



Lena United Methodist Church

Rooted in Christ, Growing Towards God, Producing the Fruit of the Holy Spirit, Spreading Seeds for the Future.

December 2020 Newsletter

**Pastor Keri
Rainsberger**

815-369-5291 or
Cell 614-542-9197

December Servants

Greeters

6 –
13 –
20 –
27 –

Liturgist

6 – Sally Buchenau
13 – Scott Stich
20 – Roberta Rogers
27 – Bonnie Broge

Video Tech

6 – Cathy Rich
13 – Cathy Rich
20 – Cathy Rich
27 – Cathy Rich

Dial-a-Devotion

6 – Norma Klipping
13 – Eleanor Holmes
20 – Pat Phillips
27 – Janet Lobdell

Fellowship

6–
13–
20–
27–

Sunday School Teachers

Lynne Howe ,Lisa Dascher
(K-5th grade)
Roberta Rogers, Cathy Rich
(Youth)
Sally Buchenau (Adult)



Larry Nelson Photo

Pray for Healing: Chase, Jen and Paul Wuebben, Jim Muller (son of Cathy Rich's friend), Evelyn Herman, Gary & Aileen Schreiner, Bruce Wuebben, Ryan Plager, Sylvia Barr (Pat Phillips' niece), Kayleigh Gerber, Chris Wood, Mervin Lobdell, Verla Lobdell, Ken Gritzmaker, Vivien Rose Dascher, Pookie Schubert, Pat Milliken, Ryan Wuebben (Bruce Wuebben's son), Marcia Pax, Joyce Knight, Marcia Lobdell, Judy Baer, Rhys Stone (Larry & Kim Nelson's great grandson), Dennis Dunn (friend of Bruce Wuebben), Dean Obert, Dorothy Montgomery, Arlene Kryder, Jodee Offerman (Renee Buisker's friend), Mark Mader, Bonnie Vondra (friend of Sally Buchenau), Pauline Lutz, Johanne Wingert, Larry Buchenau, Eileen Snapp, MaryLou Bunker-Langy (Mervin Mader's cousin), Judy Buchenau, Howard Rowe (friend of Jeff and Judy Baer), Michael Reimers (Merv Mader's grandson), Kris Sanders (Barb Feiner's daughter), Sharon Schwartz, Deloris Siemens, Lisa Prindle (friend of Janice Myelle), Judy Welch, Robert Hartwig, Darryl Wybourn, Dave (Bonnie Broge's brother-in-law), Kim Pluss (Dot Spielmann's daughter), Vernon Baer, Myron Coaty, Tam Kryder, John Gorz (Sue Bussian's brother)

In treatment:

Linda Farwell (friend of Ryan Stockton), Triscia Nickel, Pat Campbell (Mick Flynn's sister), Todd Miller (Myrna Seuring's nephew)

Our home-bound members and friends:

Gail Mayer – Liberty Village, Lois Thrasher (Liberty Village/Hawthorne Inn); Pauline Lutz, Al Owens, & Carol Fluegel (all at Lena Living Center);
Chris Liles (Oakley Courts);
Joyce Brinkmeier – Presence St. Joseph Center
Viola Sargent – Graceland Manor Assisted Living – Monroe, WI

December Anniversaries

12/7 Tom & Tammy Edler
12/9 Rory & Bethany Schulz
12/12 Elmer & Nancy Hybarger
12/15 Kurt & Joanne Snyder
12/17 Scott & Dana Borchardt
12/23 Roger & Kathie Schulz
12/28 Brad & Heidi Edler
12/29 David & Sarah Stanley



December Birthdays

12/1 Jim Klever
12/2 Rose Black
12/3 Brad Edler, Sandra Morrison, Scott Stich
12/4 Brad Kempel, Sarah Lampard
12/5 Cheryl Huggins, Nancy Hybarger
12/6 Sandra Bilgri, Ella Korte, Collyns Wybourn
12/11 Richard Thomasson
12/13 Marci Borchardt
12/16 Gary Schreiner
12/20 Ryder Lobdell, Everlee Lobdell, Shawn Robieson
12/21 Cassie Wybourn
12/22 Diane Kempel
12/28 Joyce Brinkmeier
12/29 Jeanne Offelein
12/31 Jared Borchardt, Shane Gerber

From the Pastor's Desk....

I like Advent. There is, of course, the wonderful anticipation of all the Christmas festivities, but my appreciation of Advent goes much deeper. Especially in this year when the “Christmas anticipation” is filled with all kinds of uncertainty about what traditional festivities we will actually be able to do this year.

Advent is a season of intentional waiting and preparation. We take four weeks to remember the past, live the present, and hope toward the future. This year during worship we will take each week to read the beginning of each of the four Gospels. Although all the books share the same Good News of Jesus Christ, each tells the story slightly differently. In reading the same story from different eyes we slow down to move more fully into the story, to understand better why God among us is truly Good News.

The four stories also face the reality of an imperfect world. Yet they also boldly proclaim that even in that imperfect world, God has and is drawing near, and because God is near the imperfection is not the last word. Things are changing.

Change. It is a six letter word that so often sounds more like a four letter one. Change forces us out of our routines and shakes us into disarray. It is upending, overturning, spinning and frustrating. Yet without change something new cannot take place.

This year, many of our traditions will be shaken by change. Let us live into them and see how we are changed and made new by how God brings us through.

Thank you...

I want to take this opportunity to thank my church family for all the birthday cards, the telephone calls, the treats and for the cute bouquet made of packages of M&Ms and candy bars. And I do want to thank my immediate family for the cake and flowers. It was a very special 90th birthday and I will treasure it all for a long time. Be safe and say a prayer that the pandemic will soon be over and then we can all gather together on Sundays in the sanctuary. ---Norma Klipping

Thank you from Midwest Mission: Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ at Lena UMC, Thank you for your generous donation of the toothpaste, soap, dish soap, multi-purpose cleaner and laundry soap to Midwest Mission. Each donation is a blessing God uses to bless you and others. Your donation will leave Midwest Mission and be a practical example of God's love in the world to the "least of these". "The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40 (NIV)

It is due to your generosity and partnership with Midwest Mission that we can touch so many lives for Christ around the world and around the corner. Thank you so much for blessing others through the ministry of Midwest Mission! Yours in Christ, Chantel Corrie, Executive Director. P.S. Please keep Midwest Mission in your prayers as we are praying for you. We pray over each organization and donor before the letter leaves.

Mustard Seed thank you to Lena UMC from GiGi's Playhouse: Dear Pastor Rainsberger, Thank you for your generous \$200 donation on September 29 to GiGi's Playhouse Rockford! We count on generous organizations and people like you to help us deliver programs which focus on empowering individuals with Down Syndrome.

GiGi's Playhouse Rockford believes that everyone should have the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive. The works of GiGi's have never been more important to the Down syndrome community and the Rock River Valley. The gift is a strong show of support to our cause. You are the reason why we will be able to invest even more resources to our kids, adults, families, and to the health of our community.

During these difficult times, we need to stay in touch and support each other more than ever. We are continuing to find ways to celebrate our loved ones with Down syndrome safely, yet together. Stay well... Sincerely, Karen Carlson, Executive Director

Update from finance: With all the changes this year in worship, the church has been fortunate to receive your continued response of giving. Currently year-to-date we are noticing a trend of lower offerings, which is understandable; however, to keep up with financial expenses and to support the ministries of our church, your continued support is important. For further information on the finances of the church, see the minutes of the November 10, 2020 meeting included in this newsletter. Tithing can be mailed to our P O Box 336, Lena, IL 61048.

Luminaria lighters needed! We will be lighting luminarias at the church building from December 20 until December 25. Volunteers are needed for each of the nights to put the lights out by 5 pm and then pick them back up at 10 pm. Please contact the church office (815-369-5291) if you are willing to take a night!

Christmas Eve and Day

Due to gathering restrictions we will not be holding a traditional in-person Christmas Eve service. Instead we will be offering new options for Christmas worship. We will have a service posted on Facebook. We will have a luminaria display the last week of Advent until Christmas day. From 5 pm (sundown) on Thursday, Christmas Eve until 5pm on Christmas Day we will have a 24 hour vigil at the church building. During this time the sanctuary will be open for anyone to stop by and pray. Volunteers are needed to fill one-hour shifts throughout the vigil so we can ensure at least one person is in the sanctuary to pray at all times. If you have never done an overnight vigil now is your chance because those 2, 3, and 4 am slots are still available as of this writing!! Contact the church office to sign up! Some of the hours will have special activities during the hour. Here is the schedule of special activities so far:

Christmas Eve, 5pm: Communal prayer to begin the vigil (likely outside if weather permits)

6pm: Video of the Christmas Eve service will be played

7pm: Cathy will show a PowerPoint of Christmas photos

8pm: Lisa (and maybe Tim!!) will provide live piano music

11pm: Video of the Christmas Eve service will be played

Christmas Day, Midnight: Pot parade! (Running around the church with kitchen implements making fun noise - please don't make Keri do this alone!)

6am: Reflective scripture reading led by Eleanor

7am: Outside dawn prayer led by Keri

10am: Video of youth Christmas program will be played

11am: Sally will lead an art-based prayer

5pm: Communal prayer to end the vigil (likely outside if weather permits)

Lena United Methodist Church - Finance Committee Minutes –November 10, 2020

Finance Chair, Kim Nelson called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm. Attendees by Zoom: Larry Nelson, Jeff and Judy Baer, Cathy Rich, Randy Kryder, Roberta Rogers, Chris Bartelt. Attendees at the Church on Zoom: Kim Nelson, Richard Holmes, Scott Stich and Pastor Keri.

Pastor Keri led us in prayer.

Randy made a motion to approve the September 15, 2020 meeting minutes and it was seconded by Larry. Motion carried and minutes were approved.

Balance Sheet as of October 31, 2020: At the end of October, the balance in the General Fund is \$24,062.05. The designated fund balance is \$24,369.24. Kim said she would like to add the Memorials info that's previously been on an Excel spreadsheet to the Balance Sheet and asked for comments on this. The committee said that is a good idea and she should go ahead.

P&L Reviews- September Profit & Loss comments: September income from envelope giving was the lowest it's been in a long time at \$7590. For the 2021 budget we will need \$11,392 coming in per month for the 4-week months and \$14,239/month for the 5-week months. Discussion was held and it was decided to send something out in the month of November that income is trending down. It will be sent as a letter and in the newsletter. Pastor Keri, Kim and Randy will write the letter within the next week. Expenses: Total YTD is below budget which is very good.

October Profit & Loss: October income from envelope giving was \$10,859. Trustee expenses were only slightly over budget and the quarterly insurance bill from the Conference was paid this month. Office expenses and postage are over budget due to having to do more mailings because of the way we are staying connected in these pandemic times. The net ordinary income for October was \$-3,306.61.

January through October Year to Date Profit & Loss: Comments: In SPRC- Account 6517 has been renamed to Ministry staffing from Youth Director and the account is under budget due to no one in the position. In Trustees accounts – Church gas is under budget due to new boiler. Net ordinary income for January through October is \$6,208.15, but would have been -\$11,591.85 without the SBA loan of \$17,800.

Other business:

The 2021 Budget was approved through the Conference on November 8. One comment on the 2021 budget: next year the mission fund projects will be handled through the Designated and Memorial accounts.

Richard made a motion to approve the 2021 budget of \$148,092.77. Randy seconded the motion and the budget was approved by voice vote.

We need to update signatures on a couple accounts at the bank:

- Lisa Dascher will replace Ron Buchenau as a signer on the Memorials account. The other signer on this account is Judy Buchenau.
- Liz Gerber and Stacey Mader will replace Tom and Tammy Edler as signers on the Youth account.

We received a letter from the State Bank of Davis on October 16 that the SBA loan of \$17,800 was forgiven (paid in full).

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm. Next meeting: January 12, 2021 @ 6:30 pm.

Submitted by Chris Bartelt, Financial Secretary

**Lena United Methodist Church – Ad Council Meeting Minutes –
November 10, 2020**

Randy Kryder, Ad Council chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:20 pm. Attendees by Zoom: Jeff and Judy Baer, Cathy Rich, Randy Kryder, Roberta Rogers, Chris Bartelt. Attendees at the Church on Zoom: Kim Nelson, Richard Holmes, Scott Stich and Pastor Keri.

Other attendees: Larry Nelson by Zoom.

Special prayer requests were for Penny Feltmeyer Oppold and family who lost son, Cody in an auto accident. Also for Ben Mayer's family on his passing last week. People affected by Covid in Stephenson and JoDaviess County. The minutes from the September 15, 2020 meeting were accepted as presented. One note with reference to the Sept. minutes – The chair Yoga class at Lena UMC that started had to be stopped because the instructor's husband tested positive for Covid. The class is on hold for now.

Committee Reports: Membership – Membership budget for next year will be low. Don't need to order Mothers and Fathers Day gifts as we will use what we didn't use in 2020. Biggest expense will be graduates.

Trustees – Richard reported the Trustees met last night. The elevator light has been moved and the elevator inspection has been done and we passed. Tuck pointing is almost done; with only needing to spray protectant on the brick yet. We need to put some instructions in the elevator, so people don't call 911. Parsonage walk through was done with Tammy Edler.

SPRC – Scott reported that salaries have been done and voted on. We just need to have this documented. Minimum wage will increase to \$11/hour next July.

Finance – Finance reports were covered at the Finance Meeting earlier tonight. The finance committee approved the 2021 budget earlier tonight; and now it needs to be approved by Ad Council. Richard made a motion and Randy seconded it to approve the 2021 budget of \$148,092.77. The budget was approved by voice vote. The SBA loan of \$17,800 for payroll protection was forgiven and we received a letter from State Bank of Davis dated October 16, 2020 that the loan has been paid in full as of October 9.

Education – Roberta is going to draft a letter to parents asking about interest for some type of virtual presentation (Powerpoint a possibility) for Christmas.

Missions: No report. Missions committee has not reconvened.

Worship – Sally was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Pastor Keri reported that the Worship Committee met on November 5. We received compliments on the All Saints worship service. Veterans Day Worship was on November 8. There will not be a Thanksgiving service; we will celebrate that on November 22. The first Sunday of Advent will be November 29. Luminarias will be placed outside the church from Sunday to Friday of Christmas week. We are looking for volunteers to light them. A 24-hour vigil will be held at the church from nightfall Christmas Eve until nightfall Christmas Day. Each person/family would sign up for 1 hour session. More information will be forthcoming on how to sign up.

Pastor's report:

Pastor Keri said the challenge on her plate right now is how to keep connected when we're apart. We need some ideas on putting together lists on starting to call parishioners again. There was some discussion on this. Suggestions were: a call-em-all with a daily devotion, or once/week to see what kind of response we get.

Other business:

Richard asked if the Saturday morning Men's Bible Study (previously held at Mick Flynn's) could meet at the church if they start up again. They would disinfect chairs after the meeting.

A parishioner asked about using the church bus for transfer of a family member from one hospital to another.

Roberta made a motion that Lena UMC's 2020 Thanksgiving collection will go to FHN Hospice and that Lena UMC's 2020 Christmas collection will be given to Le-Win Ministerial fund. Cathy seconded the motion and the Ad Council approved by voice vote.

The meeting closed at 8:20 pm with a prayer by Pastor Keri.

The next meeting will be January 12, 2021 @ 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Chris Bartelt, Secretary

Worship Meeting Minutes
November 5th, 2020

Those present: Pastor Keri Rainsberger, Sally Buchenau, Lisa Stich, Eleanor Holmes and Cathy Rich.

Pastor Keri opened the meeting with a reflective reading from Tactical Resources for Churches.

Reflections from Sunday's All Saints service: It was suggested to have the candles on the table already lit, rather than to bring them in from the side. It seemed to be too congested and confusing. Also, if we do the video again, Dean will help whoever takes the video to make sure the sound is loud enough. All in all, the service was very nice and appreciated by those who had lost loved ones.

Veterans Day service: Marcia Tessendorf and Dave Finkenbinder will bring in and retire the flags. Cathy will play the Power Point with the pictures of the veterans while Lisa plays appropriate music.

Thanksgiving: We will incorporate Thanksgiving into the Sunday Worship on the Sunday before Thanksgiving (November 22nd) rather than a separate service on Wednesday night. Pastor Keri will work on recording people saying what they're thankful for to be shown during the service.

Advent: Sunday, November 29th, is the first Sunday of Advent. We will green the church on Tuesday, November 24th at 10AM. Sally will call for people to light the Advent candle during the Worship services.

Christmas:

Roberta Rogers has volunteered to record something to present for the Children's program. It's not designated at this time when it will be played.

It was decided that due to so many who come for Xmas Eve service, that we do online only. This service could be pre-recorded and played back at the appropriate time.

We would like to surround the church with luminaries from Sunday to Friday of Christmas week. Lisa Stich is looking in to ordering the bags and battery T-Lights.

Pastor Keri suggested we have an all-night prayer vigil on Christmas Eve into Christmas Day. People or families would sign up for an hour to come to the church to pray.

Pastor Keri has looked into ordering an Advent series by Marcia McFee called "I Believe, Even When". It was voted to order this series.

Cathy closed the meeting with prayer. Our next meeting will be on November 19th at 9 AM.

Cathy Rich

Education Minutes

11-18-2020

Those present: Pastor Keri Rainsberger, Lisa Dascher, Roberta Rogers and Cathy Rich.

Children's Program:

"Oh Zoom All Ye Faithful". Roberta found this program and we will contact the children and youth of our Sunday School enrollment to see if any are interested in doing a virtual Zoom program. The program will be held on Sunday, Dec. 20th during the Worship hour with practices on November 29, December 6 and December 13. Roberta will draft a letter to be sent to the families and get it to Chris to send out.

Lisa had an idea of getting the children together (a family at a time) to take still shots of them acting out the Christmas story. This will then be put into a power point presentation and can be shown on a date to be announced.

Cathy Rich

Worship Minutes

11-19-2020

Those present: Pastor Keri Rainsberger, Lisa Stich, Cathy Rich & Eleanor Holmes

Lisa reported on the luminaries. She ordered 60 bags with a decorative design with 60 battery T-lights. She also ordered 500 plain white bags with 350 T-lights. The cost is \$211.27, Worship budget will cover the cost as well as a donation from the Stitches.

Keri presented an Advent series from Worship Design Studio called "I Believe Even When" Keri handed out the first week service. It has lots of possibilities for virtual choirs and readers. We can possibly send these services to the people who do not have access to internet.

We will green the church on Tuesday, November 24th at 10 AM. Richard and Keri will get the heavy boxes down. It was decided that we will not put the garland over the altar area, but will do the rest of the decorating as usual. Keri came up with an idea of having the youth do chalk art on the sides of the building, an outreach to the community. Someone will contact Linda Voreis to oversee some of this and Cathy will check with Roberta about the youth doing some of it.

Christmas Vigil: Christmas Eve at 5PM – Christmas Day at 5PM. Keri has some slots filled in but there are still a lot of the hours during the night that are not filled. She will start with a prayer outside then also have a prayer outside at Dawn on Christmas day at 5am. We will play the Christmas Eve service at 6 PM and some of the special hours will be streamed on FB.

Chris will send a message today that we are going back to Virtual Service only. This will most likely continue through Christmas.

Cathy Rich



State of Illinois
Illinois Department of Public Health

COVID-19

The State of Illinois is sponsoring a community test site in your area.

Highland Community College
Parking Lot C (Please use the Pearl City Road Entrance)
2998 W Pearl City Rd, Freeport
Date(s): 12/4 & 12/5
Testing hours: 8 am-4 pm

Simple nasal swabs will be used.

You will be called with results within 4-7 days.

No cost for testing.

Bring your insurance card, but you can still be tested if you don't have insurance.

Anyone can get tested!

You don't have to have symptoms or be sick.



[DPH.ILLINOIS.GOV/COVID19](https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19)

December 2020 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 1 pm Quilters	2	3	4	5
6 9 AM Worship On-line through Facebook	7 5:30-7:30 pm – Girl Scouts	8 1 pm Quilters	9	10	11	12
13 9 AM Worship On-line through Facebook	14	15 1 pm Quilters	16	17	18 Newsletter Deadline	19
20 9 AM Worship On-line through Facebook	21 5:30-7:30 pm – Girl Scouts	22 1 pm Quilters	23	24 Christmas Eve Vigil – 5pm Christmas Eve – 5pm Christmas Day	25 Christmas – office closed	26
27 9 AM Worship On-line through Facebook	28	29 1 pm Quilters	30	31 New Year's Eve		

Lena United Methodist Church
118 W. Mason Street
P.O. Box 336
Lena, IL. 61048
Website: lenaumc.org

Non-Profit Org.
U.S.POSTAGE
P A I D
Lena, Illinois
Permit No. 17

December 2020

No in-person Worship until further notice due to COVID 19
6th, 13th, 20th, 27th – 9 am Worship on-line thru Facebook
7th & 21st - 5:30-7:30 pm – Girl Scouts
18th - Newsletter Deadline
25th – Christmas – office closed

Or Current Resident

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[]
[Place label here]
[]

Pastor Keri Rainsberger
Office Telephone
Dial-A-Devotion
Worship hours:
Sunday School

Home 815-324-2746 Cell 614-524-9197
369-5291 Church e-mail: umclena@gmail.com
369-4411
Sunday 9 A.M. Children's worship 9 A. M. 2nd & 4th Sundays
10:30 A.M.