

Lynnewood Lines

ISSUE: 3

QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER OF
LYNNEWOOD UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH

August 2025

LYNNEWOOD
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**In this newsletter
you will find:**

Pastor Jenn's Letter

Music Notes from Michael

Corey's Family Ministry Letter

Member Letters

Finance Update

Small Group Spotlight - Dream Group Book Study

New Communication Tool - Text Reminders!

Small Group Info

Contacts

Pastor Jenn's Letter to the Congregation

"Our involvement in political systems is rooted in the gospel imperative to love our neighbors, to do justice, and to care for the vulnerable. As United Methodists, we acknowledge that love requires responsible political action and engagement aimed at the betterment of society and the promotion of the common good. We acknowledge that such political engagement demands humility and mindfulness of our complicity in perpetuating injustice. It also necessitates compassion, prayer, and a willingness to discern God's guidance." (from the Preface to The Political Community in the Social Principles of the UMC 2025-2028)

As United Methodist Christians, our social and political action DNA goes all the way back to our founder, John Wesley. He made ministry to the poor a priority in the early Methodist movement. He promoted equity in health care, food sustainability and economic systems and spoke out against colonialism and the slave trade. Wesley believed our discipleship should transform our personal lives, our families, our churches and the world. We carry on this tradition today, rooting our social and political involvement in the principles of love, justice and care for the most vulnerable among us. As United Methodists, we have sought to evaluate the social concerns of our time through the lens of faith, without endorsing or promoting particular political candidates or platforms.

However, this summer the IRS released a statement that churches and other houses of worship can endorse political candidates to their congregations, carving out an exemption to a decades-old ban on political activity by tax-exempt nonprofits. The agency said that if a house of worship endorsed a candidate to its congregants, the IRS would view that as a private matter; "like a family discussion concerning candidates" and not campaigning. Critics of the ruling warned that political groups could now use nonprofits as a kind of "legal disguise." In other words, political operatives could funnel money to their preferred candidates through churches while receiving tax breaks at the expense of tax payers who may not share those views.

While this is a valid concern, as a Pastor and follower of Jesus, it is not my primary concern. My primary allegiance is to Christ and his kingdom, which will never neatly coincide with a particular candidate or political platform. The vision that God holds for our world is far bigger and that is our focus. In faith, I acknowledge that there are diverse perspectives on many pressing issues and all of us are on a journey of learning and growing. Our job together is to examine issues in light of faith and then trust one another to make our own decisions regarding voting and action.

I have always believed this respects the God-given intelligence and freedom within each of us and is essential for a healthy democracy. Only a free church can criticize its government when it behaves in harmful ways. Conversations with our Social Justice Team and Church Council members assure me that our lay leadership is in agreement with this perspective.

So, while the law may not prevent me, or this church, from endorsing candidates or aligning ourselves with particular political parties, faith in Christ does. I will do my best to speak out boldly on social issues from a gospel perspective and to equip us to learn and act for justice and mercy in our world. But, I will not ever use the church to endorse particular political candidates. For while I may believe that the views of some candidates better reflect Christian values than others, none will ever fulfill the kingdom we seek. I am reminded of The Romero Prayer, named after Father Oscar Romero.

It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view. The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.

Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith.

No confession brings perfection. No pastoral visit brings wholeness.

No program accomplishes the Church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.

We plant the seeds that one day will grow.

We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.

We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.

This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.

It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.

We are prophets of a future not our own.

May we all be workers and prophets of a future not our own,

Pastor Jennifer

Pastor Jenn



Music Notes

Would you look at that, another summer is on its way out and a new program year is about to begin for the music program. That means it's the perfect time to join the Chancel Choir, Handbell Choir, Wellspring band, Ukulele choir, or Joyful Noise. Chancel choir resumes rehearsals on August 20, and will begin leading worship services after Labor Day. All other ensembles will begin sometime in September.

Why the uncertainty? Well, one reason is that we want to hear from you. In an effort to make music ensembles more accessible, we're hoping to hold more meetings on Sundays after worship, on a rotating schedule. In the coming weeks, look for a poll where you can provide feedback on what kind of music-making you're seeking, and works in your schedule. You can also always email me at

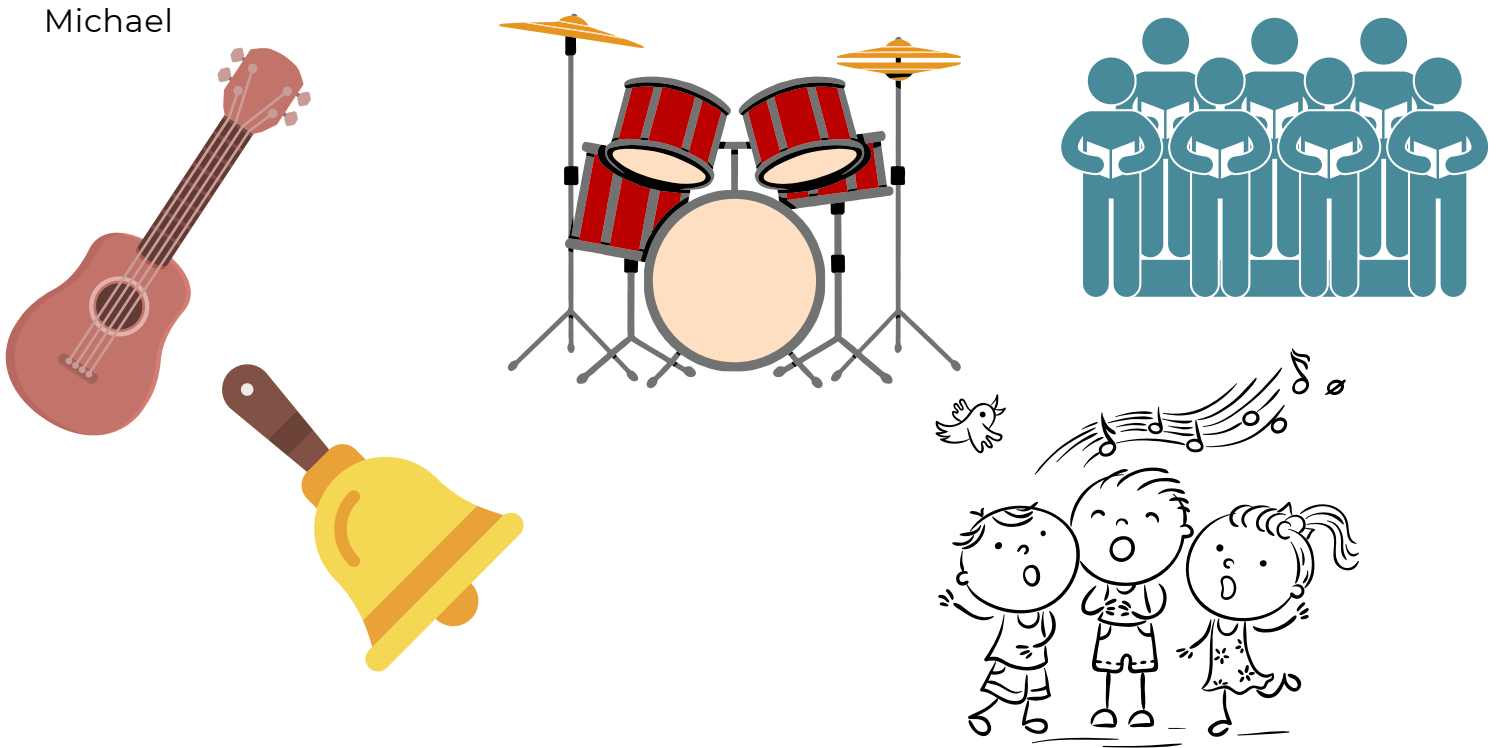
michael@lynnewood.org, or fill out one of the response forms [here](#).

What kind of music do you want to hear? What do you want to play?



Anything worth doing is worth doing badly. That's not a typo, and maybe you've heard that same twist on the adage before. Come learn something new. Strum a ukulele, hit a drum, or just lift your voice to God. So long as it is done with a full heart, I think God will be well pleased.

Michael



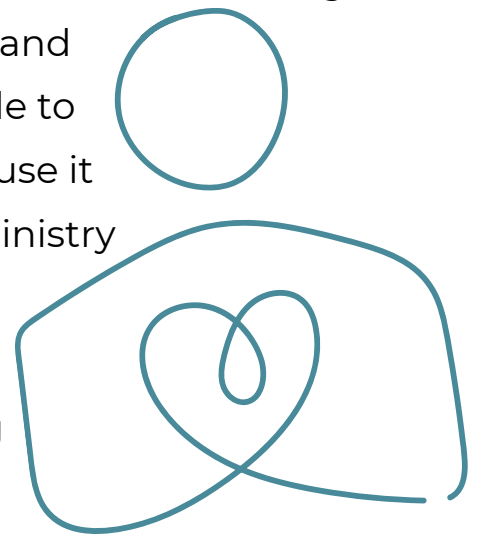
Family Ministry

Connection and Care



Each school year I try (key word try) to have a theme for myself and our families at church.

Life can get crazy and busy so quickly and easily that I like to simplify sometimes my goals or overall themes. This year our theme is - Connection and Care. I want us as a Family Ministry to do more events and activities that connect us to each other. As a new Dad I truly believe it takes a whole lot of people to raise a kid. I think we cannot do this life without more and more connections and relationships. So our first goal is to be more connected. I want us to have more moments of hard conversations, laughs, and simply sharing life. The more we connect, the less alone we feel on this journey of life. Next, I want us to care more. Now, I know this might be a weird statement to read but give me a moment to explain. I know we do an amazing job at this church of caring for one another and our surrounding world. We will continue to grow our opportunities to care and serve the more we connect with one another. I want us to focus on this dangerous concept of self care. Our second big goal for Family Ministry is Self Care. Our connections and relationships will help us keep each other accountable to this. Yet, I want to make it our second big focus because it is so very important. Thus, we are starting a parent ministry that will meet once a month this fall. We will focus more on the health of our mind, bodies, and souls in everything we do this school year (while still enjoying yummy food). We will continue to have more and more conversations about mental health, healthy communication, and the overall well being of our families. So, let's connect and care this school year.



Much love,
Corey

Member Contributions

Report on the 2025 California-Nevada Annual Conference - By Vicki Daughtry



It was my privilege to represent Lynnewood again this year in Sacramento at our annual California-Nevada Annual Conference, June 27-30. This 177th Annual Conference focused on Thriving in Community, and gave me my first chance to see the leadership of our new bishop, Sandra K. Olewine.

Saturday morning, our speaker was Dr. Stephanie Hand, focused on social justice work. She suggested the following steps: fasting and praying as we build up discipleship ministries; asking the right kinds of questions; identifying and addressing the justice issues of our community; understanding systems of oppression.

In the afternoon, we dealt with legislation issues; my group's concerned encouraging every attendee to spend time daily outdoors in God's beautiful world, having the district superintendents make climate justice a missional priority, and eliminating our retirement funds' investments in fossil fuel. Back in the plenary session, all legislative items passed.

On Sunday, I attended a breakout session on small group ministry led by Samuel Yun. He brought us together by teaching us to say "God is good, all the time" in Korean (phonetically, "Ha na nimh chota, HONG sahng"). He suggested we use Acts 2's description of the early church as a prescription for how church should be today. Small groups focusing on the spiritual check-in question "How goes it with your soul?" can find deeper spiritual connection and growth. The other three components of these life groups are study, spiritual accountability, and mutual support.

As a conference, we voted on the budget, we ordained new ministers, and we laid hands on those being appointed and reappointed to churches (always a meaningful ritual for me). You can access conference proceedings here by [clicking here.](#)

I have many mountaintop moments at conference, surrounded by so many acting as the hands and feet of Jesus Christ in the world. My favorites are usually musical, and this year was no exception. As we closed out the ordination service on Sunday, we stood and sang; I happened to be next to a gentleman from Park Presidio UMC in San Francisco. At the end of the last song, he grabbed my hand and exclaimed, "I LIKE singing with you!" Church, I like singing with you, and for you. I ask God to continue letting me do it as long as God sees fit. Thank you.

Finance Update

Here's a quick snapshot of the general fund* numbers as of the end of June (1st half of 2025). (*General fund refers to those monies that cover salaries, building maintenance, program expenses, etc.):

	Jan-June 2025	Full Year 2025 budget
Donation Income	\$ 196,564	\$ 424,000
Quarry Lane Income	\$ 132,798	\$ 268,252
Interest Income	\$ 10,460	\$ 23,000
Total General Budget Income including from other sources	\$ 343,292	\$ 715,252
Expenses	\$ 362,409	\$ 747,698
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 19,117	\$ 32,446

You may ask – how can you run a church this way? No business would enter the year with a projected deficit budget. And you would be right when it comes to talking about for-profit businesses.

But here's where a faith budget comes into play. The previous 2 years, we entered the year with a projected deficit. But we have yet to end a year with a deficit. Between spending less than projected and income being more than projected, we closed the gap those two years.

Do I like the way those numbers look? Absolutely not. But I have faith that God will continue to provide for the Lynnewood ministries to the community and the world. You all are the vehicle through which God provides.

Consider this a challenge! In 2025 to date, Lynnewood has had approximately 120 different giving units (families or individuals). If each giving unit were able to give an additional \$12 to \$15 per week over the next 19 weeks, we would close the deficit. I do recognize that not everyone has the means to do this. And that is okay. Please remember that your presence and service are also gifts that are greatly needed and appreciated by the Lynnewood family.

This discussion has not even included your giving to special appeals, such as the one this August for Texas flooding relief. You have been generous time and again. Thank you!

With gratitude for all of you here at Lynnewood,
Donna Kirch, finance committee chairperson

Small Group Spotlight

Dream Group - NEW BOOK STUDY Starting SOON!

☀️ **When: Thursday Nights at 7:00 p.m. September 4th - October 9th.**

☀️ **Where: The LUMC Youth Room**

☀️ **Contact/Sign-up: Lisa Rigge at lbrigs202@gmail.com**

☀️ **Materials: PDF pages of the book will be provided to participants**

Book Preface:

"Dream Prayers is written primarily for people of church upbringing who are seeking new ways to deepen spiritual life. Our great heritage of the importance of dreams in both Old and New Testaments has been lost. Working with dreams as a spiritual practice has been forgotten. *Dream Prayers* is meant to help recover this lost inheritance. The book conveys basic principles of the dream-work process and connects these principles with concepts of spiritual growth. The book demonstrates how working with dreams helps to develop imaginal thinking and sensitivity to the symbolic realm. Through the process of using dreams images and emotions as media for dialogue with the inner, emotional-spiritual world."

NEW Communication tool Coming SOON

More connection with each other means deeper relationships and a vibrant community. I love how connected we are as a church and community. We are blessed to have so many events and groups at Lynnewood. We want to make sure we continue to stay connected. So, this fall we are introducing **text reminders**. There will be different text groups that you can sign up for. Some of them are event reminders, daily prayers, daily devotionals, and questions of the day. This awesome new form of communication is getting set up, so be on the lookout for those sign ups to come out soon.



Small Groups



Nourish at Noon

Join Pastor Jenn at noon on the fourth Monday of the month for a time of sharing and prayer. This women's spiritual formation group reads a variety of books, poems, and articles. It's not a Bible study: the readings are a starting point for conversation, personal reflection, and discerning God's movement in our lives.



Women at the Well

Friendship and Connection
Great conversations about issues that matter, big & small.

Please join us Wednesday mornings, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., in the Sanctuary. Contacts: Jan Villott & Susan Gillaspy.

New study begins Sept. 10.



Yoga

Come join us to refresh your mind, body and spirit. Class led by instructor Joy Ellebrecht on Mondays at 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring your yoga mat and blocks. Class donations go toward UMCOR.



Prayers & Squares

Please remember whenever we have a quilt, it is not finished until you participate by tying a knot or laying your hands on a knot and saying a prayer. If you would like to help with this ministry, please contact Michele at 447-9141 / micheleohair@gmail.com, or Jane at 846-6412.



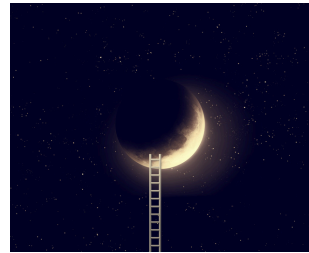
Joyful Noise Choir

The Joyful Noise Choir, for children ages PreK-6 grade, meets after Worship on Sundays from 10:40 a.m. to 11:10 a.m. We first meet in the Fellowship Hall, have a quick snack, and then sing. Please join us in making a Joyful Noise. We welcome anyone who wants to have fun while learning to sing. There's even room for those who aren't quite sure. Fall dates will be out soon!



Dare to Question

A Monday night Bible study. Join this group every Monday at 7 P.M. to read and discuss thought-provoking books and other topics. All are welcome to join! Meetings are over Zoom. ID: 813 2116 9421 Passcode: 411564



Dream Group

Dream Group meets every third Thursday from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. It is facilitated by Lisa Rigge, who has facilitated dream groups for almost 20 years. Dream group is open to anyone who would like to explore any aspect of their dreams. Dream group is a safe and confidential place to explore and work with your dreams. Please consider joining - we'd love to have new members. For more information: Lisa Rigge (lbrigs202@gmail.com) or Claire Chow (clairechow@comcast.net).



Seasoned Citizens

Seasoned Citizens meets once monthly at a local restaurant. We typically meet on the second Tuesday at 11:30 a.m.

This group offers a welcome break from the daily routine with a chance for togetherness and visiting with other church members you may not typically see or talk to during regular church services.

We visit a variety of restaurants with an opportunity to experience different cuisines. So if you're retired or just free for lunch you qualify to join us to relax, connect, meet new friends, and enjoy each others company!

To join, please email Carrie Cochran at carriecochran@comcast.net or text at 925-989-4548.

Contacts

Office

(925) 846-0221 / office@lynnewood.org

Care Team

Prayer Requests - If you would like the prayer chain to pray for you, send a request to Marsha Grimes: marshagrimes@att.net. Please indicate if you'd like this prayer to remain with the prayer chain or have it shared with the congregation in worship.

Visits - Linda Van Pelt: Ivanpelt3513@att.net
Raeanne Passantino: auntirae2@yahoo.com
Mary Ellen Huey: failedretirement@comcast.net

Pastoral Care and Support -

Pastor Jennifer Murdock: pastorjenn@lynnewood.org
Corey Dao-Forrester: corey@lynnewood.org

Stephen Ministers

Stephen Ministers come from all walks of life. Their commonality? A passion for bringing Christ's love and care to people during a time of need. You don't have to go through the difficult times alone. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to provide you with confidential, one-to-one Christian care and support to help you through a tough time. Our Stephen Ministers are there to care. To find out more about Stephen Ministry for yourself or someone you know, please call Linda Van Pelt at 510-376-0483 or email her at Ivanpelt3513@att.net.



*As a **reconciling congregation** that dares to question, love, and serve, we offer wide welcome to all people regardless of age, sex, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender identity, family status, physical or mental ability, or economic or immigration status.*
