LOUMC Family on September 29

Membership conversations were offered on September 15th and 22nd to give folks a chance to ask questions and to learn about LOUMC, and about Methodism.

We were excited to welcome 14 new members to the LOUMC Church Family on September 29th. Some of them have been attending for a while and have just not gotten around to joining before, and some are very new to the church. If you haven't had a chance to meet them, please make an effort to introduce yourself and get to know them better!

Welcome to the LOUMC Family!



Remember to Pick Up Your Cozy "LOUMC Connect" Sweatshirts!

Didn't order one, but now you want one? Contact Pam Pearson. We may be able to order up to 10 more for the same pricing! First Come, First Served!



Give Warm Outerwear So Others May Live

Through December 12th, the Lake Oswego Lions Club is again collecting Warm Outwear donations. The new warm jackets, gloves, hats, scarves and raingear will be taken to the Tigard UMC's Bethlehem House of Bread for distribution to those in need. Items for children, especially youth (adult sizes) and their families are especially important. The collection box for donations is in the hall between the Sanctuary and the CAC. Any questions? Call Diane Mead. (503-701-0317 cell & text) Thanks so much!



The Spotlight is published monthly by the Lake Oswego United Methodist Church 1855 South Shore Blvd. Lake Oswego, Oregon 97034 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

LOUMC Staff

Senior Pastor: Rev. Clay Andrew Deacon: Rev. Danna Drum Ministry and Building Coordinator and Interim Bookkeeper: Stacey Bernal Communications Director: Pam Pearson Receptionist and Database Manager: Kelly Bradley Children's Ministry Leader: Liz Whitson Youth Ministry Leader: Heidi Chang Nursery Leader: Jazmin Stang Choir Director: Chris Rust Contemporary Music Director: Noelle Goodenberger Bell Choir Director: Leanne Bilstrom

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The Open Hearts group loves to help out as they meet on Thursday mornings! Last week they helped prepare luminaries for Christmas Eve and cut out special stars for Epiphany!



December 7 from 9am til 2pm

It's that time of year to celebrate the season with the annual Home for the Holiday's Bazaar. We are bringing back **Santa** this year (bring your camera to get a fun photo!), as well as old favorites like the **Vintage** Christmas Area, the Children's Store, wonderful handcrafted gifts, baked goods and candies and, of course, the cafe!

And don't forget the knife sharpener, jewelry maker, World Hearts Fair Trade and all of the other great local vendors!

Want to help??

Set up for the Bazaar will be going on the week after Thanksgiving in the

Fellowship Hall! Contact Cathy Vause if you have some time to help! Extra hands are especially needed with setup and cleanup! Contact Pam Pearson to **donate candy or baked goods**! The morning of December 1 is dropoff time!! **Small items** needed for the Kid's Store for children to purchase for family members. Contact Alaina Kuehn or bring by the church office to donate.

Spotlight Deadlines: January 21 for the Lent Issue which is printed February 27.

Please email submissions for the Spotlight to pam@lakeoswegoumc.org by noon of the deadline date. Articles received after the deadline may not be printed. Articles may be edited for length.