

Worship Music and Vigil (In)form LuMin's Response to October 7th Attack



LuMin postponed November 7th's Tailgate Tuesday to a Thursday in order to attend a joint Muslim-Jewish-Christian vigil for peace and to mourn the loss of innocent lives taken in October 7th attack. Pictured here, is Dr. Yetkin Yildirim, imam with the Dialogue Institute speaking words of solidarity and peace to a group of 200 students, faculty, and staff gathered at The Tower.

Between Darkness and Light

- by **ELLIE SEIVERS** - Senior, Worship Music Intern, double majoring in Violin Performance and Radio, Television and Film

On October 7 the world witnessed terror as Hamas launched an attack on Israel. The ensuing war has led to suffering and loss for Israelis and Palestinians in the Middle East and around the world.

On October 13 ELCA's Presiding Bishop Eaton issued a statement on the war, advocating for peace, condemning violence against civilians by both the Hamas and the Israeli military, and calling us into prayer for all "who are living in trauma, fear and uncertainty." The ELCA has since provided further resources addressing the conflict in the Holy Land.

At LuMin, we have used these resources to discuss how our faith shapes our response to the war. As the worship music intern, I have planned hymns that give voice to both Israelis and Palestinians.

One such hymn is "Between Darkness and Light," which has lyrics by Manal Hreib (a Palestinian sociologist) and music by Daphna Rosenberg (an Israeli singer-songwriter). Rosenberg writes how the song was initially shared by a group of Israelis and Palestinians at a gathering to commemorate the Israeli Day of Independence and the Palestinian Nakba, and how the act of singing together "claimed their commitment to

peacemaking between their peoples." The text of the hymn (written in Hebrew, Arabic and English) is as follows:

*Between darkness
and light,
I will always walk;
And wherever
I will go,
I will open
a window of light
and will plant the
seeds of love.*

As an anthem for love in the face of turmoil, this hymn embodies the power that music has to transcend cultural boundaries and unite people of different backgrounds. I personally experienced this when I moved with my family from Japan to Canada at age 10. Even though I couldn't speak English, I was able to make connections with people through our shared passion for music.

As we pray for an end to the conflict and for a lasting peace, I will continue to use the gift of music that God has given us – especially hymns like Between Darkness and Light – to spread the wonderful hope and comfort that comes from receiving God's love and sharing it with others.

LuMin Intern Participates in ELCA Climate Summit



- by **VIRGINIA VANACEK** - Sophomore, The Carl and Claudia Tienert Social Justice Intern, majoring in Astronomy

This past October, I had the privilege of getting to attend the ELCA Climate Summit held at the main office in Chicago. This summit was focused on providing an opportunity for young adults in the ELCA to learn and contribute meaningfully toward the climate crisis. In total, 25 young adults from across the country attended this event that was sponsored by the ELCA as a cohabitation of the ongoing Young Adults programs.

We heard from several speakers, spent time in worship and prayer, and participated in activities designed toward crafting a final project.

On Saturday we dove into a full day at the churchwide office; we began worship, then discussed the ELCA's social statements and messages, heard from climate and creation care workers share about their own projects, all of which led to each of us creating and develop our own action that would benefit our communities - actions that address climate change or live out our baptismal call to care for God's creation.

Because we, the summit participants, were coming from very different backgrounds and live in areas with different needs, we saw a very diverse set of projects emerge from our time together.

While some were interested in solar power, others were interested in communication of scientific information. Ultimately each person walked away from the summit with a real project to work on, a general plan, and resources to assist us bringing our project to fruition.

I fully expect great things will happen from the young adults who attended. While I am still in the beginnings of my project, I feel well supported by the members of the summit and LuMin.

My vision is to bring more accessible recycling to West Campus as we do not have recycling bins readily available on the sidewalks. This creates a large waste problem, and the trash cans are often overflowing (particularly with items that could be recycled). I am grateful for any thoughts and prayers for this project as I try to get it off the ground.

Overall, this experience was overwhelmingly positive, and I am so thankful for getting to meet many different people around my age that are in the ELCA. I feel very passionately that we can truly make a change in the world that better aligns us with God's creation and our responsibility to take care of it.

Building Community @ Tailgate Tuesday

- by **ASHLYNN ALTHAUS** - Senior, Volunteer Coordinator Intern majoring in Architecture and Architectural Engineering

We're building expansive community on Tuesday nights here at 2100 San Antonio Street. Every week, so many people from so many different places in life make our service to 400ish hungry Longhorns.

I first think of the staff and students here at LuMin. None of this would be possible without their hard work and dedication to our cause. Pastor Brad does so much work before it's even Tuesday. (*continued on back*)

Builing Community, *continued...*

...and every week, a core group of committed volunteers shows up and makes it happen.

At the beginning of this semester, I was concerned that we would be unable to sustain Tailgate Tuesday in its current form without a vicar, but look! My fellow returning LuMin Longhorns step up with me to address their absence, students like Virginia, Johnny, the two Josh's and Michael. Each of my fellow LuMinators bring something vital to this feeding ministry: ranging from fast food tricks to new jokes and stories, to their joy and passion for serving others. And we have new students joining up in feeding the multitudes. I'm excited to witness how they will be woven into our life together at LuMin.

Volunteers from beyond our UT community are joining in the fun of serving too - folks I've had the joy of serving with before and new volunteers - alumni even! God is bringing all these people together from every direction to build community every week. A special community made complete by "The Line": the hungry ones we serve every Tuesday.

In the moment, I think it is easy to get overwhelmed and start seeing them as only an unending tide of hungry mouths. Four hundred people is a lot of people. While I strive to be outgoing amid serving the masses, I inevitably fall short. Still, every week, I see many of the same faces, and every week, I learn a little more about them, and they learn a little more about me. And every week, they trust us a little bit more and strengthen their place in our community.

I think of people - completely unconnected to UT - who've been caught up into what God's doing here @ 2100. I'll end with this short example: Two women come every week while they wait for their husbands to finish work on the construction site across the street. The second week they came, they approached me about donating chips to pass out with the burgers.

While we are still working with them to make this happen, I think about what one of them says to me every week. "We don't have much," she said, "But we've got God to thank every day for what we do have. And so we've got to share it."

Blessed Be the LuMin Lunches that Bind



- by **SHANNON PERRY** - Senior, The Kacie Brekhus Community Life Intern, majoring in History

In my third year of serving as the Kacie Brekhus Community Life Intern, I've shifted my focus on fostering closer relationships within the LuMin community itself. I've treasured this experience of deepening relationships among us.

We began this semester floating down the Comal River - like we do. A few new faces joined our caravan of inner-tubes, and that set the scene for this semester. We talked for hours and truly enjoyed one another's company. These conversations taught me that there is a need for deeper connection within our congregation.

With our busy schedules, it can be difficult for the entire worship community to come together on a random day of the week for a social event. However, we all have an hour or so

to grab coffee, study, go for a walk, or do anything that can relieve stress! This realization delivered "LuMin Lunches." Every two weeks, members of LuMin are randomly paired with another member to hang out with. Having this intentional time to interact with people that we have seen during worship for weeks strengthens the bonds among us. Don't just take my word for it, listen to what LuMin members Virginia and Jimmy have to say!

Virginia: "I found that LuMin Lunches were a great way to get to know members of our community that I hadn't had one-on-one time with yet! I really value the conversations that have occurred and the relationships that have been fostered through it."

Jimmy: "I really enjoyed getting

to know both Josh and Owen on a deeper level than I had previously. The LuMin lunch was a great opportunity to slow things down in the business of a work week and take time to just sit and chat with a familiar face. I really felt like it deepened my friendships with the community members I spoke to."

Building community among the LuMin worship community is the goal of my internship, and I am so ecstatic to see the growth of friendships blossoming at every turn. LuMin is a comforting place that provides each of us a space to engage in conversation, learn more about God, and eat wonderful food. We cannot go through college alone, so in building upon the relationships at LuMin, I hope that God will carry these friendships throughout our lives.

Daily Bread Food Pantry Sees Continued Growth Under New Intern

- by **JODIE NGYUYEN** - Senior, The Loren & Kay Jensen Daily Bread Food Pantry Intern, majoring in Computational Biology

Word of our Daily Bread food pantry has gotten around, such that a noticeable trend has emerged—students eager for the first selection of pantry goods are getting in line earlier each week. The consistent presence of a group of friends seated outside the pantry door at precisely 5 PM - one hour before we open - every Wednesday gives to this "eagerness." From 5PM on, the line steadily grows to at least 30 people by the time I open the doors.

In the past, I used to deploy a promotional sign all day on Wednesdays advocating for the Daily Bread Food Pantry, proudly displaying the tagline 'For UT students by UT students.' However, as word of Daily Bread has spread, I question if any advertising is needed.

The UT community's grateful embrace of our food pantry has led to

word-of-mouth promotion, with attendees enthusiastically sharing their experiences. Perhaps promotion is unnecessary; still, I put out the sign.

My Daily Bread Food predecessor intern, Josue, served this pantry well, so it's taken some time to fill his shoes. In time, though, my comfort level has increased. I've implemented my own improvements. I've shaped the pantry to meet the needs of students by attentively listening to their recommendations. I find it gratifying to see how appreciative students are to see something they recommended on the shelf.

Witnessing a weekly influx of 60-70 students, many of whom are familiar faces, provides insights into the needs and preferences of my fellow UT students.

The popularity of certain items

has become quite apparent. Refrigerated goods, fresh produce and particularly tomatoes - all these things fly off the shelves.

As I watch my fellow students depart with brimming HEB bags in each hand - bags primarily filled with bulky essentials like bread and milk, I get to see the profound impact of this pantry I serve.

Departing newcomers often inquire about weighing their bags before leaving - a policy of the UT Outpost. At Daily Bread, we don't put a limitation. Rather, we encourage students to gather the groceries they need for the week, and we trust them. As I share this with students, I realize the fortuitous position our pantry holds. We provide unconditional support to students grappling with food insecurity, an invaluable contribution to "the 40 Acres."