



Eastside Ministry

The Legacy of Silver Lake United Methodist Church

Newsletter December 2021

Pastoral Greeting

Fellow Eastsiders -

We are, of course at the end of the Advent season, which means it is very nearly Christmas and moving quickly to the end of the calendar year. It won't be long and it will be 2022.

What have you been doing to anticipate the coming of the Christ-child? That's really what Advent is all about. This year, Eastside Ministry was active during this season in a number of ways. We did some Thanksgiving food distribution. Additionally, we aided our friends in the Elks with distribution of just a few of their Christmas baskets. House Church is pausing/paused our reading of Exodus to read the Christmas story as recorded in Luke 1&2 and Matthew 1&2.

As we move into 2022, we'll be looking to start additional House Church groups. Who do you know that might be interested in joining or starting a House Church? What day/time might work for folks? Maybe someone would be willing to host House Church in their house? Or maybe folks would like to establish a Zoom House Church? I'm interested in options and ideas.

Also in 2022, we'll plan to start Beer & Bible: *Eastside*. Who might be interested? What biblical book would we like to start reading? We'll plan to meet about once per month on the same day each month. Thoughts?

We've come so very far already since Silver Lake sold the building in February and distributed funds to eastside organizations. We've come so far since my appointment at the beginning of July, building connections and growing our faith. We do have a journey still to travel, but God is journeying with us.

What other ways do you think we should be in ministry? Who should we invite into connection? What Vision are you having about the future of Eastside Ministry?

Email: eastsidepastorsteve@gmail.com OR eastsideministrymn@gmail.com OR text/call me 612-708-2466 OR connect via Facebook at the Silver Lake Facebook Page.

Blessings,
Pastor Steve

House Church Readings

The "curriculum" for House Church followed all the way through the book of Genesis over the course of the last six months. We read and experienced some of the foundational texts of the Jewish and Christian faiths, all the while asking questions and making connections to ourselves, our lives, and our time. Do you have a favorite story from Genesis?

In December, we began Exodus, the continuation of the birth of the nation of Israel. We listened to God calling to Moses from the burning bush and we heard Moses' objections as he gave God his excuses for not being able to serve in the way God wanted.

This week and next week, we'll take a little leap into the New Testament and read Luke 1&2 this week and Matthew 1&2 next week. These four chapters capture what we think of as the Christmas story. Jesus' humble birth and the spread of the message from God to Mary and Joseph, from angels to shepherds then to everyone, from stars to Magi to Herod and "all of Jerusalem." I'd invite you to read these same chapters and join house church for the

readings and discussions. Or, please feel free to contact me.

House Church meets Wednesdays at 6:00 pm. Join us on Zoom or you can call in.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84031557198?pwd=enIxMlkvTDJPcU55Wm5ldGh5blpHUT09>

Phone: 312-626-6799

Meeting ID: 840 3155 7198

Passcode: 70862

Additionally, I would encourage you to attend a worship service for Christmas Eve or read the Christmas Scriptures out loud with your family.

The Beloved is holding Christmas Eve worship at 7pm. Christ in Maplewood is holding their worship at 5pm. Path of Grace has music together at 9:30pm, with a service beginning at 10:00pm. Hamline Church has services at both 5pm and 10pm. White Bear UMC has online worship premiering at noon, family focused worship at 3pm, new crossings at 5pm and traditions at 10pm.

Carols, Bonfires and Crafts

We joined three other UMC congregations from the east side for an afternoon event. We postponed on December 5 due to the weather, rescheduling for October 12 from 2pm-4pm.

The weather was amazing, the fires were warm, the carols were lovely, the crafts were creatively done, and the company was wonderful. After some challenges getting the fires lit, there were three warm and lovely bonfires. Pastor Jay led the group in singing many carols and Christmas songs, with those



gathered adding their lovely voices and shouting out selections from our printed book of songs. Dixie Scruggs helped folks work through the card-making craft inside. Pastor Katie had help from a number of kids drawing names for prizes, including a throw crocheted by Sally. Betsy won a gift card to Big Steer Meats, she said it was the first thing she'd ever won! Pastor Steve won a gift card, too.

Thanks to everyone who was able to attend, it was a beautiful event.



Christmas Thoughts

As we travel through the days leading up to Christmas my mind can't help but find joy in the hope that Christmas brings. I think of where I was last year. The community I had become to depend on was no longer functioning in the same way. Silver Lake was no more. Last year my heart was searching for comfort and so that's just what I found, comfort, in the story of Christ's birth. I LOVE the way God meets us right where we are. Emanuel God with us. The way the story of Christ's birth speaks differently to us at different points in our lives. It's like when I was a kid and my mom would say my name. When she said it, just my name, "Carrie" it might mean "stop what you are doing right now!!!" It might mean "good job", or it might mean "come to me" or "It's okay, I got you". All I know is that with just her saying "Carrie", if I was listening, I would hear the message she was trying to communicate and the message I needed to hear.

Last Christmas the message I needed was comfort. So that's what I received. This year I am excited by the way the spirit has been moving. I am excited by the new relationships that have formed within the House Church. I am excited about all of the ways we have been able to be in ministry with the community. We have supported those grieving, those who are hungry, those who are ailing, and those like myself who are seeking a new, different closer relationship with God.

It feels good to look to the future with anticipation instead of dread, with hope instead of fear. This Christmas season we gathered with our ministry neighbors and celebrated and even sang, sang about the story of God coming to us. This year I feel like the part of the birth story that is speaking to me is the part about finding joy and hope in the future.

Are you listening? What message are you needing? This is the part of the story where God says to you "Hey _____ (insert your name) here I am. Stop what you are doing, I need you to come to me. Yes, stop what you are doing and just come sit with me for a bit, it's okay I got you".

Merry Christmas

Thanks and Giving

Pastor Steve arranged for the donation of 24 frozen turkeys from the Roseville Area Kiwanis. Then he asked us if we thought we could provide **all the sides** to go with them. I am pretty sure I wasn't the only one that was a bit hesitant. But, with a few more questions answered and knowing that we didn't have to prepare the sides, just buy them, things started to come together. One by one the sides were spoken for (beans, corn, potatoes, stuffing mix...).

Carrie said, "you can't have a Thanksgiving meal without pie...and if you have pie, you need whipped cream". So, Carrie and Pastor Steve made a trek to Costco and bought gallons of milk, pounds of butter, pumpkin pies and of course, whipped cream and a few other additions.

A gentleman, noting the gallons of milk on the flatbed cart, joked to Steve that "the cookies are over there". The conversation then continued with Steve telling him that Eastside Ministry was going to provide meals to 24 families. After hearing our plans, he made a donation to our ministry. God at work.



We gathered, assembled and delivered meals to the families at Emma's Place and their scattered site families.

Thank you to all who donated time and money to this wonderful ministry!



housing justice. We'll need to reconnect with Ben in 2022 and move forward with him and whatever other congregations might be joining Ben.

Mad Knitters (aka chicks with sticks)

Carol Stark delivered 23 sets of hats, scarves and mittens to Richardson Elementary and Carlye Schmitt delivered 22 to Castle Elementary. Wow! Awesome work.

East Side Freedom Library

On November 9, a number of us joined Ben Werner, East Side Freedom Library's Housing Justice Program Director, for a screening of *Jim Crow of the North*. We followed that with a discussion about it. *Jim Crow of the North* is a documentary created by Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) showing how through a system of racial covenants and redlining, Minnesota created its own version of systemic segregation and discrimination.

The repercussions of Minnesota's Jim Crow exist all around us in wealth and income disparities in addition to real estate ownership disparities. If we open our eyes, we can see these economic racial realities.

Jesus calls us to be in service to those around us. In Matthew 25, he commends us to feed those who are hungry, give a drink to those who are thirsty, to welcome strangers, to give clothing to those who are naked, to take care of those who are sick and to visit those who are in prison. We could also give homes to those who have no home.

As the Housing Justice Program Director, Ben Werner intends to bring people together on the east side, through connecting churches to a mission of



Thank you to all of the knitters/crocheters that continue this ministry! Legacy lives on.

Fellowship

We are gathering for fellowship via ZOOM on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am. If there is a better day or time for us to chat and catch up with each other, please let us know.

We miss you and hope to see you on ZOOM for fellowship soon. The link is on our home web page.

www.silverlakeunitedmethodist.org

Share your ideas even as you share your gifts, your tithes, and your offerings.

Follow Us

Be sure to “like” and follow us on our Facebook page. **Listen to Pastor Steve on Sunday mornings as he reads through the Psalms.** This is a great way to start your day!



If you miss him in the morning you can watch/listen later in the day.

Contact Us

Please contact Pastor Steve at eastsidepastorsteve@gmail.com or 612-708-2466.

Messages can also be relayed through the church at silver_lake@live.com or eastsideministrymn@gmail.com.

Eastside Ministry (Silver Lake UMC)
PO Box 10847
St. Paul, MN 55110