Mission Statement
We strive to be a welcoming, worshipping community of faith, helping people discover and deepen their relationship with God, growing as disciples of Christ, and reaching out in faith and loving service.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1st
Sermon: Open Table
Liturgy: Luke 14: 1, 7-14
Holy Communion / Hunger Sunday
Worship for All Ages / Birthday Sunday

RALLY DAY!
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th
10 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary
Welcome back Chancel Choir, Faith Formation Leaders and our church family!
Dear Church,

I read a UCC devotional a while back that asked the question, “Can you describe yourself without naming the things you hate?” I felt like it was calling me out. I don’t hate much, but I do complain a lot. Recently I realized that when my husband asks me about my day, I describe it by telling him the things I’m upset about, discouraged about, disheartened about. When I realized this pattern, I asked myself a similar question, “can I describe my day without naming the things that went wrong?” The question translates into a lot of aspects in life. Can you look in the mirror without noticing the flaws? Can you look at your bank account without focusing on the debits? Can you look at your job, your spouse, your parents, your children, your community, your home, without noticing the shortcomings?

It’s so easy to get stuck in pessimism. Sometimes talking about the things we hate seems like an easier conversation starter. When standing in a long line at the BMV, for some reason it feels easier to talk to someone about the length of the line and the inefficiency of the process than it does to talk to someone about the privilege of having a Driver’s License or a working vehicle. For some reason when we go out to brunch with a group of friends, it feels easier to vent about our frustrations than to talk about all the blessings in this life.

Venting isn’t always bad; sometimes it’s necessary to have that emotional release. But venting as our Modus Operandi? What a poor use of mental energy! I know that I feel better when I define myself according to the things that I love. I know that my energy goes up and I am more focused on the moment at hand when I reflect on the positive parts of my day rather than the negatives--when I talk about what I did get accomplished rather than what I didn’t.

So on that note, I’ll tell you about something I love. I love the Spirit in the Air at Lakewood Congregational Church! We have had such a wonderful summer of worship. I am certain the Spirit of God is moving through this place, and that we are being called into something phenomenal. Our staffing transition has gone so smoothly over the summer, with many thanks to those who preceded us and those who have started up. We have experienced an unusual amount of staff turnover in the past two years, and everyone-- incoming and outgoing-- has been full of grace, intentionality, and love of this church. We’ve been working so hard this summer as a staff, and as an exec team, so much of it behind the scenes, to get things organized, up-to-date, and flowing smoothly. I cannot begin to express my gratitude for every person here.

We’re looking forward to some more of that great Spirit in the Air this fall! If you haven’t seen the Rally Day Packet that went out in the mail on Thursday, August 29th, please let the office know so we can update our mailing list. We are working hard to keep people in the loop about everything that’s happening here, and we may need your help to be sure we know how to find you! Turn to the packet, and leaf through this Columns Newsletter to get a feel for what’s happening at LCC. We hope to see you around soon! And, as always, if you need anything please reach out to me.

With Grace and Peace, and so much love for each of you,
Pastor Joanna
As I Was Saying...continued

The reading from Rev. Joanna’s sermon Be the Church: Love God on August 18th

Why I stay: A prayer
Because the yearning comes from somewhere, and that somewhere must be you.

I stay because A was for Adam, B for Bethlehem, and C for Cross, and my first classroom was a pew. Because I played hide-and-seek in the font when the preacher wasn’t looking, answered every altar call with a sprint down the aisle, and snuck the leftover communion juice from the glasses the church ladies washed on Mondays. I was hoping—I understand this now—to steal a drop more of you.

Because decades later I’m still felled by stained glass; by musty old Bibles in empty, patient sanctuaries; by altar cloths, choir robes, and candle wax. Because my breathing slows in your house, my muscles unclench, and I remember how to sing loud and clear. Because you are my rootedness, my air, my water. The dark and frozen ground in which I wait to crack open, die, and sprout. You are the closest I ever come to flourishing.

Because I love stories, and I cherish the ones I first learned in your book. Because I am Eve and the apple makes sense to me. I’m Rachel and I won’t surrender my sacred objects. I’m Leah and I long to be loved. I’m Hagar, and I will name you in the desert. I’m Miriam and I am ever watchful. I’m the bleeding woman and I need the hem of your robe. I’m Mary Magdalene and I must bear witness by your tomb. I’m Junia and my story aches to be told.

Because childhood ends but childhood hungers do not. Because you were my first house, first father, first mother, first love, first hate, first heartbreak, first safety, first terror.

Because the psalmist got it right: I was cast on you from birth. Because Peter got it even better: Lord, if I left, to whom would I go?

Because I like questions, and it turns out that you ask good ones. Because I answer when you ask, and my answers never shock you.

Why are you so afraid? (Are you kidding me?)
Do you still not understand? (Nope, not even a little bit.)

What do you want me to do for you? (Um, how much time do we have?)

Do you want to get well? (Occasionally.)

Do you love me? (I think so. Or, I want to. Or, not yet. Or . . .)

How long shall I put up with you? (A little longer, please.)

I stay because sorrow came too many times this year, and there had better be an afterward to explain it. I stood at gravesides and raged, my body betrayed me to panic, and my children knew fear and pain. Bodies failed, minds cracked, and we didn’t live happily ever.

I stay because all in all there are far too many unfinished stories, and I’d like to believe you’re neater than that. Because I yearn for so much more than I have. Because my yearning comes from somewhere, and that somewhere must be you. Because “on earth as it is in heaven” is all I’ve got, and if it’s not enough, then I am lost. Because “Death, where is thy sting?” is a mockery, but “Jesus wept” is not.
Because joy comes too, and it doesn’t look anything like I think it should. Because you hound me, and I can’t get rid of you. Because our pursuit of each other is exquisite in both directions—pleasure and pain. Because rarely—too rarely, but I’ll take what I can get—the veil parts, the ground gives way, the skies open, and my hunger for you intensifies to the breaking point of communion. The hunger itself becomes you: incarnate, shining, present. I know you then in the liturgy, in the Word, in the broken bread and spilled wine. I press my palms against ancient redwood trees, and you are there. You awe me in the mountains and at the shifting edges of the ocean. I hear you in the stillness of the forest, in the cacophony of birdsong. I feel you in the solid embrace of the people I love—their hands your hands, their eyes your eyes, their voices soft echoes of yours.

And in those moments the possibility of you grows and grows until I am unhoused and undone, almost too alive for this world. Because you are my Everlasting Almost—almost here, almost certain, almost always, almost irrefutable. You are the tenuous edge I will live and die on. Because the almost of you—heartbreaking as it is—is sweeter than any guarantee I can find in this world.

Because you’re not who I thought you were, so I must wait for revelation. Because the mystery of your strangeness is a lure that calls my name. Because I thought I needed to contain you, but a tiny deity won’t bend my knee.

Because the path is winding, and you are a God worthy of perilous journeys. Because I need to wrestle, and you meet me at the river. Because this is no ordinary hunger, and your manna alone will suffice. Because you know the loneliness of the desert, and so do I. Because I will drown unless you part this water. Because the world is dark, but it shimmers at its edges.

Because I’m wild inside, and you are not a tame lion. Because you suffered, and only a suffering God can help. Because you spoke of joy, and I need to learn how to laugh.

Because I am wired to seek you, and I will not let you go. Because my ache for you is the heart of my aliveness.

Because I am still your stubborn child, and I insist on resurrection.

By Debi Thomas, December 20, 2016

A version of this article first appeared at Journey With Jesus and is included in the July 5 print edition under the title “Why I stay.” The online version was edited on June 19. The website can be found HERE.
This summer, I thought I’d try an experiment. I know that many singers in our Chancel Choir welcome some time off over the summer. But I also know that others, both our regulars and otherwise, wanted the opportunity to sing. So I organized a summer “pick-up choir” and, in classic “If you build it they will come” fashion, there was a consistent turn out. This past Sunday, as part of our exciting “Enjoy This Life” service, fourteen intrepid singers learned a song one hour before service started. This is a testament both to the skill of our choir and also their love for making music. I am always grateful for them and can’t wait to start back up with regular choir practice. If you or anyone you know would like to join the LCC music program, whether as part of the choir or handbell ensemble, or offering your vocal or instrumental talents during service, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me. You’re more than welcome to join us at 6 pm on September 5th at the Footes’ (19875 Center Ridge Road, in Rocky River) for our potluck picnic to kick off the season.

I would love to tell you that I had a relaxing summer, but instead I’ll tell you that I had a full summer. Kate and I did have a wonderful week in July, camping up in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Other than that, between reorganizing music, practicing, composing, teaching, and other performing adventures, I’ve kept pretty busy.

As Donna Fagerhaug and Doug Bailey move on to other opportunities and we celebrate their singing and role in the church community, we went on a search for new soprano and tenor section leaders. Meghan Galloway, Michael Komperda, Joann Riordan, and Jan Young generously spent over ten hours hearing candidates with me and asking thoughtful questions in interviews. We had many fine singers audition, but Naomi Columna and Ben Liu stood out as outstanding vocalists and musicians, as well as delightful people. I have every confidence they will be great assets to our music program and I encourage everyone to give them a warm LCC welcome.

We have a typically exciting fall at LCC musically speaking. Anna Bowman Hurt, the fabulous cellist who played during service a couple of weeks ago, and I are playing a recital on October 23. Les Délices and CityMusic (which has a new music director, cellist extraordinaire Amit Peled) have exciting programming planned and we do too every Sunday in our service. We also have our annual Youth Musical planning in the works, so if you would like to be a part of putting that together, we’d love to have you. Please see the Festival Arts Letter, which is in the mail as a write this, for a calendar and more details. I can’t wait to see you all on Rally Day, and in general.

Thanks for reading,

Ben

Music and Faith Formation:
Next Generation Band-Sunday, Sept 8, 11am

All youth are encouraged to come to this meeting! If you have an instrument and you are interested in playing with the band, please bring it. Instrumentalists and vocalists are all invited. We are open to exploring whatever music style best suits the group of youth participating. The band will practice after church Sept-Dec and will provide special music occasionally during worship.

There will also be additional opportunities to provide music throughout the rest of the school year. The band is lead by our Director of Children’s and Youth Music, Noah Hamrick.
**WORSHIP FOR ALL AGES**

Sunday, September 1 will be our next Worship for All Ages, which will include our monthly Food collection for the Hungry, Communion, and the Celebration of September Birthdays!

Every Sunday, during worship, childcare is provided in our Nursery for the youngest members of our church family (infants-4 year olds), and Activity Bags for other children are located in the back of the Sanctuary, if needed.

**CONFIRMATION 2019-2020 — PARENT MEETING**

Wednesday, September 18 at 7pm

LCC is offering a Confirmation Class again this year as we welcome some new families whose youth have not yet had the opportunity to participate in Confirmation.

This year's class will be for youth in grades 8 and higher. Parents of youth interested in Confirmation should attend our upcoming meeting.

Rachel Burns

**ELIZA JENNINGS WORSHIP**

All 6th-12th graders are encouraged to help lead worship at Eliza Jennings Assisted Living. Transportation is provided and the leadership is not difficult. This is a fun way to spend time with your friends while giving back to others.

Parents, if you would like to help out by driving for this event, please contact Rachel. All youth not riding with their parent will need to turn in a Faith Formation Registration and Medical/Liability Release prior to the event (information about registration and release can be found [here](#) and in hard copy at the Youth bulletin board).

**2019-2020 Faith Formation for Children/Youth:**

Faith Formation will be gearing up for its beginning on Sunday, September 8th, RALLY DAY! If your child will be in Kindergarten or 6th grade this school year, please notify Karen in the church office (216-221-9555), so that we may present your child with a Bible on Rally Day.

**Bless This Mess**, Author presentation and book signing Wednesday, September 25 at 6:30pm at LCC

Parents, be sure to check out *Bless This Mess*, a special event where we will hear from author Reverend Molly Baskette.

For more information, visit [www.lcc-church.org](http://www.lcc-church.org) or check out our Facebook event. Please feel free to invite other parents you know to this special event!
A Ministry to Serve

COMMUNITY MEAL
SEPTEMBER 5TH

Join us for the LCC Community Meal!

As always, we will start set-up and food preparation about 3:30pm. We'll then plate the food and be ready for service at 6:00pm.

We will need people to help put up tables and chairs, set tables, make coffee, tea, lemonade and food. During dinner, we will need a few folks in the kitchen to assist with refilling dishes for second helpings and afterwards we will need assistance with clean-up of the social hall and kitchen.

We generally finish up by 7:15pm. We welcome you for any amount of time you can join us!

If you are unable to make our community dinner but are interested in serving, Trinity is in need of help for their community meals. Their September schedule is posted below.

TRINITY COMMUNITY MEALS:
- Monday, Sept 2, 6pm
- Sunday, Sept. 8, 4pm
- Saturday, Sept. 21 at 12pm

Trinity Produce Distribution: 10am-12pm: Saturday, Sept. 21
Trinity Pantry: 10am-12pm: Saturday, Sept. 28

Volunteers are needed for each and every program offering. Please join us!

Martha’s Table, an “Inreach” Team at LCC (Nurture and Growth) needs your HELP*. Many of you are familiar with Martha, the woman from the Bible who was all about serving Jesus and others great meals at her home! (Luke 10:38-42, John 11:1-44, 12:2). Our own Martha’s Table began a few years ago and has served our LCC family members many meals to help nourish the body, the mind, and the soul when life has become difficult to manage.

Jennifer Schwelik heads up the Team of chefs/bakers/deliverers; *if you are interested in being a part of this behind-the-scenes Team, email or call Jennifer (see Church Directory.)

And, if you are in need of a meal due to an illness, death, new baby, or some other reason preventing you from cooking a dinner, call the church office (216-221-9555).

COMMUNITY CORNER

Have you recently volunteered? Are you part of an event that needs volunteers or fundraising? Please contact Laura Hampton at lblesseh@bw.edu to have your information included in future additions of The Columns or the weekly bulletin.
A Ministry to Serve / In and Around LCC

FRIEND’S CIRCLE EVENTS
Friends Circle (a multi-generational women’s group)
Friend’s Circle’s next event is: Monday, September 9 at 6:30pm for an outing at Clifton Beach.
Sign Up Sheet and information are on the West Clifton bulletin board
Please contact the office at 216-221-9555 or lccstaff@lcc-church.org to be added to the email list

The Outreach team will be continuing to work with Building Hope in the City for two additional events:

Saturday September 21st - Save the date for Rally CLE
Rally CLE is a project where residents of the Clark-Fulton and Stockyard areas can apply for grants to improve their communities.
On Saturday September 21st, residents and volunteers will start, partially complete or fully complete approved projects. More details will be announced in July.

Common Threads donations may be dropped off at 22409 Lorain Rd during store hours:
Monday – Saturday: 10 am to 8 pm
Sunday: Noon to 6 pm
For a full list of what can and cannot be accepted go here:
www.commonthreadsthrift.com/donate

More information on Building Hope in the City can be found on their website:
www.buildinghopeinthecity.org

If there are any additional questions, please speak with Laura Hampton (lblesseh@bw.edu)

LCC PRAYER CHAIN
Prayer Request Cards can be found on the table in the back of the Sanctuary or you can call the church office if you, or someone you love, is in need of prayer.
The LCC Prayer Chain includes members Chiquita Matthews, Ellen Tudron, Kathy MacDougall, Robert Wenz, Vicki Smigelski, Muriel Campbell, Nancy Gibbs, Alicia Fortenbaugh, Marinika Beaver, J. Horner, Patti Dobro, Charlotte Brown, Karen Lee, Pastor Joanna, and Patti Komperda. Let Karen Lee (church office) or Pastor Joanna know if you would like to be added to the Chain or if you would like to add a prayer.

Join the Journey
Are you looking for a way to deepen your faith? How has God called you individually and us collectively to be the church? Brian McLaren takes us on an amazing faith journey in his book *The Road We Make by Walking.* With McLaren, we will explore how to be alive in our faith through a quest for spiritual formation, reorientation, and activation.
Join members of Trinity Lutheran and Lakewood Congregational on the first and third Tuesday evenings beginning October 1, 2019, through May 19, 2020, from 7:00 pm to 8:15 pm Childcare will be available upon request. This is not your parents Bible study. If you are new to small group study or a long-time student, all are welcome.
Join Paula Deal, Haylee Schwenk, and Karen Wagner as we walk with God through the church year. Books may be purchased through the LCC church office, 216-221-9555. Contact Paula Deal, paula.deal@gmail.com, for more information.
CALLING ALL READERS!
Come to Adventures in Reading (LCC book club)
the 2nd Tuesday of each month.
Tuesday, Sept. 10th
12:30 p.m.
Westlake Porter Library
27333 Center Ridge Rd.

Book: News of the World by Paulette Jiles

Susan Walker will lead the review and discussion of the News of the World © 2016 by Paulette Jiles. It is 1870 and Captain Jefferson Kyle Kidd travels through northern Texas, giving live readings to paying audiences hungry for news of the world. In Wichita Falls, he is given a $50 gold piece to deliver to a ten-year-old orphan to her relatives in San Antonio. Four years earlier a band of Indians killed Joanna’s parents and sister; sparing the little girl, they raised her as one of their own. Recently rescued by the U.S. Army, the child has once again been torn away from the only home she knows. Their 400-mile journey leads them south through the unsettled, difficult, and dangerous terrain. This work of historical fiction explores the boundaries of family, responsibility, honor, and trust.

Looking ahead to October: Our book review will be The Kurdish Bike © by Alesa Lightbourne.

All men are invited to the LCC Men’s Group meeting, hosted by Bill Fraunfelder, on Monday, September 16th, 7pm.
Plan to stay to watch Browns @ Jets game on Monday Night Football at 8:15pm. Bring any beverage you want, and pizza will be ordered as usual.

SECOND SATURDAY
We’re back! After a summer break, Second Saturday will gather again on Saturday, September 21 (this is the third Saturday for this month due to conflicts) at 9:00 am in the Centennial Garden at LCC. All women in our church family are invited for an hour of conversation, reflection and prayer.
Get to know women of all ages as we journey through life.

LCC MEMBER NEWS:
◊ Reverend Farrar and Richard Budd Werner were laid to rest in the Columbarium this summer

Be sure to send your news to the office at lccstaff@lcc-church.org by the last Monday of the month. We love to celebrate and support our members.
Adam Luster  Sept. 1
David Baker  Sept. 5
David Kemp  Sept. 5
Linda Brockman  Sept. 7
Amos D’Agostino  Sept. 11
Shannon Basile  Sept. 12
Bely Stockman  Sept. 12
Tess Parker  Sept. 13
Ella Atfield  Sept. 16
Debbie Langenhop  Sept. 16
Erica Redman  Sept. 16
Cate Schleckman  Sept. 18
Kim Mitchell  Sept. 19
Ian Taylor  Sept. 19
Maic D’Agostino  Sept. 21
Peggy Wardin  Sept. 21
Kim Taylor  Sept. 22
Gloria Van Peeren  Sept. 23
Kris Payne  Sept. 24
Lisa Harvey Smith  Sept. 26
Rosalie Banyasz  Sept. 29
Earl Gottlieb  Sept. 29
Steve Ott  Sept. 29
Jon Taylor  Sept. 30

Doug & Erica Redman  Sept. 1
Mark & Cindy Stockman  Sept. 3
Karen & Matt Lee  Sept. 3
Tim & Joann Riordan  Sept. 4
Chris & Christine Gray  Sept. 5
Keith & Lisa Smith  Sept. 6
Rich & Marian Kenney  Sept. 11
Peter & Cathy Kuhn  Sept. 11
Richard & Martha Skillen  Sept. 16
John & Marguerite Harkness  Sept. 18
George & Sally Alkire  Sept. 24
## September 2019

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| 10 am Worship — Sanctuary  
10:15 am Faith Formation  
11 am Fellowship Hour | 30 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **1** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Worship for All Ages  
With Baptism  
Holy Communion  
Birthday/Hunger Sunday  
10 am Worship for All Ages  
11 am Fellowship Hour  
11 am Faith Formation Leader Meeting | 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 6 pm Trinity’s Community Meal - Social Hall | 3 | 7 pm Haynes Parent Meeting | 7 pm Haynes Parent Meeting | 6 pm LCC Community Meal  
6 pm Choir Picnic (Footle’s)  
6:30 pm Tai Chi—Parlor  
7:30 pm AA—Social Hall | 6 | 9 pm: AA—Social Hall |
| 10 am Sanctuary Cleaning |  |  |  |  |  |
| **8** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **9** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 am Worship — Sanctuary  
10:15 am Faith Formation  
11 am Fellowship Hour  
4 pm Trinity Community Meal—Social Hall | 10 | 12:30 pm Adventure’s in Reading (Westlake) |  | 6:30 pm Tai Chi—Parlor  
7:30 pm AA—Social Hall | 13 | 9 pm AA—Social Hall |
| **15** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 am Worship—Global Ministries  
10:15 am Faith Formation  
11 am Fellowship Hour—Parlor | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 7 pm Executive Team Meeting—Parlor  
7 pm Men’s Group (Fraunfelder’s) | 6:30 pm Tai Chi—Parlor  
7:30 pm AA—Social Hall | 6:30 pm Tai Chi—Parlor  
7:30 pm AA—Social Hall | 9 pm AA—Social Hall |  |  |
| 9 am Second Saturday—Garden  
10-12 pm Produce Distribution  
12 pm Trinity Community Meal—Social Hall | 21 |  |  |  |  |
| **22** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9:15 am Car Wash  
10 am Worship — Sanctuary  
10:15 am Faith Formation  
11 am Fellowship Hour | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 6:30 pm Bless This Mess—Sanctuary |  |  | 6:30 pm Tai Chi—Parlor  
7:30 pm AA—Social Hall | 9 pm AA—Social Hall | 10-12 pm Trinity Pantry—downstairs  
11 am Banyasz Rental (Parlor)  
5 pm Wedding (Chapel) |
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Building and Property
Liz Spahr

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Vice-Chair: Liz Spahr
Moderator: Michael Komperda
Treasurer: David Amen
Nurture and Growth Ministries:
Sue Tamilio
Welcoming Ministries:
Scott Sutell
Outreach Ministries:
Laura Blesse—Hampton
Diaconate: Vicki Smigelski

SUNDAY WORSHIP:
NURSERY: Sunday, 9:50 a.m.
WORSHIP: Sunday, 10:00 a.m.
FAITH FORMATION: 10:15 a.m.
(Children start in worship and are excused to attend classes at Faith Formation time)

PHONE: 216-221-9555
FAX: 216-221-9088
WEBSITE: www.lcc-church.org
E-MAIL: lccstaff@lcc-church.org

SANCTUARY CLEAN UP

Many hands make light work! We need some help with our annual Sanctuary clean up.

On Saturday, September 7 at 10:00 am we’ll roll up our sleeves and get out the Murphy’s Oil Soap to get things ready for Rally Day. Meet in the Sanctuary and come ready to clean.

Children are welcome to join if you want to make this a family volunteer project! See you then!