

LuMin Blesses Seniors; Bids Farewell - Godspeed to Bryan Rust



The LuMin Bunch! Screenshots like this one from LuMin's last Sunday worship are becoming all too familiar in this social distancing, pandemic time.

LuMin's Bridge Intern Deepens Connection with LGBT+, Undocumented Students



Shane Walley (far left) guides LuMin student leader action allies in discussing ways to be a welcoming and safe community for the LGBT+ folk.

- by **KIT CAUDLE**, Senior -Bridge Intern

Twelve LuMin students had the opportunity to ask themselves "How can I be a better LGBT+ ally?" this past February when Shane Whalley, a genderqueer social worker, led an LGBT Ally Action training at LuMin.

The Saturday morning workshop covered the topics of identity, stereotypes, and hardship in today's society, and how allies play a pivotal role in making LGBT+ peers feel welcome, comfortable, and supported in any environment. Students were encouraged to ask questions in the open and honest space which prompted meaningful discussion. All who participated in this training were grateful that Shane came to share his expertise.

Upon fulfilling LuMin's goal to raise \$5,000 through Sunday offering for Water to Thrive, our student worship community has shifted

its stewardship focus to show solidarity with undocumented and DACA UT students. University Leadership Initiative (ULI) is comprised of individuals who are DACA recipients and undocumented students on the 40 Acres.

This organization needs scholarship funds for their students. As the Bridge Intern, I brought this need to our campus pastor and the worship community. It took little to no convincing; our worship community is committed to being in solidarity with ULI students, their dreams, and their challenges.

Our ultimate goal is to raise five \$1,000 scholarships for ULI students through our Sunday offering by May 2021.

Following our last worship of the school year, we have already gathered funds to cover one of those \$1,000 scholarships!

Madison Brenner Named LuMin's 2019-20 Katarina von Bora Servant Leader

For the past few years, LuMin celebrates a student or group of students with the Katarina von Bora Servant Leadership Award. Recipients of this award are recognized for how they embody such qualities as empathy, listening, imagination, sabbath taking, welcome, foresight, and collaboration.

For her work with Daily Bread, Madison Brenner has been named his year's Katarina von Bora Servant Leader. Throughout this year, Madison has shown an exceptional awareness of the concerns and needs of those students served by LuMin's food pantry.



Bittersweet Last Zoom Worship of the School Year for LuMin

by **BIANCA BLANEY**, Senior

Sunday, May 3rd the LuMin worship community had our last worship service of the semester. At the sending, we blessed 15 LuMin seniors, and we bid farewell and Godspeed to our music minister, Bryan, who offered his musical gift in our worship for the final time.

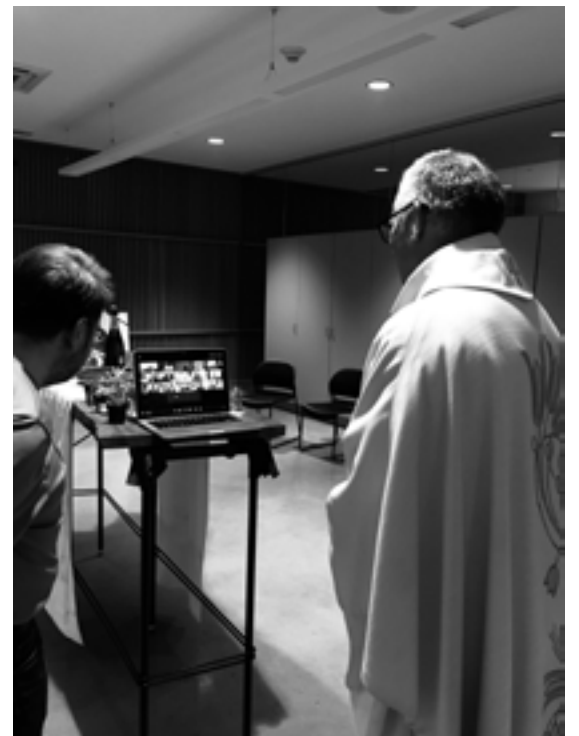
The love and support were clearly felt by all in our Zoom worship service. Thirty-four zoom participants logged into this worship - many of whom were joined by their family members at home. It was a joy to have parents, relatives, alumni and friends of LuMin singing some of LuMin's favorite songs: Christ be our Light (ELW 715) and We are Called (ELW 720).

I estimate over 50 people participated in LuMin's year-end worship - the highest attendance of a final worship service that I can remember in quite some time.

Pr. Brad's sermon addressed the seniors encouraging them to cling to their formation by the Good Shepherd to be servant leaders in the world. When it came time to bless the seniors, Pr. Brad played a video filled with photos of the seniors and messages from underclassmen. And after we gave God thanks for Bryan's 12 years of service to LCM, he gave the following benediction - borrowing, in part, from Henri Frederic Amiel,

"Life is short, and we don't always have time to gladden the hearts of those who journey the way with us; so, be swift to love, make haste to be kind, and make peace, while making not peace with oppression; and the blessing, mercy, and grace of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, travel with you, now and forever,"

Online worship and social distancing definitely altered how we would prefer to celebrate our seniors and the end of the school year. Still, I found that there was a beautiful silver lining displayed in our virtual service. It was heartwarming to have people from all over joining us through Zoom to celebrate our seniors and Bryan. Though we muted ourselves during the hymns, I could see us all singing together. We received the eucharist together over the web. As a one of those seniors being celebrated and blessed, I felt very loved and supported by everyone who attended, and I felt it was a very beautiful and fitting send off for the time we're in.



Bryan and Pr. Brad greeting worshippers as they arrive on Zoom.

Ad Hoc LuMin Visioning Team Postpones Visioning Process

by Meri Marcks, Senior

Recognizing how powerful a uniting vision can be, Pastor Brad gathered a small but mighty team to start the exciting work of building a vision for LuMin Austin. Albert Swantner (a board member and LuMin alum) and I collaborated with Pastor Brad to determine the process we would follow.

During the first half of the semester, we conducted the first set of interviews with past and current students. However, after the attention of everyone in our community and all who care about it was drawn away by COVID-19, we decided to suspend the work and continue it at a later time.

The conversations we have had so far showcased the great strengths of LuMin and the ways we hope to more closely follow God's calling.

With so many things to think about in the present, we know people are not able to freely and fully dream about the future.

Nevertheless, the conversations we have had so far showcased

Daily Bread During Quarantine

by Madison Brennor, Senior

During this unprecedented time, a lot of things have turned our world upside down. One thing that hasn't changed is the food insecurity still being prevalent on campuses. Pastor Brad and I made the decision before school got cancelled for the entirety of the semester that we would still be open for students who needed us.

During spring break, we put plans in place to minimize contact and follow all CDC guidelines in bringing groceries to students who need them. We have continued our services, but we now function on a pre-order only basis to minimize the number of people in our center.

Being a continued presence on our campus means even more during this time. While we have had people who regularly visit us continue to do so, I have heard from others who have lost their regular jobs or can't get out of expensive leases and have visited us for the first time. It means so much that we are able to take one less burden off of students during this trying time for everyone. The words of appreciation I hear from students every week affirms our purpose and efforts in being there for them.

the great strengths of LuMin and the ways we hope to more closely follow God's calling. LuMin students delight in the community LuMin provides and how it acts as a home away from home.

Students are grateful for the immense support they receive from LuMin's staff and the opportunities they have to serve.

LuMin is a place where students deeply engage with, strengthen, and stay connected to their faith. Beautiful music rises from our worship space, hungry students receive food from students who joyfully operate Daily Bread, and people gather around delicious meals.

We have also started to capture the yearnings of our community. LuMin students hope our ministry becomes increasingly diverse, reflecting the diversity of God's creation. Students yearn to maintain LuMin's sense of community and its role as a place where they are able to lay down their burdens and be reminded of what is important. There are hopes for a continuing emphasis on service, stronger connections with other groups, and an ongoing focus on nurturing faith.

I look forward to hearing about where we want to go together, and I rest in the knowledge God will guide us and walk with us when we do.

Quaran-TEA, Anyone?

by Rebecca Guengerich, Spiritual Director

During pre-quarantine times, I set out the tea cups at LuMin and wondered, would anyone show up? During this present quarantine reality, the question hasn't changed. Nor has this: I've never waited long for people and God's Spirit to show up.

Spirituali-TEA provides students the gift of sabbath...pause...rest...a time to listen. Pre-quarantine, the conversations were about life -- career goals, roommates, faith, discernment or dating. Present-quarantine, the conversations have shifted to loss (grandparents, pets, graduation, college experience) isolation, coping with being a homebound college student. Spirituali-TEA sabbath time has still been crucial. My job has been reminding them: God is always present: opening new pathways, bearing their burdens, granting them courage to live life freely - abundantly - with God.

At the end of every Spirituali-TEA (via Zoom, now), students have felt blessed, simply by speaking what was deep inside. I too have been blessed! God's baptismal promised presence holds us: God is present in our gathering: renewing hope, renewing thoughts and renewing energy. I carry their conversations with me. I pray for them and follow up. God is present in all our lives - pre and present quarantine - and for whatever comes next.

Bish's Cap 10K with LuMin Lopers: A Journey of Adaptation

by Bishop Erik Gronberg, NTNL Synod

It has been years since I participated in the Cap 10K, so I was excited to do it in 2020 with Pastor Brad and the LuMin "Lopers." We connected online for training, sharing and encouragement. Then the race was cancelled.

What would we do? What we all do in this pandemic, we adapt. Instead of running together we planned a physically distant race, our own routes, concurrently.

7:45am Palm Sunday we gathered online for prayer and off we went. I chose a familiar route on Fort Worth's Trinity Trails featuring a low water crossing a third of the way in. Rain the night before left the crossing covered in feet of water. The way shut I adapted, changing my route to complete the full distance.

The flooded crossing required adaptation and slowed my pace. I missed my goal time. A reminder we make plans and goals but we must adapt and that adapting has costs. In 2020 LuMin students have had to adapt and live with grief and disappointment.

Grief brought by suffering from

COVID-19 but also lost milestones and celebrations. Some minor, like running goals, others much larger. In the midst of challenges they have adapted as has Pastor Brad's ministry accompanying them.

COVID-19 has and will continue to change us. We are adapting, changing, experiencing grief and joy. Yet in faith we trust the Christ we proclaim, God's living Word, and Christ's promises do not change. So we adapt to comfort those who sorrow. We experience opportunities, new routes. Ministry continues, and we look towards the future, which is God. I give thanks for the ministry of LuMin and encourage your support of this vital young adult ministry.



Bp. Gronberg gettin' his Palm Sunday and virtual Cap10K on!



LuMin Reads...

by Magdalena Shen, Freshmen

The Lenten season was just beginning when the LuMin community started our Bible study and readings of Dear Church by Pr. Lenny Duncan. Pr. Duncan is a Black preacher serving in the whitest denomination in the United States: the ELCA.

On the First Sunday in Lent, Pr. Brad said the LuMin worship community was being called to observe our own Lenten "quarantine" (from the Italian word *quarantino* meaning 40) with Pastor Duncan. Our engagement with Duncan's book - by God's Grace - would help LuMin confess this church's sin of white supremacy and ways God is equipping us to eradicate it.

Initially, as a woman of color, I was nervous to undertake this study. How would my voice be perceived in a majority white congregation? Would people be afraid to be transparent with me in the room? I quickly found that neither of these concerns had

merit. The community of LuMin is ready to make changes, to listen to the voices that have been silenced in the past. We do not want to live in ignorance alone, but rather, we desire to understand and to love one another.

Our Zoom book and Bible study discussions and Zoom Sunday worship services throughout Lent were times when we faced the truth: ELCA has the highest percentage of white membership of any church in the United States. Beyond that, historically, the ELCA has been estranged from the LGBTQIA+ community, undocumented immigrants, and even the women in our own pews.

Many of us recognize these hard truths, but will we do anything? Do we have time to wait for someone else to fix the obvious flaws in our practices? Personally, I don't think so, AND I believe that God is about the work of helping LuMin act to repair our relationship with groups that have been historically marginalized by the Church. We must realize that we cannot take the liberty of waiting any longer.

We, as Lutheran Christians, have been too comfortable with the privilege of believing "someone else" will repent and repair the historical sins committed by the Church. God is calling us NOW to be RE-formed. *Semper Reformanda.*