

Lyons Muir Church
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“Music and Light”

Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, ‘What were you arguing about on the way?’ But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, ‘Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.’ Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, ‘Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.’ (Mark 9: 33-37)

The other day during supper, Elliott and I rehearsed our favorite songs from the Disney movie *FROZEN*. Elliott—at 4 years old—particularly loves the idea of Olaf the magical snowman getting a tan on the beach. “Olaf is a silly bean,” Elliott rejoiced, “and he’s going to be a puddle.” And then, because we finished supper on the early side, Elliott suggested that we watch the whole thing again. I looked at him and said, “You know, Elliott, that’s a long show.” “But I’m not tired,” he explained, “And I can stay up late ‘cause I’m a big boy.” I looked at Jessica, who shrugged and smiled and started singing, “Let it go! Let it go! Can’t hold it back anymore...” which is Queen Elsa’s big tune early in the film. So we rushed through “tubby times” — no toys, and no water crayons — hurried into our pajamas, made a soft spot on the couch with pillows and blankets, turned the lights down low, and forgot that it was dark and cold outside because inside there was music and light.

Attendance:

The average attendance for the month of January was 22.

WEEKLY

SCHEDULE

- SUNDAYS Worship on the Lord’s Day, 11
- MONDAYS No regular events
- TUESDAYS Office Hours, 9-12
- WEDNESDAYS
Bible Study, 6:30-7:30
Ionia First UMC, Cafe
- THURSDAYS Office Hours, 9-2
Bible Study, 12-1

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Board of Governors meeting
Monday 2-14 at 7 P.M.
- Sunday 2-20
Potluck after Church
- Tuesday, March 1st
Blood Drive

Music and light... One of the other characters in the story is Elsa's younger sister, Anna. She's been more or less on her own her entire youth because her family intended to keep Elsa's magical powers a secret. Anna's had a lonely existence; but when Elsa comes of age and is crowned queen, there's an unavoidable party. With great anticipation, Anna sings a song of liberation in which she rejoices that "for the first time in forever, there'll be music, there'll be light..." on coronation day. Throughout most of the song, actress Kristen Bell sings with what could only be described as a giddiness in her voice, which is perfect. But at the moment when she sings the words "music" and "light" the tone of her voice gives way--in a moment of superb acting--from giddiness to hope, as the suffering she hasn't even been able to admit to herself comes to the surface of her heart only to be washed away in a torrent of joy. And as the liberation from her silent solitude *unbreaks* her heart, the bottom drops out of the adult assumption that this is just some silly cartoon. I look over at Elliott: his mouth has opened in astonishment, his eyes are wide with wonder and, in the gleam of our cozy lamplight, glisten with the faintest hint of tears. He gets it.

Hope is something a little child can understand, because in its most basic form hope remains that primordial and inexplicable feeling of buoyancy that defies the deadweight of human sorrow. Jesus knows this; Jesus feels this. So Jesus points anyone who will listen to the truth that if we're going to understand grace, we're going to have to feel our way to God through the inexplicable joy which defines the human experience of Christ's love. The people who have the easiest time with this are children. Children -- though mischievous and tricky betimes -- are generally innocent of the adult penchant for overthinking everything. Children take music and light as... music and light. Inasmuch, children welcome Christ for they welcome reality as it is and not interpreted through pathos. Inasmuch, they welcome the Father. They experience beauty without the fear of that beauty passing away. None can accept the promise, "even though they die, yet shall they live" (John 11:25) by rationalizing the

theology of the Messiah (as Martha tries to do). This promise must be received as a sunset... or as the epiphanal yet strangely familiar tenderness of humpback whales... or as the first few moments of peaceful sleep when the mind rejoices in release. And when this promise is given its due, in all its inexplicable beauty, hope wells up from deep within the human soul. And if that well is not capped, the hope of the resurrection gushes forth into our lives. This hope comes as music and light in places where all the lamps and songs have gone out. This hope makes our eyes glisten with recognition and joy. This hope seals all the fissures of our crumbling hearts. This hope stirs our minds with the notion of our best and truest selves. Aye! This hope turns the human life into an anvil upon which the red-hot fear of the whole world can be hammered into love and placed to hiss and cool in Christ's living water. This hope is something a child can understand.

These are dark times, dear brothers and sisters, when fewer and fewer of us have the stamina or courage to lift our voices in song. Some lose their lives before they've lived; some dwindle away beyond the count of years. A pandemic rages still, and --worse, far worse-- we're learning war once more. But cling to your faith; for if Christ has gone away into the heavenly places, then he will come again and take us to himself: that where he is, we might be also. And in that great gettin' up mornin', when the Cherubim sheathe their flaming swords and unveil the path to paradise, the joy of the Lord will wash away the suffering of the whole Creation... and there'll be music... there'll be light.

Hoping against hope for things not seen,
but deeply and inexplicably felt...

Yours, in Christ Jesus,
Jonathan

Noisy February Offering Twin River's Elementary



Twin River's Elementary is fundraising to improve their library and add a reading tree. This would house benches and chairs inside and around as well as a couple of sack swings to provide pressure stimulation to those in need and offer a more diverse yet fun and inviting reading area.

Do Not Weep for Eden

by Jonathan Bratt Carle

Out across the field
the low-lying ground is wet
and the tall grass gives way to reeds,
lugubrious as they slowly bend to the breeze.
Those spots would have been ponds
if we'd had more rain,
and the Jerseys wouldn't have to walk
all the way down through the old apple trees
to drink where the pasture ends
in a cleft of the hills.

The cows never seem to tire of this journey
up and down the slope.
Dawn to dusk they make their way
from the timothy to the pool and back again.
Nor do I tire of watching them.
Sometimes they stare back,
trying to ascertain whether I am friend or foe
until the matriarch punctuates my unimportance with a grunt
and guides the herd to a fresher patch of green.

I wonder, would it take the world long
to right itself if we were no more,
if all creation gave a single, final grunt
and gave Earth back her five day crown:
when each kind governed its own
and the mighty australopithecines
had not yet descended from the trees?

Out across the field my name is whispered
in the sighing of the grasses,
as an apple falls from its stem,
as the breeze comes over the hill.
They cry out with one voice:
do not despair for beauty's sake,
do not weep for Eden
nor for your crude estate.
You are part of this world
and the triumph of the sixth day season.
A luminous being are you,
and so shall we be restored
when you rise once more a child of light.

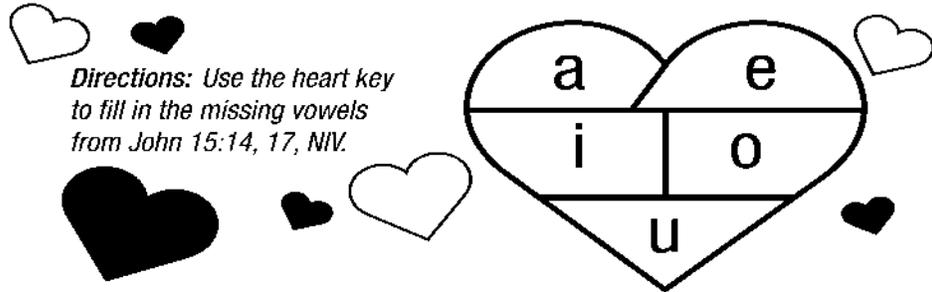
I follow the Jerseys down to where the apples are
and lose my shoe in the mud.
That would've been a pond
if we'd had just a little more rain.

(scripture reference: Romans 8:18-25)



A friend in Jesus

In the Bible, Jesus shares what it means to be a true friend.



Directions: Use the heart key to fill in the missing vowels from John 15:14, 17, NIV.

“Y _ _ _ r _ my fr _ _ nds _ f
y _ _ d _ wh _ t _ c _ mm _ nd. ...

Th _ s _ s my c _ mm _ nd:

L _ v _ _ _ ch _ th _ r.”

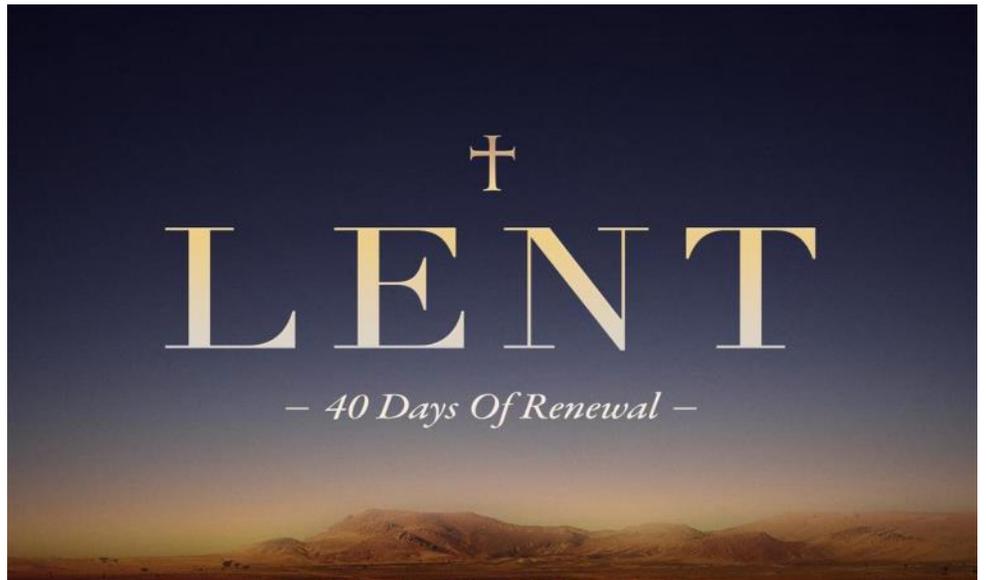
JOHN 15:14, 17, NIV

Answer: “You are my friends if you do what I command. ... This is my command: Love each other.” John 15:14, 17, NIV



MISSION STATEMENT

The Lyons-Muir Church is called to be God's healing and hope-filled congregation, and to make followers of Jesus Christ for the positive transformation of our community through lives of prayer, love, forgiveness, honesty, acceptance, and trust.



SCHEDULE OF LENTEN SERVICES

March 2: Ash Wednesday—Imposition of Ashes

12 pm IOFUMC

6 pm LMC

March 6: 1st Sunday of Lent

Holy Communion

March 13: 2nd Sunday of Lent

March 20: 3rd Sunday of Lent

March 27: 4th Sunday of Lent

April 3: 5th Sunday of Lent

Holy Communion

April 10: 5th Sunday of Lent

January Finance Report

Thank you for your ongoing support!!

Revenue \$4,291.44

Disbursements -\$4,492.58

Year to Date Surplus (Defecit) (**\$201.14**)

JOINT HOLY WEEK SERVICES

April 14: Maundy Thursday

6:30 p.m. IOFUMC

Holy Communion

April 15: Good Friday

12 Noon IOFUMC

April 17: Easter Sunday

Easter Egg Hunt at 10 a.m.

followed by Hot Breakfast

Worship at 11 a.m.

