



LIGHT YEARS

A PUBLICATION OF LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN *Autumn 2021*

LCM STUDENTS RUN TO RAISE OVER \$10,000 FOR CAMP

Sophie Dettling, Senior, Public Health



Our last runner neared the park entrance on the edge of Traverse City and our team cheered in excitement as we all ran the last few steps and crossed the finish line together. We had successfully finished the 2021 Ragnar. The weekend full of tired legs, painful feet, new faces, and van playlists was an experience I will never forget. From early Friday morning to Sunday evening our team of 12, beside dozens of other teams, ran 200 total miles across the state from Muskegon to Traverse City. We were split into two vans of 6 runners, a driver, and a navigator. While each runner completed their leg, the rest of the van cheered and drove to the next hand-off location. Every runner had three legs of anywhere between 3 and 9 miles each. The van I was assigned to, along with Pastor Elizabeth, Rosemary, Josh, Hunter, and Brian, had to complete our second legs in the rain

between 10pm and 3am. While I never expected to be running 5 miles at 1am with a head lamp guiding each step, the feeling of accomplishment afterwards was unmatched.





Not only was it an incredible experience, our LCM Ragnar team raised over \$10,000 for Living Water Ministries, with the full effort by 36 runners and 12 support people raising over \$106,000. This is making it possible for the camp to offer full scholarships to every camper this coming summer and finish construction on a brand-new handicap-accessible building. This will make camp more accessible and offer a space for groups like LCM to get away for retreats in the near future. I am so thankful that Pastor Elizabeth encouraged the participation of all of our runners this year (Josh, Brian, Rosemary, Hunter, Rachel, and myself). I'd also like to thank everyone in our community for your support of this event and the Living Water Ministries mission. This would not have been possible without the financial support of so many of you, our incredible drivers, upbeat

navigators, the texts and Facebook messages of support, and all the amazing people who work to make Living Water Ministries such a special and uplifting place for all.



Top: Rachel, Pastor Elizabeth, Rosemary, Josh, Hunter, and Sophie at the finish line.

Above: Rosemary hands off to Brian.

Above right: Van #2, with our six runners, our driver Pastor Lindsey Anderson, and our safety officer Willie Caldwell, Jr.

Right: Hunter hands off to Josh.



LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

Pastor Elizabeth Friedman



“Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to God in heaven.” - Matthew 5:16

Being seen on a busy campus is always difficult, and like all ministries, we continue to struggle with the already and the not yet – of the pandemic being almost over, but not quite. We are back to normal, *-ish*. It’s a liminal space that has its benefits and challenges.

There are things we can now do together with confidence, even in these times of Covid. Fortunately for us, U of M students are 97% vaccinated, and that makes decisions about what we *can* do safely much easier. We’ve been worshipping outside since June, since our space is small and we don’t have an HVAC system to update. We’ve started up Sunday dinners again, opting to eat outside as much as we can. We’ve resumed our Wednesday night Faith & conversations, having a campfire outside when possible but moving into Vida and opening windows when the weather doesn’t cooperate. Plus, we were able to put together half of a 12-person Ragnar relay team and volunteer on a local farm. All of these things increase our community’s visibility and witness.

The experience of being back together, of being with other humans in actual physical spaces, is something that is life-giving in a way that Zoom quadrants never will be. Being in spaces with other people, worshipping and serving together, is something that brings light into our lives. Coming together is, of course, something that has never gotten old because it comes from a part of ourselves that is older than we are – the part that has evolved to need other people in community, the part that keeps us seeking connection.

Back when social media was just starting up, I remember hearing that this was the end of all in-person activity, that this younger generation would desire actual human contact far less since they could do their socializing without ever having to leave their home. But after 18 months or so of Covid lockdowns and now-slowly-waning limitations, I think we see plenty of hunger for the basics: community, care, and food.

That’s what campus ministry offers: we gather people, we feed people both in body and spirit, and then we send them out into the world to let their God-given lights shine. That’s never going to get old.

WILL YOU HELP US GLOW BRIGHTER?

Our 2021 graduates and student leaders all received these stainless steel engraved, insulated, vacuum-sealed bottles. **Sign up to give a recurring monthly donation of \$25 or more and we will send you your very own!** Go to www.lcm-um.org, choose “Give,” and you can easily set up a recurring donation on our giving page. Your support will help Lord of Light/LCM to continue to grow and glow brighter as we reach toward stronger engagement and visibility in our campus community.



SUNDAY DINNERS START UP AGAIN WITH VEGMICHIGAN

Kitty Oppliger, First-year student in the Master of Public Health program



For one of our first community meals together this fall, we were blessed to receive food from two wonderful organizations: VegMichigan and Slow Farm. VegMichigan is an organization working to bring awareness to the importance of plant-based diets to environmental and public health as well as ethically. Caring for all of God's creation is an important value here at Lord of Light, and having a cruelty free, eco-friendly and low-impact meal was a great opportunity to show our thanks. In addition to the delicious plant-based burgers, beans and spring rolls from VegMichigan, fresh produce was provided by Slow Farm- an organic local u-pick farm- for both the meal and for congregants and students to take home for their own use.



The importance of plant-based eating has been highlighted by the WHO as a necessary step towards ensuring food security and avoiding catastrophic climate disaster. A future that is safe and nourishing for all people will require a major shift in our lifestyle habits, including a drastic reduction in industrial animal sourced foods. Animal agriculture is one of the most impactful sectors of our global economy, through land use, water and air pollution and carbon emissions. We can all help to make a brighter future by shifting towards a more plant-based diet. Eating locally is another great



way to reduce your food footprint. Be on the lookout for volunteer opportunities working with Slow Farm, and be sure to head out there (a short drive north!) to get some of the produce for yourself. Picking fruits and veggies for your meals would make a great family day-trip.

Learn more about Slow Farm at their website: slowfarmandfriends.com

Calculate your food footprint: <https://myemissions.green/food-carbon-footprint-calculator/>

Top and right: Students and Lord of Light members enjoying some lovely food from VegMich and Slow Farm.

Above: Andrew crunches into a spring roll.

Above right: Lord of Light member Bruce keeps the grill going!



STUDENT LEADER RETREAT

Sophie Dettling, Senior, Public Health



After my freshman year here at UofM, Pastor Elizabeth encouraged me to apply to be a student leader. Feeling both unqualified but excited to get more involved in the Lord of Light community, I went for it. Now in the third year as a part of the student leadership team, I was ecstatic to get back to in-person ministry and make our presence better known around campus. In late September, our student leadership team and Pastor Elizabeth were able to get away from the hustle and bustle of central campus for a morning of bonding and training outside of another student leader's apartment. This year we have six student leaders: Alyssa Cozad, Hunter Gandee, Shelby Shaughnessy, Julianna Marks, Kitty Oppliger, and myself. Our team represents both undergraduate and graduate students across a variety of programs with many interests and involvement. Having this larger team greatly expands our ability to be present around campus and serve a wider range of the campus community.

We began the retreat with getting to know one another, as many of us had never met one another in-person or had not seen each other in over a year. Next, we did a bible study focused on how Jesus approached ministry with a balance of being accessible to others while putting up personal boundaries. I always appreciate the reminder of Jesus's humanness that Pastor Elizabeth emphasizes in our bible discussions. From there, we shared a delicious meal and discussed our next steps for peer ministry this school year. Personally, the retreat brought me closer to the fellow student leaders and left me inspired to connect with new students interested in joining this community. It's been a joy to work with this team over the past few months and I am excited to continue this ministry over the rest of the academic year.

REFER A STUDENT

Do you know someone currently in college or grad school? 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!



VISIT FROM NATIONAL LUMIN DIRECTOR, LAMONT WELLS



In October, our national LuMin director, Rev. Lamont Wells, was able to come visit Lord of Light. We got to hear him preach at our outdoor service on child-like faith, using the text from Mark about Jesus welcoming the children. Lamont was able to chat with Pastor Elizabeth and several students over dinner. We were so glad to get to see him and share our ministry!



Above: Rev. Wells gives his sermon.
Right: Rev. Ben Adams, pastor of the newly-formed All.Together Community serving Wayne State University, University of Michigan-Dearborn, and Henry Ford College, with Rev. Lamont Wells and Rev. Elizabeth Friedman
Bottom: Communion at our outdoor service.



FAITH & RESUMES

Wednesday nights at 8pm, we're back in person for conversations about faith and its intersection with various topics. This term, we've talked about joy, anger, grief, hope, food, and welcome. We're grateful to Roland Schaedig and Wayne Halmquist for keeping us well-stocked with firewood!



VOLUNTEER TRIP TO SLOW FARM



On a Tuesday in October, we headed about 15 minutes north of Ann Arbor to Slow Farm, an organic farm committed to sustainable food systems and food equity. The trip was organized by student leader Kitty Oppliger, who is studying sustainable food systems as part of her program as a Master's student in Public Health. Together, we learned to plant garlic (sorry, not in the straightest rows!) and got our hands dirty under a gorgeous blue sky. It was just the medicine needed for mid-semester stresses, and we plan to be back in spring!



Above right: Jessie and Alyssa

Above, from right: Alyssa, Jessie, Anna, Pastor Elizabeth, and Kitty
Left: Anna



Enclosed you will find an Autumn 2021 Appeal Card. Thrivent Choice lets members recommend where some of the charitable outreach funds from Thrivent Financial go by directing Choice Dollars. In order to participate in Choice Dollars, donors must be benefit members age 16 or older and hold a Thrivent Financial volunteer leadership position or have \$800 or more in annual premiums toward qualifying insurance products or have \$20,000 or more in contract value of qualifying products. If you previously directed Thrivent Choice Dollars to Lutheran Campus Ministry, thank you! Would you please do so again?

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Lord of Light Lutheran Church

Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Michigan

801 S. Forest Ave., Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Autumn 2021

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