HAPPY NEW YEAR!

SPONGE: OUR NEW PLAN FOR THE YEAR 2020
P. 5

JOB OPPORTUNITIES AT LENEXA UMC
P. 9

NEWS AND EVENTS FOR JANUARY
P. 10–11
The deadline for the February issue of the Messenger is noon on Thursday, January 16. 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.
Last week, as I was driving on I-435 East around Kansas City, I listened to public radio in my car. I heard an interview with a lady who had just written a book on the Eastern philosophy of how you can decorate your house and organize your furniture in order to best tap into the energy of the universe. What was really fascinating to me in the interview was the conversation about clutter in our homes, and how clutter keeps us from tapping into life's energies. She talked about the need to clear out clutter in order to make ourselves ready for new possibilities in our lives. She was talking about physical clutter. And she talked about people who have financial trouble and how if you clear out stacks of old bills and receipts that are just accumulating in your house, (either file them away, or just shred them) you can open yourself up to new financial possibilities.

Having listened to that, I began to think about the spiritual and emotional clutter that gets in the way of tapping into the possibilities of new opportunities in our lives. I think there is some truth to the idea of clearing out clutter in order to be open to the new. As a New Year's resolution this year, I've already started clearing out physical clutter in my office. My wife Alice is doing the same thing at home, but hers is more of a goal than a resolution. She said that a goal is something achievable, while resolution may not be achieved. I spent most of Friday and Saturday last week working on cleaning and organizing, and it felt good just to be getting rid of some of that old stuff. Alice and I are eager to see how we have opened ourselves to new financial possibilities from the cleaning that we have done.

Concerning spiritual clutter, I think that there is a need to say goodbye to things that are holding us back from fully experiencing life. What kinds of emotional or spiritual clutter are we holding onto? What do you need to let go of in order to make room for new possibilities in your life this New Year? Perhaps it's an old resentment or grudge, or maybe it’s a need for control in a certain situation. You may be having emotional scars from your childhood that you’ve been holding onto for a very long time. Perhaps you have fear or anxiety about something in your life, something that's coming, or something that you have no control over. Maybe you’re in a dead-end or life-draining job and it’s time to quit, move on, and find something else that gives you more life. It’s possible that you’re dealing with old grief or loss from a divorce, a job, or a move. Perhaps you need to let go of a person—someone who has died, a friendship that has ended, or a child who has gone off to school. Maybe it's the loss of health, or the loss of your youth—the aging process is certainly a time for saying goodbye. Or maybe it's simply an image that you had in mind about where you would be in life by this point—or who you would be at this point in your life—and it hasn’t been realized. This month, take time to think seriously about what you need to let go of and what is holding you back from experiencing life to the fullest, and ask God to give you cleansing and peace.

I wish you all a happy new year 2020!

Rev. Ezekiel Koech
LUMC FINANCIAL UPDATE

General Operating Fund Contributions Received November 2019 ......................................... $28,107
Building Use, Fundraising and Other Income Received ................................................................. $6,552
Income from Bequest ...................................................................................................................... $0
Total Operating Income Received November 2019 ....................................................................... $34,659

Mission Shares Paid November 2019 ............................................................................................... $0
Mission Shares Paid Year to Date ................................................................................................... $37,687
Budgeted Mission Shares Year to Date .......................................................................................... $46,062
Total 2019 Mission Shares ............................................................................................................... $50,250

Education Building Debt Report

Balance Due on Education Building Loan 11/30/19 ................................................................. $124,403
Amount Remaining on Capital Campaign Pledges ................................................................. $58,783
Gap .............................................................................................................................................. $65,620

Alternative Ways of Giving

Do you have a New Year’s Resolution to never get behind on your giving to the church? The first of the year seems a good time to be reminded that there are several ways to give to LUMC. As well as putting your offering in the plate on Sunday morning, you may give online, using a mobile app, or through text giving.

- **Online Giving** – Go to lenexaumc.org and click on online giving. You may give via electronic check, debit or credit card. You may make a one-time donation or set up recurring gifts. You may give to any fund in this manner.

- **Mobile App** – Download ShelbyNext Giving to your smart phone and search for Lenexa United Methodist Church. Follow the instructions. As with Online Giving, you may make a one-time donation or set up recurring gifts and you may give to any fund.

- **Text Giving** – Text the amount you would like to give to (913) 444-5960. You may enter a fund name after the amount. Any undesignated gifts go to the operating budget.

If you have any questions about giving to Lenexa United Methodist Church, contact the Business Administrator, Linda Stokes, at 913-888-5600 or Linda.Stokes@lenexaumc.org.
SPONGE: New Strategic Initiatives for 2020

During the last Charge Conference, our church voted on new initiatives for 2020: Growth in Spirituality, Participation, Outreach, Numbers, Giving, and Enthusiasm (SPONGE). Join us in worship January 5 – February 9 for our SPONGE sermon series. The drama team will also bring us a short message presenting each week’s topic.

JANUARY 5 | EPIPHANY SUNDAY
“Spirituality”
1 Peter 2:2-5

We must understand that Christianity is not like a change of clothes we put on for Sunday morning and take off at noon. When we were baptized we “put on Christ,” and from that day forward we are never to “take Him off.” God wants us to grow and mature into the likeness of His Son Jesus Christ. That doesn’t just happen on its own. We must desire to grow! Tree of Life Praise Band at 9:00. Chancel Choir at 10:30.

JANUARY 12 | BAPTISM OF THE LORD
“Participation”
John 1:6-8, Matthew 5:13-16, 1 Corinthians 3:12-14

John is not the only one sent by God. Every Christian is sent to this dark world to lead morally and warn people of the dangers ahead. We are to serve, give and sacrifice in order to show them the love of God. We will change the world with one small kindness at a time. Tree of Life Praise Band at 9:00. Growing in Grace Children’s Choir and Chancel Choir at 10:30.

JANUARY 19 | 2nd SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
“Outreach”
Acts 26:22-23, 2 Corinthians 3:1-6

In reaching out with the gospel, we cannot underestimate the power of our testimony. Testimony is simply how God is working in our lives, and not necessarily how we came to faith. It may not be that we affect many through our testimony, but there should be those who can say that having us in their lives made a different in their Christian maturity. Tree of Life Praise Band at 9:00. Joy Bells at both services.

JANUARY 26 | 3th SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
“Numbers”
Acts 6:1-7

Sometimes, changes and persistence are required if we are going to reach people for Christ. Personal evangelism is the kind of persistence I’m talking about. Each of us personally will have to evangelize for Christ. Tree of Life Praise Band at 9:00. Chancel Choir at 10:30.
**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 January, Kid’s Kingdom at 9:00 will be studying Jesus Feeds the 5,000. 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**

A new ministry for families of kids (birth–6th grade) will launch in January! Family Matters will meet once a month—usually on the 4th Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 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, JANUARY 19** | Family “Minute To Win It” Games
- **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23** | Parent Group: “Keeping Your Cool When Parenting Raises Your Blood Pressure” with Tammy Shepherd
- **SUNDAY, MARCH 22** | Family Scavenger Hunt
- **SUNDAY, APRIL 26** | Parent Group Topic TBD
- **SUNDAY, MAY 31** | Family Activity TBD

**CHILDREN’S MUSIC**

Growing in Grace children's choir starts back up on Wednesday, January 8. Join us from 6:15–7:00 p.m. on the 2nd floor of the education building for music and fun.

**save the date on your 2020 calendar for our upcoming events!**

- Lenten Craft Fair: February 26
- Easter Egg-Stravaganza: April 5
- Knights of North Castle Vacation Bible School: June 15-19
EPIPHANY SPAGHETTI LUNCH
Bring a jar of sauce, a loaf of garlic bread and a half-gallon of ice cream. We’ll bring the beef and the spaghetti.

LUMOUTH AT KC DISTRICT EVENT
We’ll join other youth groups from across the Kansas City district for a night of service projects, games, fellowship, and worship. We will meet at LUMC at 3:30 p.m. and drive together to Shawnee UMC, then return around 7:15 p.m.

CONFIRMATION 2019
Confirmation is available for all youth 7th grade and up. If you have not been confirmed and are interested in participating, please contact Mary Clow at mary.clow@lenexaumc.org very soon!

LUMOUTH STATIONS
Let’s start the new year right!

LUMOUTH SARDINES!

LUMOUTH SPOONS!

June 1–5
GREEN PEANUTS MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION TRIP

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, January 19, Sunday, February 23, Sunday, March 29, Sunday, May 3, and Sunday, June 14.

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.
“May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.”  

Prior to her election to the United Methodist episcopacy in 2016, Bishop LaTrelle Miller Easterling served as dean of the cabinet of the New England Annual Conference and as the Boston Hope District superintendent. Before entering the ministry, she worked as a human resources manager and director, and as a prosecuting attorney.

This rich and varied experience was evident as Easterling reflected on the spring 2019 meeting of the Council of Bishops. “We engaged in deep discussion,” she said, “and labored both to speak and to listen to one another with patience and love. That is harder to do at some times than others; yet, we believe we have the responsibility to do so. There is no one-size-fits-all, quick transition into this new reality. The journey matters as much as the destination.” Easterling recalled a comment that followed one intense conversation. “Well, we are going to arrive at a new place eventually.” She replied, “But will we have any love left in us when we get there?”

“How we listen and respond to one another, speak of and about one another, criticize and critique one another matters greatly,” Easterling asserted. “As we committedly and earnestly walk through this season of United Methodism, I pray that we remember who and whose we are.”

When we support the Episcopal Fund, one of seven General Church apportioned funds, we enrich the ministry of visionary leaders like Easterling, who strive to “promote faithfulness in our mission, prevent harm and respect our diversity.”

On January 19, we will recognize Human Relations Day with a special offering. Celebrated on the Sunday before the birthday observance of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Human Relations Day calls United Methodists to further the development of improved race relations and to recognize the right of all God’s children to realize their potential as human beings in relationship with one another.
JOB OPPORTUNITIES

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 Cathy Boyd at cathyboyd5310@gmail.com or (913) 707–8761.
MIXED NUTS YOUNG ADULT MISSION TRIP

January 5–11, 2020 | Biloxi, Mississippi

Meet at the west entrance of LUMC early to hit the road heading southeast! This year, Mixed Nuts will be working with Seashore Mission Homeless Day Center. Seashore Mission helps hundreds of people each year, including individuals experiencing homelessness, families in need of food, and women and children victimized by intimate violence. Projects will include roof repair/replacement, trim demo/replacement, and anything else that gets added to the list. We will be staying at Burton Memorial UMC in Gulfport, Mississippi. Cost is $125 for young adults 18–30 and $250 for older adult participants. This covers food, lodging, showers and gas. We anticipate needing $2,000 to cover costs for lumber, roofing materials, paint and tool rental. LUMC members and friends are invited to make a contribution to cover these needed materials. Make a check out to LUMC MIXED NUTS and drop it in the collection plate before the end of the year.

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.

January health ministries tip!

Check those carbon monoxide detectors! The life expectancy for CO detectors is 5–7 years. Check the back of your detector for either a build date or an expiration date. If there’s no date or your CO monitor is more than seven years old, replace it now. When selecting a new CO detector, pick a one with a “fuel-cell electrochemical” sensor. This type is far more sensitive to CO and less prone to false alarms. Also consider choosing a model with a digital readout and a “peak level” memory retention feature.
Our 60-year old kitchen is in desperate need of remodeling. In fall of 2018, the Property Management Team began looking for a contractor to make our kitchen safe and up to date. For example, the old electrical panel is impossible to repair. The older circuit breakers are not made any more, and the box is rusted from water leaks.

Derick Shackelford of Shack Built Construction came highly recommended by members of our congregation, who have had kitchens remodeled by Derick. Three kitchen remodel presentation boards were created. Each board focused on a different aspect of the remodel, including the plan, price breakdown by category, and a display of finishes including countertops and flooring. The boards were displayed 3 different Sunday mornings in October during Heavenly Half Hour.

A church conference was held October 13 in Schneeberger Hall following the 10:30 service. After discussion regarding the kitchen remodel, it was decided we postpone a vote on the remodel until we finalized end-of-year finances for the church 2019 operating budget, complete a budget for 2020, and pay down more of the outstanding debt on the Education Building. At the end of the meeting, we were all given slips of paper and asked to write down a dollar amount we would be willing to commit towards the remodel. Even with only 50 in attendance, we gathered $108,000 in estimated gifts at a total cost estimate of $300,000—over one-third of the estimated cost!

We will hold a church conference on Sunday, January 26 at 11:30 a.m. in the Wesley Room to vote on the kitchen remodel. We hope that everyone in the congregation will prayerfully consider the decisions we will be making for our church and participate in the church conference.

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**KITCHEN REMODEL PROJECT**

**YAC: YOUNG ADULT CONVERSATIONS**

*Sunday mornings | 10:30–11:30 a.m. | The Underground*

The newest ministry at LUMC is all about young adults! Come join us! We will meet on Sunday, January 12, where more conversations will be enjoyed and we will hear stories from our MIXED NUTS, and every Sunday after. We thank Diane Troy for providing our hot drinks and yummy snacks on these Sunday mornings. We hope you will join us at each of these gatherings! For more info, contact Bruce & Lisa Freeman, Young Adult Conversations facilitators at brfvet@aol.com or soaringhogs@sbcglobal.net.

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**LUMYOUTH CHILI LUNCH & AUCTION**

*Sunday, March 29 | 11:30 a.m. | Schneeberger Hall*

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

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- **Serving the families of the Ronald McDonald House twice** - $600
All are welcome to join one or more of these great classes!

SPECTRUM
9:00 a.m. | Room 122

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.

NOTE: Going forward, Pulse is being folded back into Dashers.

LADIES’ BOOK CLUB

3rd Wednesday of the month | 12:00 p.m. | Library

The ladies’ book club of LUMC has chosen books for the next few months and meets the third Wednesday of each month at noon in the Library. Our next meeting is January 15, 2020 and we will read Heartland by Sarah Smarsh. This is about a Kansan girl who grew up on a farm and is a look at economic inequality, at class and being broke in the richest country on earth. Available at the library. Our February book is The Only Woman in the Room by 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.

PRESCHOOL NEWS

Happy New Year! We are back in school after Christmas break, and everyone is excited to begin a new year! Enrollment for Fall 2020 begins this month. Current families may enroll January 23 through 30, returning families may enroll the afternoon of January 30, and enrollment opens to new families on January 31. If you are interested in our wonderful Preschool and Children's Day Out program, please contact Lori Campbell at 913-888-6300 for more information. Wishing you a happy, healthy, and blessed 2020!