



# *the Messenger*

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*Photos courtesy Alex Claney Photography*

## ***Christmas Story Caravan***

by Pastor Lisa Telomen

We had a most blessed event on Sunday, December 6, when we welcomed church and community to come see our live nativity staffed by church families and animals from Friendly Farms in DeKalb! We estimate that at least 100 cars drove by and/or stopped, and we received \$1,916.54 to support Heifer Project International. We were the "middle" stop of the caravan. Baker Memorial UMC told the Good News sharing the light the shepherds saw, giving away luminaries, putting prayers on their prayer tree, and raising \$2,000 for missionary Clara Biswas in Cambodia. Batavia UMC collected a carload of scarves, gloves, and hats, plus \$600 cash for the Marie Wilkenson charity, and offered a photo op with angel wing banners, sharing the angel's announcement to Mary.

***Many thanks*** to our Reach In/Reach Out team members who helped organize and run the event: Sharon Anderson, Jean Eakins, and Linda McConnell. Special thanks to youth Caroline Donati, Evan Horvath, and A.J. Hansen who helped staff the event, and to Pastor Rich, Chris Schmal, and Robbin Lang. Thanks also to our four wonderful Holy Families and Shepherds: the Popplewells, Howells, Drexlers, and Sacrey-Eggens! And a big thank you to Music Director Scott Stevenson for pulling together our choral soundtrack, and Rev. Becky Nicol for recording our scripture and doing publicity. Thanks also to Trustee chair Tony Zefron who put up our banners, and Admin Debbie Sampiller, who supplied our baby Jesus!

## Pastor's Note

### Happy New Year!

I found this prayer on the web and thought it very appropriate as we enter the new year.

Pastor Rich

**Loving God**, thank you for helping us to make it through this difficult past year. Thank you that you've carried us through the uncertainty of deep waters, through the flames of trials, and through the pain of hard losses. We are constantly aware of how much we need you, your grace, your strength, your power working through even the toughest days. Help us to keep our focus first on you this season. Help us to remember that the gift of Christ, Immanuel, is our greatest treasure, not just at Christmas, but for the whole year through. Fill us with your joy and the peace of your Spirit. Direct our hearts and minds towards you. Thank you for your healing power, thank you for bringing us into this new season up ahead. We look forward to all that you still have in store. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

(from crosswalk.com)

Join us as part of your Lenten Journey!

### Aurora District Virtual Lay Academy 2021

5 Sundays in Lent 2 to 4pm  
Beginning February 21

Introduction to Lay Ministry: Basic Course  
Roger Curless, Instructor

Called to Preach: Rev. Becky Nicol, Instructor

Biblical Storytelling: Rev. JoAnne Chase,  
Instructor

Leading Worship: Chuck Dexter, Instructor

### Christmas Story Caravan



Photos: Howell family by Pastor Lisa (top)  
Drexler family by Maria Isely

# REACH UP...

## JANUARY 2021 Worship Schedule

Worship is held online at [genevaumc.org](http://genevaumc.org) & [facebook.com/umcgeneva](https://facebook.com/umcgeneva)

**Children's Sunday School** – contact [jcpoboe@msn.com](mailto:jcpoboe@msn.com)

**Youth Sunday School** – at 11 a.m. via Zoom – contact [denise@genevaumc.org](mailto:denise@genevaumc.org)

**Youth Activities** – contact [denise@genevaumc.org](mailto:denise@genevaumc.org)

**Pen & Paper** meets Saturdays 6-9 p.m. online – contact [denise@genevaumc.org](mailto:denise@genevaumc.org)

**Adult Sunday School** on Zoom 10:30 a.m. Sunday – contact [mcjamesc@aol.com](mailto:mcjamesc@aol.com)

**Neighborhood Group study** on Zoom at 10:30 a.m. – contact [lisa@genevaumc.org](mailto:lisa@genevaumc.org)

**Sunday, January 3 – Epiphany/Holy Communion “He’s Coming Back”** Hebrews 13:1,2; Matt. 2:13-18  
As we welcome a new year, we welcome Jesus, who comes to us in unexpected moments and from unlikely places. Watch! Pastor Mary Gay preaches.

**Sunday, January 10 – Baptism of the Lord “Claimed & Loved”** Mark 1:4-11  
Everyone has a deep need to be claimed and loved. Jesus’s baptism is a powerful reminder that as God claimed and loved Jesus, God also extends those same blessings to us through our baptisms. Pastor Rich preaches.

**Sunday, January 17 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany “For or Against”** John 1:43-51  
The theme of accepting or rejecting Jesus plays a central role in John’s gospel. Deciding for or against Jesus is the most important decision we will make in our lives. Pastor Rich preaches.

**Sunday, January 24 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany “Follow & Fish”** Mark 1:14-20  
Jesus’s first disciples responded immediately when he called them to follow him and fish for people. What does it mean for us today to follow Jesus and fish for people? It’s time! The kingdom of God is near! Let us believe, and follow Jesus! Pastor Lisa preaches.

**Sunday, January 31 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany “Resistance & Healing”** Mark 1:21-28  
The story of Jesus’s healing of a spirit possessed man has implications for personal healing. As professional counselors know so well, denial and resistance are often strongest at the point of healing. Today we are reminded that our moments of resistance can also be moments of healing. Pastor Rich preaches.



Photos by  
Alex Claney Photography





# REACH UP... REACH IN... REACH OUT...

We **Reach Up** to God in worship and spiritual development, **Reach In** to help and care for one another in our congregation, and **Reach Out** to serve others in our community and the world.

## REACH UP...

### Adult Study Opportunities

For the month of January, there are a number of online classes available. Check eNews for the latest.

**Spirited Women** will begin a new study in January. For additional information about new studies and a Zoom invitation please contact Jenean Larsen at [jenean\\_larsen@yahoo.com](mailto:jenean_larsen@yahoo.com).

The men's study group, **Early Bird Fellowship** is meeting via Zoom each Thursday at 8:00 a.m. They will finish the Advent study "Incarnation" by Adam Hamilton in early January. A new study will begin later in January. For more information and a Zoom invitation to join the weekly discussion, please contact Jim McConnell.

**Spirits & Studies** meets Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom - Dec. 1, 8, 15, then TBA. We'll be checking in around a question. We welcome newcomers, and people who can join in occasionally. For more information email [marygay@genevaumc.org](mailto:marygay@genevaumc.org). Phone or text her @ 815-508-2055.

**Adult-Ish** - the group for 18-30 somethings meets via Zoom monthly on Google Meets. Email Connor at [connormck37@gmail.com](mailto:connormck37@gmail.com) or Maria at [maria.isely@gmail.com](mailto:maria.isely@gmail.com) with any questions or comments!

**The Adult Sunday School Class** is meeting each Sunday at 10:30 a.m., using Zoom. They will begin a study by William Willimon "Fear of the Other." If you'd like to join the weekly discussion contact Jim McConnell.

**Sunday Morning Neighborhood Study** - all are welcome to join the general Neighborhood Study Zoom on Sunday mornings at 10:30. We start another study January 17 and are considering these books: *Love Period* by Rev. Rudy Rasmus, *Jesus is the Question* by Rev. Martin Copenhaver, and *Serve God Save the Planet* by Dr. Matthew Sleeth. Email Pastor Lisa to join the zoom discussion and/or send her your book suggestions!

Adult Council welcomes your ideas for studies and other areas of interest that you would like to see offered. Please contact Jim McConnell (630-715-3480) [mcjamesc@aol.com](mailto:mcjamesc@aol.com) with any ideas or questions.

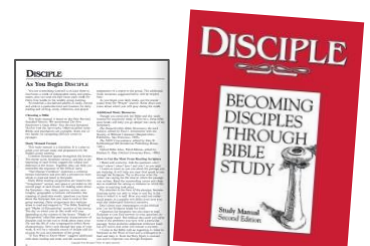
### **Disciple I Bible Study** - starts with an Introduction on Wednesday, January 13, 7 p.m.

Please contact Tom Tamlyn or Pastor Lisa now to sign up for Disciple I by Zoom. Classes will be 1 hour a week through this school year, studying the Old Testament. Next year we study the New Testament!

Top 5 reasons to join this best ever Bible study published by any church in the last 50 years?

5. I have some free time now - not commuting to work... kids are off to college...I just retired...
4. I could use a little more prayer support and scripture foundation for my life.
3. I want to get to know some UMC Geneva people better!
2. I want to understand Bible stories, themes and history better.
1. I want to get to know God better!

Please add to our list and join! [ttamlyn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ttamlyn@sbcglobal.net) or [lisa@genevaumc.org](mailto:lisa@genevaumc.org)



# REACH IN & OUT...

## Scholarship Fundraising Update by Colleen Fasbender

**Thank you** all for supporting the monthly Scholarship fundraisers during this COVID year. Many of our restaurants are struggling, and many were not able to support the fundraiser because they needed to pay their expenses. During this pandemic, **please help support all our local restaurants** for which Geneva is known! The restaurants that have worked with us in the past are Livia, Gia Mia, California Pizza Kitchen, Portillo's, and Lou Malnati's. This month's fundraiser will be at Gia Mia's. FYI - we found the meal for 4 to be a fantastic deal so check it out.

Have you considered buying gift certificates from the restaurants for yourselves? If you enjoy the restaurants and know you will dine with them (carryout counts), then purchase a gift certificate to help them and use the card later for your own purchases. Livia and Gia Mia are offering a reward card good for \$10 off each month of the year if you purchase a \$100 gift certificate from them. It can be used at either restaurant once each month. All you have to do is remember you have the certificate!

## Women's Ministry Fall Retreat by Betty Keeler

The Women's Ministry Fall Retreat was held on October 24, a beautiful but chilly day at Gunnar Anderson Preserve in Geneva. Betsy Petrie led a discussion about pandemic concerns, guided by Covey's *2020 Hindsight: Processing Worry and Finding Balance*. All women attending this day of fellowship followed protocols of wearing masks and social distancing.



Robbin Lang shown above and right, sewing. Far right see AFS youth from Senegal, Ukraine, Thailand (2), Ecuador, St. Charles, Argentina, and Morocco.



## 1,300 Masks Made for Kids Alive/Haiti & DR by Sharon Anderson

More than 1,300 masks were sent to Kids Alive friends in Haiti and the Dominican Republic several weeks ago. Most were handcrafted from shop cloth, which takes precision and patience to fold - others were hand sewn.

Thanks to mask makers Robbin Lang, Colleen Fasbender and her yoga students, Abbey Arends, Val Erickson, Judy Burgess, Nancy Tweed, Marilyn Heinemann, and Jenean Larsen. Carolyn Burnham and her daughters did the sewing of many masks that were sized and made with material for kids. Thanks also to Jason Hartz and Josh Tibbs who helped with the cost of transportation.

Sharon Anderson (below) with the many masks made and sent to Kids Alive.





# REACH IN...

## KIDS

**from Julie Popplewell - Interim Director of Children's Education**

We had a great turnout for our December 6 in-person meeting - 24 kids and teens helped ring bells for recordings to be highlighted in the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services. We played "The First Noel" and "Go Tell it on the Mountain." The kids also enjoyed making cards for folks who live in nursing homes. The kids all received gifts of Christmas crafts: boxes containing an ornament craft, angel craft, and cookie recipe, ingredients, and a cookie cutter.

Throughout the rest of the month we met on Zoom and focused on showing "Joy Proudly" and "Choosing Love over Fear" like Mary and Joseph, and the shepherds did when they heard the news from the Angel. We will end our last Advent related lesson on January 3, showing off the angel crafts we made. We want to think about the angel ALL year long and remember "Do Not Be Afraid!"



Photos by  
Wendy McKeehan

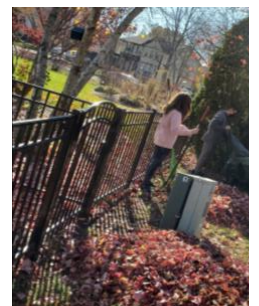
## YOUTH

We've made it to another new year. So, what can we look forward to this year in our Youth Ministry? We will be resuming our regular virtual programming with Sunday school and activities. We will also be hosting some outdoor events- this month we will have a 'Snowlympics' event TBA our first good snow.

The youth council has been filled with some new but familiar volunteers, charged and excited to face the year together in ministry. And our leaders, volunteers, and staff will continue our work with Ministry Architects as we dream together, design, and build the foundations of our Youth and Children's ministries. Looking forward to spending each blessed moment with our students and families in 2021!

Contact: Denise Clementz, Director of Youth Ministry  
at [denise@genevaumc.org](mailto:denise@genevaumc.org) or 309-507-2328.

## ASP



### Fall ASP Fundraiser

Youth raking leaves.  
They also offered  
Thanksgiving pies which  
were a big hit!

Photos by Mike Popplewell



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## Neighborhood Groups Give in December!

by Pastor Lisa



Several of our neighborhood groups joined together to give to the community this December: providing gifts for a Salvation Army family, sending cards to ours and other shut ins, sponsoring a meal for a family in need, or helping at the Northern Illinois Food Bank. Many groups are meeting on zoom now, and enjoying face-to-face conversations, laughter and concerns shared. If your neighborhood is not meeting yet, perhaps YOU are the convener they are waiting for! Contact Pastor Lisa if you are willing to help connect with your neighbors by email or phone once a month, to gather joys and concerns to share with your neighborhood. Contact Pastor Lisa - [lisa@genevaumc.org](mailto:lisa@genevaumc.org)



## Prayer Shawl Group

by Pastor Lisa

The Prayer Shawl ministry group has now given 14 prayer shawls and numerous prayer squares to church members and their family and friends. We have several shawls ready to give, so if you know someone recovering from a crisis of any sort who might welcome a shawl to remind them of God's love and our church's prayers wrapped around them, contact Jean Eakins, Val Erickson, Colleen Fasbender, and Nancy Harrington. We welcome new friends to join us and meet once a month. Contact Pastor Lisa at [lisa@genevaumc.org](mailto:lisa@genevaumc.org) for the Zoom link.



# JOIN US FOR TUESDAY FUNDRAISER DAYS!

This Tuesday we will be supporting the following local charitable organization:

Fundraiser in Support of:  
**UMCG Scholarship Fund**

Date of Event:

**Tuesday, January 12, 2021**

Location of Event:

**Gia Mia, Geneva**

Any guest that dines with us on Tuesday and provides a flyer<sup>a</sup> with your organization's name on it, 10% of the total check will be donated to your organization for that day.

<sup>a</sup>Hard Copy Or On Your Smartphone

**Curbside pickup or carryout available**

Only 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations are eligible to participate in our Tuesday Fundraising Program. Tax, gratuity, and gift card are excluded from the donation. Offer valid for dine-in or carry out. If your organization would like to participate, please call and speak with one of our managers.



**GIA MIA**  
15 N 3rd St | Geneva | 60138-6544  
302 N 16th St | Wheaton | 60182-2480

**EG. HOSPITALITY GROUP**  
and its divisions have the gift of talent

**HARRY & EDDIE'S**  
NUGGETS & BURGERS  
29 E 1st St | Huntley | 60142-5900 | 647

*Livia*  
307 S 1st St | Geneva | 60138-02444  
118 E 1st St | Elmhurst | 60120-6193

## MESSENGER DEADLINE

Submit articles for the February Messenger

By **Friday, January 15.**

Send information to: [communications@genevaumc.org](mailto:communications@genevaumc.org)

## United Methodist Church of Geneva

211 Hamilton Street  
Geneva, IL 60134