

Fall 2023

LIGHT YEARS



LCM HELPS RAISE \$126,000 FOR CAMP

Hunter Gandee, Senior, Mechanical Engineering

In September, for the third year in a row, I got to participate in the Ragnar Relay Race for Living Water Ministries as part of the LCM team. The Ragnar is a 200(ish) mile relay race between Muskegon and Traverse City, MI. Running teams consist of twelve people, with each person running three legs that total between 14-19 miles. Every year, LWM takes part in the Ragnar as a fundraising effort. LWM runners and Team Basecamp members are each tasked with raising \$2,000, which helps support the camp and its other ministries. This year, our total goal between two Ragnar teams and Team Base Camp was \$100,000; we ultimately raised over \$126,000 to help make sure LWM can continue to provide inclusive, faith-filled programming. Since LWM's first Ragnar fundraiser in 2018, this annual event has raised over \$500,000 for camp. Funds from the Ragnar efforts have been used to provide scholarships for campers - and last year, to kick off "Welcome To All" pricing, which is a pay-what-you-can pricing structure that further increases the inclusivity and accessibility of camp to even more children.

(Continued on p. 3)



Let us then pursue what makes for peace
and for mutual edification.

— Romans 14:19



Tabling at Ann Arbor Pride
this year with Mert, Dayle,
and Anna

Day. We've also started an intergenerational conversation group called "Questioning Answers" that is going to meet roughly twice a month throughout the rest of the year; our first session was about how we see God, and how that has changed since our childhood, and both students and grown-ups appreciated the different perspectives raised. During Faith & in the month of October, we've been using the discussion guide from ELCA World Hunger entitled "Hungering For Justice," and this has led to many insightful conversations around the campfire.

In the midst of such a troubled world, healthy campus ministry communities continue to provide a space for students to wrestle with difficult questions and come to one another with more open minds and understanding. I'm convinced, more than ever, of how important our conversations continue to be in a world that wants everything to break down into a simplistic binary. A peace that respects the dignity of every person is a peace that can hold different truths in tension.

I continue to give thanks that I am fortunate enough to be able to lead here in this time. Thank you so much for your continued partnership in ministry! We couldn't do this without you!

LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

Pastor Elizabeth Friedman

My colleagues and I have been remarking about just how much more normal this year feels as the marks of the crisis period of the Covid-19 pandemic have begun to fade. After three interrupted fall seasons, this is very much a year of rebuilding - but the vibrancy of this ministry is evident in the ways in which students are showing up to participate in deep conversation, worship, and fellowship, and I realize there simply isn't enough space in this newsletter to share the photos of everything that's going on!

After a flurry of activity in September, including the Ragnar, October brought the first monthly grad student and young professional gathering. This was followed the next day by a trip to the cider mill, and students carved pumpkins together on Reformation



Left: Three LCM pastors in Ragnar Van 2: Pastor Kate (GVSU), Pastor Ben (All Together Community), and Pastor Elizabeth



Right: Our annual Ragnar Van #2 pre-run breakfast at Deb's Café in Shelby, MI

LCM HELPS RAISE \$126,000 FOR CAMP (CONT'D)

The Ragnar experience also serves as its own form of ministry to the members who participate, and this year we had a great deal of fun! Pastor Elizabeth, Rachel, Hans, and I were joined in our running van by Pastor Ben Adams, the campus pastor of the joint campus ministry at Henry Ford College, Wayne State University, and the University of Michigan Dearborn, as well as Brian Deames, a former LCM Board President here at U of M. Everyone ran hard, cheered each other on, and shared lots of laughs. While running nine miles in the middle of the night might not be as restful as lying in your bed, there's a certain peace I've found each year during these runs. The relay format of the race also provides a strong sense of bonding for the teams running together, and we all had a lot of fun. Not only did everyone complete their legs of the race, but thanks to many of you, we all met our fundraising goals too! The weekend concluded with a celebratory dinner back at camp, followed by a worship service the next morning.

Thank you to everyone who supported this year's Ragnar efforts through donations, prayers, and cheers. This has become a great event for our community to regularly get involved in, and I know many of our runners can't wait to participate again next year!



Above: LCM Runners Hans, Rachel, Pastor Elizabeth, and Hunter



Above: Hunter, Pastor Elizabeth, and Pastor Ben;
Upper right: Rachel, Hans, and Brian
Lower right: Rachel hands off to Hans during the night runs



CONSERVATION INTERNSHIP IN MONTANA

Will Tschetter, Senior, Earth & Environmental Sciences

Over this past spring I had the unbelievable experience of working in Bozeman, Montana to further my education in soil and water conservation in the field of agriculture. It was so awesome to be able to participate in this wonderful endeavor, and I was blessed to meet some incredible people and gain amazing knowledge of how our amazing creation works to provide us with the amazing food that we are able to eat.

My primary focus was working on a regenerative bison ranch, North Bridger Bison, to both learn and contribute my knowledge to further their sustainable development of their ranch. Soil health and promotion of biodiversity are the top priority of the ranch in everything that they do. The ranch was the first bison ranch in Montana to become Audubon Certified, further showing their commitment to ensuring that the food they are providing is raised as in sync with nature as possible.

Overall, the experience was exceptional for furthering my knowledge of regenerative ranching and farming, and providing sustainably-sourced food for an ever-growing population.



INCREASING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF OUR SPACE

Maddie House, Junior, Information Sciences & User Experience Design

As our students returned to campus this August, they were greeted by a colorful and welcoming new patio set-up outside of Lord of Light.

As we continue working towards our dream of designing a new accessible building, the patio serves as an important stepping stone toward accessibility, as it does not require someone to climb stairs to enter. Last year, when student leader Kitty Oppliger found out about the availability of mini-grants through Student Accessibility and Accommodation Services, she identified Lord of Light's patio as a space where we could increase our accessibility.

In the spring, Curtiss, Juliana, and Mark built our new ADA-compliant picnic tables, which allow wheelchair users to pull up without having to transfer to the bench.

Lord of Light community members teamed up to prep, paint, and seal the tables with a rainbow pattern inspired by stained-glass windows. The final touches to the patio are the rainbow light bulbs strung above the gathering spaces.

It has been exciting to see our community gather in this new space for Sunday night dinners, Wednesday 'Faith &' conversations, and conversations of all types. We hope this new space is a blessing to our community and that the bold rainbows might welcome all of God's children to our inclusive ministry.

Clockwise from upper right: Juliana, Curtiss, and Mark assemble the tables;
Jen, Rachel, and Dayle painting the first coat;
Maddie, Rachel, Dayle, Pastor Elizabeth, and Jen with paint all over their hands;
Dominique, Anna, Hunter, Maddie, and Dayle using one of the tables at Sunday Dinner



PLANTING TREES ON A SATURDAY MORNING

Anna Scheck, Senior, Earth & Environmental Sciences

As the kickoff service event for our ongoing service partnership with Samaritas affordable senior living, a few members of our community helped plant trees and work on their garden on September 16, 2023. One of the residents of Samaritas, Janet (the resident queen of gardening) thought a few new trees would bring some birds to watch from the resident's windows. The folks at Samaritas worked with the city and selected four trees that are all native to the area and should be happy in their new home. Along with other volunteers, we worked in groups of three to plant the trees. This was the first time I've planted a tree since elementary school, and I loved re-learning how to plant them correctly, from the size of hole to dig to the exposure needed at the base of the trunk. Mert and I were on digging and tree planting duty, while Maddie, Pastor Elizabeth, and Emily were busy weeding the garden.

With three people working on each tree, we were done in about half an hour. What I had envisioned to be a morning full of labor ended up being much more about the connections I made. Digging into dirt is such a grounding experience that gave me a chance to step away from my seemingly endless academic life on campus. In addition to actually planting trees, I really enjoyed connecting with the residents who were there to direct us in the activity. They told us about their gardens and fed us edible flowers as we chatted over coffee and donuts. I look forward to future opportunities to volunteer at Samaritas, as the residents are as genuine as you can get.

Clockwise from upper right: The whole group after all the hard work;
Anna and two folks from the city planting a tree;
Maddie weeding a flowerbed near Sequoia Place.



snapshots

OF THIS FALL



Tabling during FestiFall 2023



Dinner after church out on our new picnic tables



Anna, Rachel, and Dayle



Our annual first-week trip to Blank Slate Creamery

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE, AND THERE ARE SO MANY WAYS TO GIVE!

TALK TO YOUR REGIONAL ELCA GIFT PLANNER

The ELCA foundation offers free gift planning services as a ministry of the ELCA, and can help you to plan your gifts to align with your generous intentions. Please let us know if you would like us to connect you with the ELCA Foundation.

DIRECT YOUR THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS TO LCM AT U OF M

If you have a qualifying Thrivent account, please consider directing your **Thrivent Choice Dollars** to Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Michigan!

Simply go to:

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Choice Dollars designated during the calendar year can be directed until March 31 of the following year. For example, you can direct Choice Dollars designated to you in 2023 until March 31, 2024.



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building community deepening faith
expanding minds inspiring service

REFER A STUDENT!

Do you know someone going to college or grad school this fall? You can help them connect to one of 240+ ELCA-affiliated campus ministries across the country by visiting www.luminelca.org, and make sure their pastor can get in touch with them right away! Faith is such an important part of all of our lives, and students are no exception!



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