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The deadline for the March issue of the Messenger is noon on Thursday, February 20. Email articles to Lauren.Lanigan@lenexaumc.org.

The Messenger is available online, or you may pick up a copy at church. If you would like a copy mailed to you, please contact the church office.

Cover photo from the 2020 MIXED NUTS mission trip provided by Lisa Freeman.
How many of you feel weak in spirit? How many of you out there are honest enough to admit that you are in need of spiritual renewal? Good news! Lent is around the corner. It is a solemn religious observance in the Christian liturgical calendar that begins on Ash Wednesday (February 26) and ends approximately six weeks later, before Easter Sunday—that is to say, 40 days from Ash Wednesday. The purpose of Lent is to allow God to renew our faith. It is also a time of preparation for Easter through prayer, repentance of sins, doing penance, mortifying the flesh, almsgiving, forgiveness, and self-denial. This event is observed in the United Methodist Church, and the Lenten theme for Lenexa UMC this year is “FORGIVE”.

In Psalm 51, we learn about the power of sin to make us weak and hinder our spirits through the life of King David. He was beyond the point of being able to resist temptation of the flesh because he was weak and unfed spiritually, and a major work of spiritual renovation was necessary in his life. Because of that, he pled to God in his prayer for mercy and forgiveness.

Fellowship with God through prayer is the first step to spiritual renewal—the food of the spirit. The next step is repentance. When David saw that he was in desperate need of spiritual renewal, he began his pursuit of it on his knees, and that led him to repentance. He said, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10). A spirit of purity, of commitment, of dedication to God, begins with repentance. It begins when the Holy Spirit of God convicts one’s heart, and when the sinner finally has a sense of shame and sorrow for the condition of sin in his or her heart. It comes from a sincere heart when we confess our sins and say, “I’m sorry”, to the only righteous and holy Lord.

I want to bring to your attention the desperate need we all have for the renewal that comes with true repentance. None of us is without a need for repentance in his or her life. When was the last time you had heart-to-heart fellowship with God? When was the last time you knelt before God in tears, pleading to Him for forgiveness, and asked Him to renew a right spirit in you?

Repentance is detoxification for the soul. It makes a spirit healthy on a personal level and benefits the health of the congregation as a whole. The Lord is passionate about repentance! In Ezekiel 18:30-32, The Lord says, “…Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed to God and to one another and get a new heart and a new spirit…”

Repentance is a daily requirement for spiritual life and renewal, and a great time to pursue it is during the Lenten season. You can either choose to give something up—like cigarettes, TV, or certain foods or drinks—or choose to add something, such as reading the Bible every day, praying more regularly, or attending church every Sunday.

Grace and peace,

Rev. Ezekiel Koech
A Faithful Steward

As true followers of Christ, all we have is from God. We are stewards of His creation. We are stewards of what God has blessed us with. We should give generously, cheerfully, sacrificially and selflessly. How we handle our finances and our wealth is important, and it reflects where our hearts and priorities are at. (2 Corinthians 8:1 – 15)

Grace Stewardship

Here is the grace of giving. There is no pressure on the giver. There is no public display, no competition and no manipulation of the givers. It is honest, open, transparent and genuine giving from the heart. It is a ministry of grace. The whole letter of Second Corinthians is about ministry. This is another aspect of ministering in the church. What can we learn from the Corinthians?

1. They gave methodically. Paul instructed them to give “on the first day of every week.” It was periodic giving. The church received the gifts every Lord’s day.

2. They gave personally. It was a personal privilege and responsibility to give. “Let each one of you” give.

3. They gave regularly. They were to “put aside and save.” You will never give consistently unless God comes first. When you give Him His part first, before the house note, car notes, even food, you will give as a gift of grace.

4. They gave impartially. They gave as God caused them to prosper. Each person gave “as he may prosper.” They gave in proportion to what they had.

5. They gave confidentially. Paul wanted them to take the offering before he came, so “no collection be made when I come.” He did not want a big show. He didn’t want to make a contest out of it. Do it privately so that when I get there we can concentrate on other matters. Giving is an act of grace.

Humor of the Month

“What’s wrong, Bubba?” asked the pastor.
“I need you to pray for my hearing,” said Bubba.
The pastor put his hands on Bubba’s ears and prayed. When he was done, he asked, “So how’s your hearing?”
“I don’t know,” said Bubba. “It isn’t until next Tuesday.”
2019 Financial Report

The people of Lenexa United Methodist Church are amazing! After spending the first half of the year in an overage situation as people prepaid their annual giving early, we started running short the second half. We let you know, and you responded! Total income for the 2019 operating budget was $491,419—just over the budget of $490,700!

We finished the year with all bills paid, including 100% of our Mission Share for the tenth consecutive year! This has not happened in 35 years. That is something to celebrate! Additionally, we were able to add a much needed $8,050 to our Building Maintenance Reserve Fund which had been depleted earlier in the year.

Your generosity extends to so many projects above and beyond the operating budget; it’s impossible to name them all. In 2019, you contributed nearly $12,000 to special offerings and other mission projects, including disaster relief, Hillcrest, Sunflower, and more. You gave $148,461 toward the debt on the education building, which allowed us to reduce our loan from $258,731 on January 1 to $119,266 on December 31.

Lenexa UMC is truly blessed to have such wonderful support from our members and friends!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>December 2019</th>
<th>Total for Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Operating Fund Contributions Received</td>
<td>$84,937</td>
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<td>Building Use, Fundraising and Other Income Received</td>
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<td>Income from Bequest (Budgeted)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Operating Income Received</td>
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<td>2019 Giving Received in 2018</td>
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<td>Prepayment of 2020 Giving in 2019</td>
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<td>2019 Operating Income Received</td>
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<td>2019 Annual Budget</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission and Ministry Shares Paid—100%</td>
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Education Building Debt Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance Due on Education Building Loan 12/31/19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amount Remaining on Capital Campaign Pledges</td>
<td>$55,394</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>$63,872</td>
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WORDS ON WORSHIP

SPONGE: Our Strategic Initiatives for 2020

During the November 2019 Charge Conference, our church voted on new initiatives for 2020: Growth in Spirituality, Participation, Outreach, Numbers, Giving, and Enthusiasm (SPONGE). Through February 9, we will be continuing our SPONGE sermon series, and the drama team will continue to bring us a short message each week to present each topic.

FEBRUARY 2 | 4th SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

“Giving”

Philippians 4:10–20
It is God’s character to give. John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he GAVE his one and only son...” He gave us life. He gave us love. He gave us purpose. He gave us a second chance. He gives and he gives. We ought to do the same because we are his followers. Rev. Ezekiel Koech preaching. Tree of Life Praise Band at 9. Chancel Choir at 10:30.

FEBRUARY 9 | 5th SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

“Enthusiasm”

1 Thessalonians 5:16–22
So much of what Paul encourages the Thessalonians believers to be about in his final instructions center’s on living an enthusiastic, positive, Spirit-filled life. One of the marks of authentic Christianity is that believers will have an enthusiasm for God and the things of God. I pray for my congregation to be enthusiastic about the things of God. Rev. Ezekiel Koech preaching. Tree of Life Praise Band at 9. Growing in Grace Children’s Choir and Chancel Choir at 10:30.

FEBRUARY 16 | 6th SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

“A Call To Have a Right Relationship With Others”

Matthew 5:21–37
If someone has something against you, Jesus wants you to reconcile with that person before you do things to earn individual favor with God. Rev. Ezekiel Koech preaching. Tree of Life Praise Band at 9. Chancel Choir at 10:30.

FEBRUARY 23 | TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY

“Transfiguration”

Matthew 17:1–9
What happened on that Mountain top took place between Jesus’ two statements of impending change. Jesus comes to us in whatever circumstances of change we find ourselves in and touches us saying, “Get up, be raised”. It is the promise that though life has changed, it has not ended. Rev. Ezekiel Koech preaching. Tree of Life Praise Band at 9. Praise Bells at 9, Celebration Bells at 10:30, and Joy Bells at both services.

FEBRUARY 26 | ASH WEDNESDAY | 7 p.m. in The Underground

“Forgive”

Luke 23:34
Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of a new season—the season of Lent. Please join us for an evening of worship and imposition of ashes.
CHILDREN’S MINISTRIES

join us for sunday school!

9:00 A.M.  
Nursery: Birth–3 years old  
Kid’s Kingdom: 4 years old–6th grade

10:30 A.M.  
Nursery: Birth–3 years old  
Kids Connect: 4 years old–6th grade

On the first Sunday of each month, Kids Connect stays in the sanctuary for the 10:30 a.m. service to experience worship and communion. For February, Kid’s Kingdom at 9:00 will be studying Jesus’ healing miracles. Kids Connect at 10:30 will participate in learning activities tied to the week’s scripture lesson from the church service.

upcoming events

FAMILY MATTERS

Join our new ministry for families of kids (birth–6th grade)! Family Matters will meet once a month from 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. for lunch followed by an activity. We will alternate each month between a family bonding activity for parents and kids to participate in together and splitting out to have a guest speaker or discussion group for parents and separate activities for kids. Mark your calendars for the following dates and RSVP to Mary.Clow@lenexaumc.org so we know how many to expect. RSVPs are needed for nursery care for kids 3 and under.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23  |  Parent Group: “Keeping Your Cool When Parenting Raises Your Blood Pressure” with Tammy Shepherd; activities for kids
SUNDAY, MARCH 22  |  Family Scavenger Hunt
SUNDAY, APRIL 26  |  Parent Group: “Child Safety” with Lenexa PD Officer Danny Chavez; activities for kids
SUNDAY, MAY 31  |  Family Activity TBD

LENTEN CRAFT FAIR  |  February 26  |  5:30 p.m.

Join us on Ash Wednesday to prepare for the Lenten season. There will be Dinner’s On Us and Lenten crafts for kids in Schneeberger from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Then, stay for the Ash Wednesday worship service in the Underground.

SCOUT SUNDAY  |  February 9

We will recognize Girl Scouts during the 9:00 a.m. service and Boy Scouts during the 10:30 a.m. service on Scout Sunday, February 9. If there are any scouts who would like to be involved in the service, please contact Mary Clow.

PJS AND POP-TARTS  |  March 8

Spring forward your clocks and spring out of bed to join us in Sunday School on March 8! Wear your PJs and we will have Pop-Tarts during 9:00 a.m. Kids Kingdom Sunday School and 10:30 a.m. Kids Connect Sunday School.

save the date!

Easter Egg-Stravaganza: April 5  
Knights of North Castle Vacation Bible School: June 15-19
LUMYOUTH ACTIVITIES

Sunday, February 2 | 5:00 p.m. | The Reads’ House
LUMYOUTH SUPER BOWL PARTY
Please bring a snack to share—and your family as well!

Sunday, February 9 | 5:00 p.m.
LUMYOUTH SERVICE PROJECT—BLANKETS AND DOG TREATS!

Sunday, February 16 | 5:00 p.m.
LUMYOUTH DODGEBALL NIGHT

Sunday, February 23 | 5:00 p.m.
LUMYOUTH BOARD GAMES

save the date!

Sunday, March 29
YOUTH CHILI AUCTION
The Youth of LUMC will host the annual Chili Auction again this year. We will prepare and serve chili and baked potatoes the morning and afternoon of the 29th. Questions? Call Christine Read, Tammy Shepherd, Sandy Gunkel, or Melinda Parks.

June 1–5
GREEN PEANUTS MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION TRIP
There will be a planning meeting for 6th and 7th graders and their parents on Sunday, February 9 at 11:30 a.m. in the middle school room.

July 12–18
PEANUTS HIGH SCHOOL MISSION TRIP
Planning meetings: All youth going on PEANUTS must attend planning meetings. Information coming soon about applications for Leadership Planning teams. Meetings will be at 7 p.m. on Sunday, February 23, Sunday, March 29, Sunday, May 3, and Sunday, June 14.
Lenexa UMC has two part-time job openings. We are currently in need of the following:

**LEAD CUSTODIAN** for building services. This staff opportunity is a 20-hour-a-week position.

Duties include:
- Standard cleaning—empty trash, vacuum, dust, and clean windows and bathrooms for both buildings.
- Setup—set tables and chairs for all church, preschool and guest events.
- Maintaining supplies—keep track of towels, toilet paper and cleaning supplies. Order as needed.
- Building maintenance—fix toilet valves and flapper, change light bulbs, change paper towel dispenser batteries, change furnace filters. Coordinate outside vendor for carpet cleaning and floor polish. Major paint projects are typically done by volunteers.
- Candidate needs to be able to lift at least 40 lbs. to handle trash and move tables.

**YOUTH DIRECTOR** to provide spiritual and relational Christian leadership for youth in the 7th through 12th grades. This staff opportunity is approximately 20 hours per week.

The Director of Youth Ministries will work with the Church Leadership Team and will provide the primary leadership for youth programming, along with adult volunteers. This will include weekly youth meetings, regularly scheduled classes (Sunday School, Confirmation, etc.); worship inclusion, fellowship programs, and service projects that will include district and conference activities and events.

Responsibilities:
- Grow the youth ministry by creating an attractive, vibrant, and compelling environment to which our youth can invite and attract others to the church.
- Build and support a team of passionate adult volunteers who provide diverse ability to lead, coach and mentor youth.
- Challenge the youth to respond to God’s call to serve in their communities and the world.
- Build a ministry that engages with local middle and high schools in the area and connects with the youth in their activities.
- Love youth for who they are and where they are in their faith journey.

Qualifications:
- Hold a bachelor’s degree in a related field.
- Have a vision and demonstrated ability to plan, develop, coordinate, manage and implement a youth ministry.
- Possess excellent written and verbal communication skills, conflict management skills, and computer skills.
- Demonstrate an ability to work effectively with youth, diverse individuals, and teams of volunteers.
- Previous experience leading a youth ministry program is desired.

If you are interested in either position, contact Rick Smith at office@lenexaumc.org or (913) 888–5600.
SALTY PEANUTS ADULT MISSION TRIP

SALTY PEANUTS are heading to Oklahoma in March of 2020. This is what we know so far: Cost per person will be $200. They have a growing list of projects in various stages across the state, with an expectation of 500 or more by March and all needing volunteer teams. They will definitely be able to find us a project. Therefore, as our trip approaches they will determine what projects are available and work with us on what tools we will need to bring and what they will provide for us.

Interested adults should contact Bruce Freeman or Marv Hammontree. Watch CrossLinks and the church bulletin for our next meeting date and time.

LUMOUTH CHILI LUNCH & AUCTION

The Youth Chili Auction will take place right after church. Come join us for chili, baked potatoes and the opportunity to purchase some great auction items. Proceeds support youth ministries all year including PEANUTS, GREEN PEANUTS, retreats, and other service projects. We are accepting donations at this time. If you or your family have an item, gift card, service, or experience you’d like to donate, please drop it off in the church office or contact Sandy Gunkel or Melinda Parks.

Earnings from the 2020 Chili Auction will fund the following events:

- PEANUTS Mission Trip - $8,000
- GREEN PEANUTS Mission Trip - $3,500
- LUMYouth Fall Retreat for all - $3,500
- Serving the families of the Ronald McDonald House twice - $600

LUMC LADIES’ BOOK CLUB

The ladies’ book club of LUMC has chosen books for the next few months. Our next meeting is February 19, 2020, when we will discuss The Only Woman in the Room by Marie Benedict. Our March book is The Huntress by Kate Quinn. Everyone is welcome! You may bring a lunch if you want.

Questions? Contact Linda Stoker at lstoker98@gmail.com.
2020 YOUNG ADULT CHALLENGE

July 5-10 | Salida UMC—Salida, Colorado

Cost is $125 per young adult aged 18-30 ($250 for older adults). Packing lists will be provided. We will leave from the church at 7 a.m. on July 5.

All young adults 18+ are invited to come on this mission trip adventure. Our week will include:

1) One day of hiking up to 12,500 ft. to get acclimated to high altitude
2) Two days working with Chaffee County Habitat for Humanity
3) Climbing and hopefully summiting a 14,000+ foot mountain

“Older adult” facilitators will be recruited as needed. Interested persons should contact Lisa Freeman, Young Adult Facilitator, at soaringhogs@sbcglobal.net. Space is not limited...if we have greater interest, we will secure another vehicle. All are welcome!

February Health Ministries Tip!

Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer in non smokers? Should I be concerned? Should I get my home tested?

Yes, yes, and yes. 1 in 4 homes in Kansas will test at or above the EPA's action level. Find out your home’s radon level with a simple and inexpensive (less than $10) test kit obtained through the Kansas State Research and Extension offices. For more information and to obtain a kit, check out www.kansasradonprogram.org or call the Kansas Radon Hotline at (800)693-5343.
All are welcome to join one or more of these great classes!

**SPECTRUM**  
*9:00 a.m. | Room 122*  
The Spectrum class is currently studying the life of the prophet Jeremiah in a study by Matt Miofsky, pastor at The Gathering in St. Louis.

**FOUNDATIONS**  
*9:00 a.m. | Room 105*  

**PATHFINDERS**  
*9:00 a.m. | Asbury Room*  
Pathfinders selects current issues in the news or other contemporary topics for discussion. We debate how these issues should be addressed in light of scripture and our Christian faith.

**DASHERS**  
*10:30 a.m. | Asbury Room*  
After experiencing 9:00 a.m. worship, we reflect on the day’s service through lively and thoughtful conversation. Someone often brings something from the editorial page for discussion, and we apply our faith walk to the topic at hand as we share our opinions. We know our date of birth, and don’t know the day we will die, but we’re doing our best to fill the dash.

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**YAC: YOUNG ADULT CONVERSATIONS**  
*Sundays | 10:30–11:30 a.m. | The Underground*  
This young adult group meets every Sunday morning. Hot drinks and yummy snacks are always available at these lively conversations. Come join us! For more info, contact Bruce & Lisa Freeman, Young Adult Conversations facilitators at brfvet@aol.com or soaringhogs@sbcglobal.net.

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**PRESCHOOL NEWS**

February is the shortest month of the year, but it is still FULL of learning and fun in our preschool and CDO classrooms! This month we focus on love and friendship. Enrollment for the 2020-2021 school year is now open. If you are interested in learning more about our wonderful Preschool and Children’s Day Out program, please contact Lori Campbell at (913) 888–6300. Wishing you a Happy Valentine’s Day!