

Currents

Newsletter of University Lutheran Church, September 2024



Carol and Joyce feeding students

Welcome Back Students Tacos & Tunes Sept 5

Over 100 students attended our second annual *Tacos & Tunes* event on September 5th. This event is part of our welcome to new and returning students. A jazz trio of UWEC musicians, Ingrid, Eli, and Naomi played during lunch. The trio was great!

The students were really appreciative, with lots of "thank yous."

Thanks to Carol Rudd's leadership and the support of Cindy, Sue, Andrea, Joyce, Dave, and Pr. Lori for making *Tacos & Tunes* a successful event.

More pictures from *Tacos & Tunes* are on page 2.



UWEC student musicians—Ingrid, Eli, and Naomi

More pictures from Tacos & Tunes Sept 5



Student in the serving line for *Tacos & Tunes*



Students eating and listening to the Jazz trio

President's Letter

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Can you feel the new burst of energy at ULC? That is how we are starting our second 50 years serving campus, community, and the world. This past spring, we celebrated our 50th year as an ELCA congregation. Our church is called to be both a designated Campus Ministry within the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin as well as a fully recognized congregation of the ELCA. We are happy to welcome students from within the Lutheran church; our full-communion partners (i.e., Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian, UCC); and any students (churched or unchurched) seeking a home away from home.

We welcomed back over 100 students at our second annual Tacos and Tunes lunch, Thursday, September 5. We are hoping many will join us in worship and activities at ULC this year. Sunday following that event over half of the 40 members at worship were new and continuing students. We thank the members of the Campus Ministry Task Force (Pastor Lori, Adrianna Dahlberg, Jill Granlund, Carol Rudd, and Jacob Gapko) for their contributions over the summer to prepare us for Fall 2024.

We have a JONAH core team working on our behalf, led by Carol Rudd and Cindy Rasmussen engaging with churches and other community organizations working on social justice issues in the Chippewa Valley.

We established a 12-member Good Neighbor Team co-led by Lou Hoeschen of Newman Parish and Sara Bryan of University Lutheran helping to settle refugees in Eau Claire.

We are working on the Ray of Life project building solar light kits for Ukraine led by Tom Bryan. The Church Council enthusiastically endorsed this project serving families in war-torn Ukraine. We hope you are excited to contribute financially as well as with your time and talent to build light kits on Reformation Sunday, October 27 after church in the ERC basement. Our goal is to raise \$4,500 to build at least 20 light kits for Ukraine. So far, we have raised \$1,800.

With all this new energy, please watch for encouragement from your Generosity Team to financially support the ongoing work of ULC as a community congregation and UWEC and CVTC student Campus Ministry.

Shalom,

Jacob Gapko, ULC President

RAY OF LIFE

Solar Lights for Ukraine

Our “Ray of Life” campaign is underway. Our Goal is to raise \$4,500 (or more) from members of the congregation by the end of September. This will enable us to provide 20 (or more) solar light units to the people of Ukraine. In addition to the solar light, a water filter kit is also included. Price per kit (light and water filter) is \$150.

We are off to a good start. We have already raised \$1,800 in the first few days of the appeal. Join with your brothers and sisters at ULC as we seek to spread the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ through this important endeavor.

For more information or to make a donation, just scan the QR code below or go to [ULC Website](#). After clicking the GIVE button, choose “Ray of Life” from the drop-down menu and complete the form.



It is time to make a difference. Can you give a solar unit? How about 2 or 10? Remember, all gifts, big or small, are welcome and will provide some important relief to the people of Ukraine. Thank you for your concern and support.



WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

5:30 PM



FREE MEAL

6:00 PM



WEDNESDAY WORSHIP



Adrianna cantoring
on Wednesday Evening
Prayer in August

Carter played piano

Wednesday
Evening Prayer
in August



SUMMER WEDNESDAY

WORSHIP and CONVERSATION

Wednesday worship services have been well attended with spirited and well informed discussions about John's gospel. It was good to be able to stay connected with some students who were here for the summer as well as regular congregational members who came when they could. Wine, lemonade and cheese and crackers, often with a pan of bars or cookies added, was fun and also well attended with people staying usually for an hour or so.

Together with members of the Newman Community, we welcomed two special guests for a conversation following Wednesday Worship on August 28th: Mercedes Falk, director of [Puentes/Bridges](#) and farm worker and fellow Puentes member Roberto. During our post-worship fellowship time, Mercedes and Roberto spoke with us about the work that their organization does, creating experiences to build bridges between Mexican workers, the farmers alongside and for whom they work, and ultimately the communities they all live in. They also talked about the lives of immigrant dairy workers in Wisconsin who harvest nearly 80% of dairy products. Roberto told his story of leaving his Mexican home and family and working in the USA for the past 24 years, without any pathway to a green card or citizenship. In hearing this information and Roberto's story, it would be difficult to deny that there is a need for a guest worker program or specific visa for farm workers and that Roberto, is a well liked employee and wants what so many US citizens want ... simply to work hard and provide for their family without ongoing separation from them.



Mercedes Falk and Roberto

CONVERSATION cont.

The farm where Roberto works has a connection with UWEC course work. A lively question and answer period followed. More than 20 people were in attendance, a couple from Newman parish. Everyone learned something new. Special thanks to Joyce Anderson for organizing this!

“The community building that preceded the formation of Puentes was grounded in interactions between a high school Spanish teacher, a UW-Extension ag agent, and local farmers. This kind of connection has continued with UW-Eau Claire’s “Community-Based Spanish” University Honors course, taught by ULC member Carter Smith.”

You can read more about that history (including the names of the ag agent and the teachers) on the organization’s website. And for more on Carter’s class, click [here](#).

You can read about Roberto’s experiences and those of others at the [“Stories”](#) page on the Puentes website.

For a more in-depth view that contextualizes the Puentes story within our present moment, see Ruth Conniff’s 2022 book [Milked: How an American Crisis Brought Together Midwestern Dairy Farmers and Mexican Workers](#).



Students with members from ULC and Newman

SUNDAY WORSHIP 10:00 AM at the ERC



SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP 11:00 AM

MINISTRY NEWS

Joyfully Serve

Carol, Sara, Pat, and Marie continue to be active members of the Good Neighbor Team in collaboration with several members of Newman Parish. Recent events in the life of the Mahirwe Family include this long-awaited announcement: the dad and the 18-year-old daughter have been hired by Walmart for third shift work. They will use the City bus for transportation.

At a picnic hosted by World Relief on Sunday, August 11th, refugee families and support teams from all over town were able to meet, mingle, and eat together. Children were free to run around and play at our Riverview Park location. Our “adopted” family was full of smiles as they greeted another family, newly arrived in Eau Claire, with whom they were acquainted back in the Rwandan refugee camp!

A big moment in the life of our Team is approaching: the 3-month mark, at the end of August, is when World Relief begins providing fewer services to the family. Our Team’s commitment continues through the end of November. It is clear, however, that relationships we’ve formed will endure beyond that.

Submitted by
Carol Rudd & Sara Bryan, Joyfully Serve

Gracefully Welcome

A time for conversation and snacks has continued with the final post-worship summer fellowship concluding August 28.

Thanks to all who shared snacks and treats. Marie is ordering Equal Exchange coffee as we prepare for the fall schedule with coffee after Sunday worship and meals served on Wednesday evenings.

Submitted by
Joyce Anderson, Gracefully Welcome



**WE INVITE YOU TO ATTEND
THE UPCOMING GRIEF CIRCLE.
SPONSORED BY NEWMAN
PARISH, EAU CLAIRE
Fall, 2024**

A SIX WEEK SERIES MEETING:

October 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 and November 7, 2024

Thursdays: 6:00PM – 7:30PM

Ecumenical Religious Center

110 Garfield Ave., Eau Claire, WI 54701

Everyone in the Chippewa Valley is welcome to participate.

This group provides a safe place for those experiencing grief and the loss of a loved one. It is a time of learning about grief and the opportunities to share your thoughts, feelings, and concerns with others who understand.

The facilitators Laurie Hittman and Sue Ripp, have experienced the death of parents, a sibling, a child, and friends. The support of others on the same journey can provide a great deal of comfort and healing.

For more information or to register contact:

Laurie Hittman at 715-379-4110 or jlhittman1@jlhittman.com

Sue Ripp at 715-829-3822 or suerippht@charter.net

REGISTRATION DUE BY September 19, 2024

REGULAR SCHEDULE

WORSHIP & COMMUNION

SUNDAYS, 10:00 AM
WEDNESDAYS, 5:30 PM

PRACTICE SPIRITUALITY

MONDAYS, 5:30 PM, INSTA LIVE

BIBLE STUDY

SUNDAYS, 11:15 AM

FREE MEAL

WEDNESDAYS, 6:00 PM

QUEER & AFFIRMED

MONDAYS, 4:00 PM
@ THE BRIDGE IN DAVIES

ALL ARE WELCOME

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RECONCILING in CHRIST



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

