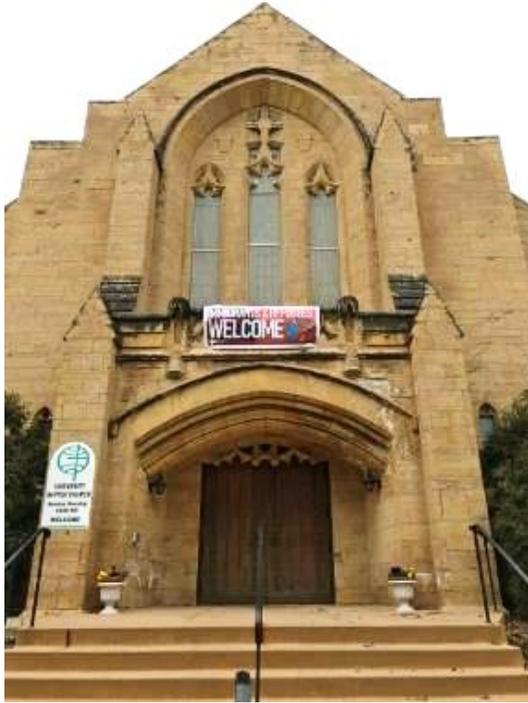


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UBC NEWS

University Baptist Church

1219 University Ave SE

Minneapolis MN 55414

Established 1850 at St. Anthony Falls, MN

April 1, 2021

From the Pastor

Rise Up!

I got my first vaccination on March 24. I volunteered at a distribution site and they had a space for me at the end of my shift. I'll get my Pfizer booster on April 14 and by April 28, I ought to join the throngs of people who are fully vaccinated. How I wish we could be vaccinated from violence as a country.



we rise up, infused and enthused by the Easter miracle? What will rise up in our lives?

The message of Easter is that the forces of violence will not have the final say. The miracle is not so much that Jesus rose from the dead, but that the people inspired by this event took it upon themselves to no

Another set of shootings has occurred. This has become so commonplace; we are no longer surprised. And yet we still grieve. It gives a stark reminder of the work we have ahead of us to create a beloved community. It seems appropriate that both mass shootings happened in the Lenten season. I wonder what Easter means in the light of these senseless tragedies.

longer be defined by their fear. They too rose up and became a hopeful force.

As we get vaccinated and move toward seeing each other in person, what will emerge? How will we spend our time together? What new mission awaits us? I know that we will unleash the power of this creative community to imagine and work for a more peaceful, just and nonviolent world.

Will we continue to retreat into the upper room with the disciples? Will we continue to deny, betray, fall asleep and cower in the corners of our lives? Or will

Blessings and Peace,

Doug Donley

**2020-21 UBC Worship Theme:
“Repairing the Breach/ Restoring the Streets”
Isaiah 58:12**

Worship Leader

Apr. 2	The <i>Good Friday</i> joint service with Judson Memorial Baptist will be a Reader's Theater with scriptures, poetry and music from both congregations. Link available on the UBC website.		
Apr. 4	<i>Easter "Fear Not the Empty Tomb"</i>	Matthew 28:1-10	Jean Lubke
Apr. 11	"Possessions"	Acts 2:42-47	John Medeiros
Apr. 18	"Courage"	2 Timothy 1:3-7	Howard Johnson
Apr. 25	"Reparations"	Luke 19:1-10	Karen Swenson



**Sunrise Service
Easter Sunday, April 4
6:30 am**

Please join us for an Easter sunrise service on the UBC lawn. Bring a warm beverage from home, maybe a lawn chair, and imagine what that first Easter sunrise was like for Mary Magdalene at the tomb. It's also an opportunity to see your UBC friends in person. There will also be a sunrise Easter egg hunt after the service.

Come to the 9 am sharing and prayer time on Zoom with bragging rights that you attended the sunrise service.

The regular 10 am Easter service will be recorded and available for viewing on the [UBC web site](#), the Facebook page and together with your UBC family on Zoom.

Calendar for April 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
				5:30 pm Guided Meditation 6:30 pm Caregivers Support Group		9 am Bible Study 4 pm Anti- Racism Group
4 Easter	5	6	7	8	9	10
6:30 am Sunrise Serv 9 am Social time 9:15 am Joys & Concerns 9:45 am Announcements 10 am Worship	5 pm Inter Spanish 6:15 pm Beg Spanish	7 pm Memoir Group	6 pm Choir	5:30 pm Guided Meditation		4 pm Anti- Racism Group <i>Newsletter deadline</i>
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9 am Social time 9:15 am Joys & Concerns 9:45 am Announcements 10 am Worship 11 am Forum	5 pm Inter Spanish 6:15 pm Beg Spanish	7 pm Key Doc Group	6 pm Choir	5:30 pm Guided Meditation		9 am Bible Study 4 pm Anti- Racism Group
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9 am Social time 9:15 am Joys & Concerns 9:45 am Announcements 10 am Worship 11 am Forum 12:15 pm Council	5 pm Inter Spanish 6:15 pm Beg Spanish	7 pm Memoir Group	6 pm Choir	5:30 pm Guided Meditation		4 pm Anti- Racism Group
25	26	27	28	29	30	
9 am Social time 9:15 am Joys & Concerns 9:45 am Announcements 10 am Worship 11 am Forum <i>Newsletter deadline</i>	5 pm Inter Spanish 6:15 pm Beg Spanish	7 pm Key Doc Group	6 pm Choir	5:30 pm Guided Meditation	2-6 pm Loave & Fishes	

What's Going On



Sundays (all on Zoom)

- 9-9:15 am** Social time
- 9:15-9:45 am** Joys & Concerns
- 9:45 am** Announcements
- 10 am** Worship service (Social time follows service)
- 11 am** Forum

The service and bulletin will be available on Sunday on both the UBC web site www.ubcmn.org and the UBC Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/ubcmn>

ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID 839 4725 7444 passcode 257750
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83947257444?pwd=cFZCWEdqUkR0RDgwT0JwT3hrQ3FpUT09>

Guided Meditation – Thursdays at 5:30 pm

Join Kim Donley for 15-20 minutes of guided meditation to help us to stop, breathe, and focus on grounding ourselves.



ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID: 856 3650 9180 passcode: 484125
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85636509180?pwd=R3lJdWQzbG5raEQrck5OcWZPWStOUT09>

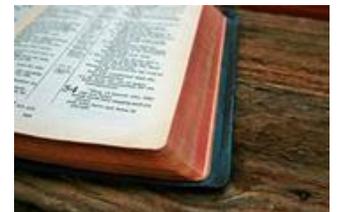


Caregivers Support Group – April 1 (1st Thurs.) at 6:30 pm

UBCers who have an elderly parent meet for support. If you have questions, please contact Jean Lubke at lubk0001@umn.edu.

ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID: 653 705 477 passcode: 833420
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/653705477?pwd=S25PdFE2Uml0cUdBeGJBeHQ4Y1prdz09>

Bible Study – Apr. 3 & 17 (1st & 3rd Sat.) at 9 am. On Apr. 3, we will be looking at the 15th chapter of Mark, which recounts Jesus' final hours. We will finish Mark's Gospel following Easter on Apr. 17. New members are welcome! For questions, contact Diane Ehr, DianeEhr@q.com.



ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID: 886 6992 0103 passcode: 613038
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88669920103?pwd=dnozWEYzQUh1RU5HUTFwVd3ZFy1Zz09>



Anti-Racism Discussion and Action Group – Saturdays at 4 pm

- Apr. 3** – [The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman](#) (1 hr, 46 min, YouTube)
- Apr. 10** – [A Most Beautiful Thing](#) (1 hr, 35 min, Peacock tv)
- Apr. 17** – [Modern Day Slavery: From Plantations to Prisons](#) (1 hr, 53 min, Tubitv)

ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID: 831 4584 1908 passcode: 313775
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83145841908?pwd=djhuSmMwZ1NESXZ5SExNOURXa2FNQT09>



Easter Sunrise Service – Sunday, Apr. 4 at 6:30 am on the UBC lawn

Bring a warm beverage and maybe a lawn chair, and imagine what that first Easter sunrise was like for Mary Magdalene at the tomb. It's also an opportunity to see your UBC friends in person. There will also be a sunrise Easter egg hunt after the service.

Spanish classes – Mondays (Intermediate 5-6 pm, Beginners 6:15-7:15 pm)



ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID 810 5166 8898 passcode 292647
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81051668898?pwd=R1liaXBpMXJRMlFT0liZ2hTZVhXdz09>



Memoir Writing Group – Apr. 6 & 20 (every other Tues.) at 7 pm

All are welcome! Come share your stories, and listen and give feedback to others. Feel free to write about anything you'd like. Here are some new ideas for prompts: Brushes with famous people, Library, Easter. If you have any questions, please contact Trish Donley at crazyazgal@msn.com or call/text 612-386-2856. (See some of the members' work on page 13.)

ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID: 810 6944 9838 passcode: 244380
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81069449838?pwd=ZWNIUmMzNXRSYIFYaHJUczk2ZmRoUT09>

Virtual Choir Practice – Wednesdays at 6 pm



ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID: 871 8601 2016 passcode: 113703
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87186012016?pwd=SjJ0eGJ2bVN1M1NZK0ljYkxkb1pYZz09>



Essential Documents Group – Apr. 13 & 27 (every other Tues.) at 7 pm.

Join other UBCers for accountability to complete your essential documents such as your health care directive, obituary, funeral plans, and organize your financial records.). Bring your documents in progress and questions for discussion. If you have any questions, please contact Gayla Marty at gaylamarty@gmail.com.

ZOOM INFO: Meeting ID: 810 6944 9838 passcode: 244380
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81069449838?pwd=ZWNIUmMzNXRSYIFYaHJUczk2ZmRoUT09>

Loaves & Fishes – Friday, April 30 at 1816 Portland Ave. S., Mpls 55404 (new location) Loaves & Fishes has moved from St. Stephen's School to Peace House Community. It's a few blocks NE of St. Stephen's. Parking is available on Portland or in the small lot on the alley west of the building.



We'll be doing the same meal that we have done but on a smaller scale. We'll need about four people for preparation sometime between 2-5 pm. and about six people for serving from about 5-6:30 pm. Serving will be preparing to-go containers as we have been doing recently. And we'll need a couple people to help with clean-up until about 7 pm. Let Steve Lee know at steven.lee@thrivent.com or 612-844-8194 or 763-645-9499 if you would like to help.

UPCOMING FORUMS

April 4—Easter—Extended coffee hour

April 11—What We're Reading Now

What have you been reading lately? Bring a few favorite books read recently to this forum to show and tell—why they moved you, why you recommend them. You don't have to bring a book, though—you can just come to listen! Kim Donley will facilitate.

April 18—Interfaith Work for Racial and Economic Justice

ISAIAH is a multiracial, statewide, nonpartisan coalition of faith communities fighting for racial and economic justice in Minnesota, on issues including health care, children, mass incarceration, and more.

Minneapolis congregational organizer Ben Whalen will give us an overview of ISAIAH as a whole. Then he will describe a current priority around policing and public safety in Minneapolis, helping people understand the charter amendment proposals and equipping us to shape the future of our city through caucuses. Check out <https://isaiahmn.org> and click [here](#) to learn more about the amendments.

April 25—Earth Day, May Day

Since the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970, reflect on how you've observed this day and its ancient inspiration, May Day. Come prepared to share and listen about how UBCers think about these holidays and celebrate them.

Do you have a forum topic or speaker idea?

If you have an idea for a forum or would like to partner on finding forum speakers, please contact Gayla Marty.



Do you have a favorite recipe to share?

We are putting together a new UBC Cookbook! The first edition was done by the UBC Loyalty Circle in 1994 and it's time for an update!

Please send me your tried-and-true recipes (make sure they are not copyrighted) for categories of appetizers, salads and vegetables, soups and stews, main dishes, bread, cookies/bars/desserts. Make note if your item is vegetarian, gluten-free or vegan.

Did you serve something wonderful for Palm Sunday Brunch – or for a Dinner for Eight? Do you have a knack for soup making? Or cookies? (I'm looking at you Terri Wottrich!) Please share! We will be working on this project over a period of months so you have time (and there will be reminders!) Thanks!

– Chris Follett

Poem by Stella Wright (granddaughter of UBC member Betty Shaw)

Dear Angry Tweeters,

*You scoff at us... for what?
You administer your white gaze... for what?
You call us thugs...for what?
Kneeling to an anthem when our country is in a state of misery?
When the police have caused injury?
Even though it happened again as it once did in history?*

*Where was your outrage as the police kneeled?
As he kneeled for eight minutes and 46 seconds?!*

You can argue he didn't use weapons

*But that is because he had something stronger.
Something that has been around much longer.
This thing you dismiss as squander.*

*He had fear. A badge. A system that instilled in him beliefs that were
not overt.*

*But so profound he saw nothing wrong with watching a man pleading
for his life... take his last breath.*

These words are not meant to justify the acts of violence done in outrage.

*Rather, emphasize the need for a new age. Yes, that means reparation! Not a wage but justice!
Which has yet to be discussed, thus, brutality will persist.*

*Draw us as victims, in white washed history.
But we will always be warriors and kings.
We will use our voices and sing
until the ones who "do not see color" or see us as other...change*

*James Baldwin once valiantly said, "ignorance, allied with power, is the most ferocious enemy justice can
have."*

*Do not let this enemy conquer. Do not sponsor racist ideals. Instead try asking the other side how they feel.
Because inquiry is so much stronger than ignorance.*

*So when you make that tweet. Let your finger linger... just for one
second. And think, am I writing to be heard, or to understand?*

*Be an Ally, lend a hand. That is what we need. I mean, we've already
had an angry tweeter for a leader... look how that turned out.*



George Floyd memorial
Photo by Amanda Donley

If you are on Facebook, you can see/hear Stella recite her poem here:
<https://www.facebook.com/laura.shaw.wright/videos/4162647323746063>



*Dear Doug and all our friends at
University Baptist Church,*

We are so grateful for your gift to **AMOS Health and Hope** on February 7th. Your generous contribution is helping vulnerable families in 25 communities in Nicaragua access health care, medicines and clean water.

With love and gratitude from the AMOS family,
*Dr. Gabriella Woo, MD,
AMOS Executive Director*

Dear Rev. Donley,

I am writing to thank you and your congregation for your financial support for **American Baptist Churches USA and ABC of the Rochester/ Genesee Region**. Your congregation's commitment to its denominational family and heritage is important to us as we join together in God's work in our community. As your Executive Minister, I do not take these gifts lightly. I understand all the pulls on a congregation's financial resources and give thanks that you continue to make supporting the denominational family a priority.

*In Christ's peace,
Rev. Dr. Sandra Hasenauer*

John Medeiros's Book Launch

Friday, April 16 at 7 pm

Join UBC member John Medeiros as he discusses and reads from his newly published memoir, *Self-Divided* at the official book launch presented by Quatrefoil Library.

Registration for this free event can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/events/887341935389351>



Got Your Vaccine Yet?

Governor Tim Walz announced on Mar. 25 that everyone 16 years old and older is now eligible for the vaccine.

If you plan to get vaccinated and would like to check out available slots at various providers, check this resource:

<https://www.vaccinespotter.org/MN/>

The Vaccine Spotter collects info from around the state and lets you sign up for an appointment. It's an easy process but you have to act fast once you find a slot (and check the location twice --- you may check one but be sent to another).

President's Column

Spring is Coming!

This newsletter appears on Maundy Thursday, the day Jesus observed a Passover seder with his disciples and initiated the ordinance of The Last Supper, or Holy Communion. Dark days are just ahead, but because we know the story, we can also look forward to the promise of Easter and joy of spring, a time of hope and renewal.



time, talent, or treasure by completing a Time and Talent Form or Pledge Card. Information and forms will be emailed, and access to the Time and Talent Form will be provided through a link allowing easy online completion. If you prefer communication by regular mail, please let us know with a call to

612-331-1768 or email to info@ubcmn.org, and we will send paper versions of the information and forms.

At UBC, spring is also the season we prepare for the coming fiscal year, which officially starts on July 1 and coincides with the academic year that is central to life on a university campus. This “Commitment Season,” is a time to dedicate ourselves to the year ahead. Many of you will recognize the beloved hallmarks of Commitment Season at UBC, including the Talent Team, Time and Talent Form, Pledge Card, Commitment Sunday, and Annual Meeting.

This year we will ask that pledges of time, talent, and treasure be returned by May 2, Commitment Sunday. Normally, we would ceremoniously deliver our commitments in person during worship in the sanctuary. This year, we may be able to enjoy an outdoor version of the ceremony if weather permits. Otherwise, your commitments to UBC will travel by email, phone, or mail.

The Talent Team—Trish Donley, Harriet Johnson, and Betty Shaw—is already busy encouraging community members to consider how they might help, as they are able, to sustain the work and community of UBC during the upcoming year. We aspire to passion-led work and the Talent Team helps match passions and capacities with needs and opportunities at UBC. Along the way, the Team also gathers ideas for how UBC might better meet individual needs and interests.

After May 2, the Talent Team will continue seeking volunteers aided by Time and Talent information and the Church Council will develop a budget proposal for next year aided by Pledge Card information.

On about April 11, you will receive information about anticipated needs and opportunities for the coming year and an invitation to pledge a contribution of

On about May 23, you will receive UBC’s Annual Report for 2020-2021. UBC’s Commitment Season culminates in the Annual Meeting, this year scheduled for 11 a.m. on Sunday, June 13. At the meeting, we will celebrate the many accomplishments of the past year, vote on candidates for elective offices, and approve a budget for next year. If weather permits, those able to gather in person may also enjoy a picnic lunch. In any event, the Annual Meeting will be accessible through Zoom.

– Denise Roy



Pastor Doug represented UBC at the SE churches meal packing event for Every Meal on Mar. 25. Over 12,000 meals packed!

Photo by Doug Donley

We just got word from our sister church in Leon, Nicaragua that they have called a new pastor, Miguel Escobar (see photo below).

We are so grateful to receive weekly video recordings of scripture readings from their sanctuary that are incorporated into our worship services.

They also report that their school has 196 students: 166 preschool and primary students, and 30 secondary students. They have 12 teachers and three administrators. They give thanks for the annual scholarship donations, which Francisco Diaz hand-delivered in February.

- Doug Donley



UBC Awarded Two Grants to Help with Water Concerns

UBC is proud and humbled to be selected for two grants aimed at improving the stewardship of our church property.

One grant (\$50,000) is from the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO) and will help us to install a series of rain gardens on the church property. This will assist with the diversion of storm water away from the building and away from the storm sewers, letting it absorb naturally into the soil.

We'll install some educational signs in the gardens to teach our neighbors about water stewardship and the Mississippi watershed. Several other organizations have agreed to partner with us. We'll spend some time this year sponsoring educational events and promoting water stewardship. Look for opportunities to get your hands dirty as we reimagine our open space. Not only will the rain garden keep our basement a bit dryer, it will also help us qualify for a 25% property assessment break because of our conservation efforts.

We also received a \$6,900 Hennepin County Good Steward Grant. This will help with the diversion of storm water away from the corner by the swing that has been notorious for flooding as water moves from the roof to the window well below. We'll divert water away from that well with the help of this grant.

The MWMO grant requires a 25% match. Some of that will be taken care of by the Good Steward grant. The rest will be made up in sweat equity and educational hours.

There will also be opportunities for people to contribute to some permanent benches that we will install at strategic spots on the property. Already, the Sacred Harp community is designing channel drain covers with a musical motif.



Thanks to the UBC garden team for their wisdom and to Sacred Harp singer and water

steward Barb Patterson for all of the grant writing and education.

Partners for the grants include:

- UBC
- The Twin Cities Sacred Harp Singers
- Gaia Democratic School
- First Congregational Church
- University Lutheran Church of Hope
- St. Lawrence Catholic Church
- Marcy Holmes Neighborhood Association

- Doug Donley

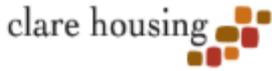
Are you even just a little bit tech-y?

As UBC strengthens its virtual presence, we are looking to form a Zoom Team. Do you have experience with Zoom? We are hoping to gather a group of people who can serve as mentors and troubleshooters for those of us who are less skilled with the nuances of using technology.

Please contact Gayla Marty or Trish Donley if you have interest in sharing your gifts!

Special Offering for March and April

Our special offering for March and April supports four local organizations that work in housing. The four organizations are Clare Housing, Families Moving Forward, Simpson Housing Services, and Tubman.

The logo for Clare Housing features the text "clare housing" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a graphic of several small squares in shades of orange, red, and yellow, arranged in a roughly rectangular pattern.

Clare Housing provides housing and healthcare services for people living with HIV/AIDS. Based in Minneapolis, Clare provides affordable and supportive housing for more than 150 people. They operate community-based care homes, supportive housing, and scattered site housing.

The logo for Beacon features a colorful, stylized flower or starburst icon to the left of the word "Beacon" in a bold, sans-serif font. Below "Beacon" is the text "INTERFAITH HOUSING COLLABORATIVE" in a smaller, all-caps font.

Families Moving Forward, a program of Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, provides hospitality, shelter, and services for homeless families in Hennepin, Scott and Carver counties. Families stay overnight in one of over 60 congregations. The program works with 12 families at a time and about 75 families each year. They work with people to find permanent housing and employment.

The logo for Simpson Housing Services features a blue house icon with a white roof and a white chimney on the left. To the right of the icon is the word "SIMPSON" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, with "HOUSING SERVICES" in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below it.

Simpson Housing Services works to house, support and advocate for people experiencing homelessness. They work to help people achieve housing stability. Simpson has emergency shelters and permanent subsidized rental housing for single adults and families with children. They provide services for children and youth to help break the cycle of poverty and homelessness.

The logo for Tubman features a dark brown background. On the left is a stylized green and white graphic of a person's profile. To the right of the graphic is the word "Tubman" in a white, serif font.

Tubman is Minnesota's largest provider of domestic violence shelter services. They provide shelter, transitional housing, mental and chemical health services, legal services and elder care.

If you like, you may designate your gift to an individual housing program, otherwise the donation will be split among the four. Please note your request on your check and send to the church, or donate online.

– Steve Lee

Online Giving Available

You can now donate funds electronically via the UBC website. Here's how it works. First, go to ubcmn.org and scroll down to the middle of the page and click on [DONATE HERE](#). This will take you to several options to donate to (pledge, Fellowship Fund, monthly mission offering, etc.)

Click on one of them and indicate how much and often you want to give. Please choose the option to add a small amount to your gift to help reduce processing fees. You may want to set up an account with Vanco, our administrator, to keep track of your giving. If you have any questions, please see Denise Roy or Nancy Myers.

Contributions from the UBC Memoir Group

Good Friday / Tunisia, 1980

By Gayla Marty

I was not supposed to take communion, I knew that. I hadn't gone to confession—I didn't know how, I wasn't even Catholic. But it was Good Friday, the first week of April that year. I sat in a pew next to my friend Lilly in the dark church of Joan of Arc on the north side of Tunis. My legs were tensing, wanting to stand up and join the line.

Jeanne d'Arc was a little white stucco fortress facing a park with palm trees swaying in the rain. Inside it was dark, a nighttime service for the darkest day on the Christian calendar. Despite the spring weather, it



Joan of Arc church, exterior.

was too cold to take off our raincoats. The priest spoke in French. The pews were not full, and most of the heads were gray. We knew at once that we were the youngest there and took a seat near the back.

Lilly wasn't raised Catholic, either. By now her Arabic was better than her French, and my French didn't include church language. We had come for cultural reasons. We grew up with Easter, and this was its prelude, the dark before dawn.

Since leaving Minnesota a little more than six months ago, I had gone to church exactly three times, two of them in Europe. The one time in Tunisia was a Sunday in December when Lilly and I, classmates in Arabic, met up on the steps of the big cathedral downtown

at eight o'clock in the morning. The Advent service left us cold, literally and mentally.

Now the pouring rain was warmer, the wind milder. Tonight, instead of walking south from the apartment on Avenue de la Liberté, we had walked north through the Lafayette neighborhood, past Bourguiba Institute, past the U.S. and British embassies. Jeanne d'Arc was far smaller than the cathedral but still felt big.

Back in December, in Advent, I knew almost nothing about the history of Christianity in North Africa. I'd grown up Baptist in the Midwest, attending church three times a week but ignorant of the lives of the saints or even the liturgical year. By high school, I wanted nothing more than to escape church, to wash my hands of all of it. The Catholic-Protestant divide in town exasperated me because it interfered with dating. But at college, I found myself in a Baptist church again, though a different sort, where I started learning textual criticism. Soon I'd been enlisted to teach a Sunday school class for teens, then once a month to prepare communion, bread and tiny cups of juice in trays.

I had not come to Tunisia to learn any more about Christian history. This year was a chance to learn about the Middle East, Islam, and Roman history. But even here, my Christian upbringing followed me. From my first morning in Tunis, the Arabic call to prayer made me yearn to pray. Invocations in daily conversation—Hamd'allah! Thanks be to God!—reminded me of home, where in my farm family we often uttered "Thank the Lord!"

By the time I attended that Advent service in Tunis, I'd experienced just one trip to the Roman ruins in Carthage. Now in April I had been to the ruins many times. In Tunisia's museums, I skipped past the early Christian collections and focused on those things I

Continued on page 14

Good Friday – continued

knew the least about. But Roman history, I recognized now, was Christian history, my history.

Once I had thought of Christianity as a late arrival to the North African shore with the colonizing French and Italians. Now I knew the French and Italians considered their emigration a kind of return to the holy land of the early church.

I had heard of Augustine, author of *Confessions* and *The City of God*, theologian best known for his early formulation of the doctrine of original sin. Now I'd discovered that this was his landscape in the 300s of the Common Era. I went to the ruined remains of an amphitheater where Christians, nearly a century even before Augustine, were thrown to the beasts. Two of them were women, and I had learned their names: the young noble Perpetua and her slave Felicity, sisters in Christ. Taking communion, they defied the emperor.

That was 203 C.E., nearly 1,800 years ago, just a few miles from where Lilly and I sat. It seemed appropriate on Good Friday in North Africa to observe it in a church named after another woman martyr.

As the eucharist was laid out on the altar by candlelight and the darkness deepened, my shoulders ached. Anxiety. The same old divide between Catholic and Protestant—how had I imagined it would not be here? I'd attended Catholic masses before with friends who described at least some of the rules. Priests are not permitted to administer communion to anyone who had not confessed, are they? Taking communion without following the rules means eternal damnation, doesn't it?

Lilly and I didn't belong. We came seeking our community and instead found ourselves outsiders.

The line of congregants formed as people around the sanctuary stood and spontaneously walked forward

to join it. The light was dim, a thin music sounded. I watched closely to see how it was done.

"I'm not going," Lilly whispered.

And yet we did belong. Jesus himself invited his friends, invited us. Nothing can separate us from the love of God, wrote the apostle Paul to the church in Rome.

My Baptist church in Minneapolis practiced open communion. I could practice it here. But wouldn't the priest know I didn't belong? Would he withhold the host from me?



Joan of Arc church, interior. Photos by Gayla Marty

The congregants stood before him, one by one, as he uttered a blessing and placed the wafer in their mouths. They returned to their pews, turned open the kneelers and knelt, hands clasped before them. The line was shortening.

I stood, stepped out into the aisle, and walked forward, cold hands in my pockets, joining the line. The acoustics were sharp, sound falling like pebbles into a pool.

It was my turn. I stood before the priest, a youngish man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a rough linen alb. He spoke to me in a low stern voice, disapprovingly, holding back the wafer. I didn't understand what he said.

Continued on page 15

Good Friday – continued

“Prennez les mains de les poches,” he repeated. Take your hands out of your pockets.

I pulled my hands out and clasped them together, and he laid the wafer on my tongue. I felt it begin to dissolve. I stepped beyond him, into a shadow, before

circling back to the pew. Lilly was kneeling, her freckled face glowing in the candlelight. I dropped to my knees beside her. I felt relief. Connected.

The candles were extinguished. We walked out into the damp night.



April Birthdays

- 3 Kamiyah Walton
- 9 Betty Roy
- 10 David Martyn
- 12 Erica Garmers-Perreault
- 26 Denise Roy

April Anniversary

- 27 Rachael Acevedo & Zach Hoffman

Fundraiser for Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery

I am on the board of the Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery. This group does wonderful work supporting families. They provide respite care for birth thru 5 years old and a home visiting program to help stabilize these families. They are not associated with Child Protective Services and so occupy a safe niche for women who are concerned that if they express need for a break from their kids, they may get them taken away. Go to <https://www.crisisnursery.org/> to learn more.

Our major fund-raising event, *Formula for Hope*, is coming up in April. It's a 30-minute virtual event to bring awareness and funds to a spectacular organization. I hope that you'll join me and show your support for children and families who have been disproportionately affected by the events of the past year.

If you are interested, let me know (Gunnar@umn.edu) and I will sign you up. All this means is that you will get a link to the event (where of course they will ask you for money; but it is a good cause).

- Megan Dahlberg

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www.ubcmn.org

Rev. Douglas M. Donley, Pastor
Deadlines: 10th and 25th of the month.

Please send contributions to
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