

# LAKE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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72 Ambrose Street, Rochester, NY 14608; Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm  
www.lakeavebaptist.org; Phone: 585-458-5765; Fax: 585-458-5766; Email: lakeavebaptistchurchoffice@gmail.com

## FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH

History is often reduced to a handful of memorable moments and events. In Black history, those events often include courageous stories like those of The Underground Railroad and historic moments like the famous "I Have a Dream" speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. But these are only a few of the significant and important events to know and remember.

In an effort to honor this expansive and growing history, Black History Month was established by way of a weekly celebration in February known as "Negro History Week" by historian Carter G. Woodson. But just as Black history is more than a month, so too are the numerous events and figures that are often overlooked during it. What follows below is a list of some of the "lesser known" moments and facts in Black History:



### **Inoculation was introduced to America by a slave.**

Few details are known about the birth of Onesimus, but it is assumed he was born in Africa in the late seventeenth century before eventually landing in Boston. One of a thousand people of African descent living in the Massachusetts colony, Onesimus was a gift to the Puritan church minister Cotton Mather from his congregation in 1706.

Onesimus told Mather about the centuries old tradition of inoculation practiced in Africa. By extracting the material from an infected person and scratching it into the skin of an uninfected person, you could deliberately introduce smallpox to the healthy individual making them immune. Considered extremely dangerous at the time, Cotton Mather convinced Dr. Zabdiel Boylston to experiment with the procedure when a smallpox epidemic hit Boston in 1721 and over 240 people were inoculated.

Opposed politically, religiously and medically in the United States and abroad, public reaction to the experiment put Mather and Boylston's lives in danger despite records indicating that only 2% of patients requesting inoculation died compared to the 15% of people not inoculated who contracted smallpox.

Onesimus' traditional African practice was used to inoculate American soldiers during the Revolutionary War and introduced the concept of inoculation to the United States.

### **Of the 12.5 million Africans shipped to the New World during the Transatlantic Slave Trade, fewer than 388,000 arrived in the United States.**

In the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, the advancement of seafaring technologies created a new Atlantic that would change the world forever. As ships began connecting West Africa with Europe and the Americas, new fortunes were sought and native populations were decimated. With the native labor force dwindling and demand for plantation and mining labor growing, the transatlantic slave trade began.

The Transatlantic Slave Trade was underway from 1500-1866, shipping more than 12 million African slaves across the world. Of those slaves, only 10.7 million survived the dreaded Middle Passage. Over 400 years, the majority of slaves (4.9 million) found their way to Brazil where they suffered incredibly high mortality rates due to terrible working conditions. Brazil was also the last country to ban slavery in 1888.

By the time the United States became involved in the slave trade, it had been underway for two hundred years. The majority of its 388,000 slaves arrived between 1700 and 1866, representing a much smaller percentage than most Americans realize.

# The diverse history of Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

While Jewish and African American communities have a tumultuous shared history when it comes to the pursuit of civil rights, there is a chapter that is often overlooked. In the 1930s when Jewish academics from Germany and Austria were dismissed from their teaching positions, many came to the United States looking for jobs. Due to the Depression, xenophobia and rising anti-Semitism, many found it difficult to find work, but more than 50 found positions at Historically Black Colleges and Universities in the segregated South.

Originally established to educate freed slaves to read and write, the first of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities was Cheyney University in Pennsylvania, established in 1837. By the time Jewish professors arrived, the number of HBCUs had grown to 78. At a time when both Jews and African Americans were persecuted, Jewish professors in the Black colleges found the environment comfortable and accepting, often creating special programs to provide opportunities to engage Blacks and whites in meaningful conversation, often for the first time.

In the years that followed, the interests of Jewish and African American communities increasingly diverged, but this once-shared experience of discrimination and interracial cooperation remains a key part of the Civil Rights Movement.



## The earliest recorded protest against slavery was by the Quakers in 1688.

Quakers, also known as “The Society of Friends,” have a long history of abolition. But it was four Pennsylvania Friends from Germantown who wrote the initial protest in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. They saw the slave trade as a grave injustice against their fellow man and used the Golden Rule to argue against such inhumane treatment; regardless of skin color, “we should do unto others as we would have done onto ourselves.” In their protest they stated, “Pray, what thing in the world can be done worse towards us, then if men should rob or steal us away, & sell us for slaves to strange Countries, separating husband from their wife and children....”

Their protest against slavery and human trafficking was presented at a “Monthly Meeting at Dublin” in Philadelphia. The Dublin Monthly Meeting reviewed the protest but sent it to the Quarterly Meeting, feeling it to be too serious an issue for their own meeting to decide. The four Friends continued their efforts and presented at the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, but it wasn’t until 88 years later that the Society of Friends officially denounced slavery.

Over the centuries, this rare document has been considered lost twice. Most recently it was rediscovered in 2005 and is now at Haverford College Special Collections.



## One in four cowboys was Black, despite the stories told in popular books and movies.

In fact, it’s believed that the real “Lone Ranger” was inspired by an African American man named Bass Reeves. Reeves had been born a slave but escaped West during the Civil War where he lived in what was then known as Indian Territory. He eventually became a Deputy U.S. Marshal, was a master of disguise, an expert marksman, had a Native American companion, and rode a silver horse. His story was not unique however.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Wild West drew enslaved Blacks with the hope of freedom and wages. When the Civil War ended, freedmen came West with the hope of a better life where the demand for skilled labor was high. These African Americans made up at least a quarter of the legendary cowboys who lived dangerous lives facing weather, rattlesnakes, and outlaws while they slept under the stars driving cattle herds to market.

While there was little formal segregation in frontier towns and a great deal of personal freedom, Black cowboys were often expected to do more of the work and the roughest jobs compared to their white counterparts. Loyalty did develop between the cowboys on a drive, but the Black cowboys were typically responsible for breaking the horses and being the first ones to cross flooded streams during cattle drives. In fact, it is believed that the term “cowboy” originated as a derogatory term used to describe Black “cowhands.”

(Articles from the Black Culture Connection of PBS,

<http://www.pbs.org/black-culture/explore/10-black-history-little-known-facts/>)

## **YOUR PASTOR'S ARTICLE**



How is God challenging you to get beyond your comfort zone and to move beyond the things that you are familiar with and “used to doing?” Sometimes we take the things that we know someone is good at and then expect that they will always use those gifts in the church. For instance, if there is someone who is a teacher in their Monday to Friday life, we may assume that they want to serve as a Sunday School teacher. There may be someone who is a banker in their formal work, and we assume that they want to be on the finance committee of the church. Sometimes we are right in these assumptions, but sometimes we are completely wrong.

As part of our “What’s Next” Initiative, we are hoping to challenge ourselves as we see how God is using us in our shared ministry at LABC. One of the things that I have encouraged people to do is to ask themselves, “how can I be involved in the life of the church?” In this article, and hopefully out of reading this article, I encourage you all to move beyond this basic line of thinking. I want you to push yourselves. I want you to do some introspection. I want you to do some personal exploration.

I encourage you to ask yourselves “what would I want to “try out” in the church?” If you could do anything in the church, what would that be? Sometimes we put ourselves into categories and expect, or are expected, to do certain things. But what if we had the freedom to explore our interests in our ministry? What if we could move into areas that we hadn’t been in before?

Imagine, we could make new discoveries about ourselves. Perhaps we could learn that God has equipped us with skills and abilities in new areas that we had never done before. Our hearts and minds could be expanded by doing something new.

I will always recall an older gentleman who served on the property committee of a church I served. He has given me permission to share this story. He was dedicated and a great volunteer and could fix anything. One day a young man came to the church asking for food. I was not there, but this older gentleman was. He talked to the young man for a half an hour. He learned all that there was about this young man, why he was in need and how he was desperate for community. The next Sunday, the young man who was asking for food came to the church for worship, and in time found the community he was longing for in the church. When he was baptized he said that he was there because of the older man who spent the time to talk with him.

I share this story because this older gentleman had so much more to him than being the “fix-it” guy around the church. When I spoke with him about this experience and the impact he had on the young man, he told me that he always wanted to be part of the spiritual care committee and have more of a chance to connect with people, but no one ever asked him to. I can assure you that after hearing his heart to do that, he was asked to join the committee. He became one of the best visitors to the elderly that I have seen in many years.

This is just one story of someone who could have been easily “pigeon-holed” in a certainly area of ministry. We did that to him. As a church we assumed he could only do one thing. We were wrong. When he was invited to serve in a new role he excelled and taught us so much.

How is God using you? What areas have you always wanted to serve in? What areas have you wanted to explore?

This season of "What's Next" is about focusing on developing and nurturing relationships within our vast community, but it is also about exploring the relationship between God and ourselves, and how God is using us, developing us, challenging us.

I invite you to see how God is moving in your heart, and I invite you to know that the church is a place where we can do and try many things, and we can develop and grow as God's people.

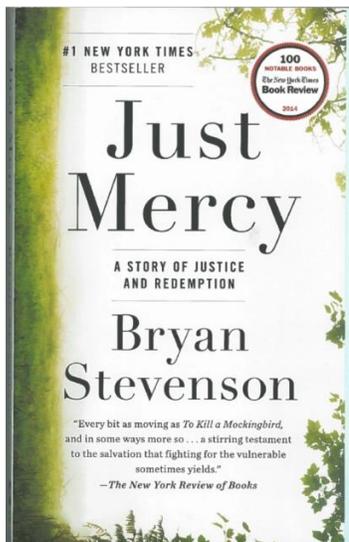
Join me as we develop and grow together, and we see who God is walking with us to be.

Michael

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## SOCIAL AWARENESS BOOK STUDY WITH MICHAEL FORD

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Join us for a new initiative that will take place on **Thursday evenings** at LABC: Our Social Awareness Book Study. Throughout the year, we will gather on Thursday evenings to explore a variety of social issues through a selection of books that touch on the topics that we choose to delve deeper into. The first study will cover the month of February and

will read the book *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson. We will meet together, and discuss the book and the topic that it speaks to. Join me and others from our LABC community (and beyond?) from 7:00-8:30 p.m. during the month of February. Coming months will discuss other topics through other books. It should be a wonderful time of learning and fellowship!

**Dates:** Thursday February 6\*, 13, 20, 27 (in preparation of the first class please read the first four chapters)

**Time:** 7:00-8:30

**Location:** Classroom 1 (conference room)

\*Copies of the book are available on Amazon, at local book stores, and in local libraries (circulation dependent)

***This book is a powerful true story about the potential for mercy to redeem us, and a clarion call to fix our broken system of justice—from one of the most brilliant and influential lawyers of our time.***

*Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinkmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever.*

*Just Mercy is at once an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer's coming of age, a moving window into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice.*



February is Black History Month and as usual we are planning aspects of our worship services to honor that theme. Bulletin covers, music, quotations from famous black Americans will be included each Sunday. We hope these will help us to honor the amazing Black History of our nation. I can't give you further details because we are still in the planning stage.

I would like to hear from you about your input about our morning worship. We try to have a variety as well as be consistent. Is there a hymn you would like us to sing? Is there a subject you want to hear about? Is there a format that would enhance worship for you? Remember, worship is our opportunity to praise God, receive forgiveness, learn

about a Bible passage, and to be embraced by our community.

**REFLECTIONS FROM YOUR YOUTH  
AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY  
DIRECTOR, AUSTIN PETTIGREW**

2020 is finally here! I feel so much gratitude for being able to use my talents here at LABC.

I was thinking the other day about what it means to be grateful. In a world of such turmoil and strife I remember the people who care about me; my friends, family, my fiancé Fiona and you, my church family.

Gratitude is what comes to mind when I sit down and talk to our children about the love we have for them and how much God loves them. It's good to know and feel God's love for us.

Our youth surprise me at every turn. They are learning how to tell me about things that interest them and topics they want to study. Things like female leadership in the church, living a life focused on simplicity and away from materialism are just a few topics they have asked for.

Of course, seeing our young people interested in these topics fills my heart with so much joy and expectation for the future.

Please continue to pray for me. Pray for our children and youth who are growing in unexpected ways.



**LAKE AVENUE  
BAPTIST  
CHURCH AND  
AWAB**

**(Association of  
Welcoming and  
Affirming  
Baptists)**

Recently, the Sunday worship bulletin advertised an "AWAB potluck supper". Perhaps you have been wondering, what exactly is "AWAB"? Is it a recovery group like Alcoholics Anonymous? Is it some sort of secret society? Or is it one of those computer things that all the kids know about and about which most adults are clueless. It is none of the above!

AWAB stands for "Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists." Lake Avenue is a member of this organization, along with First Baptist of Rochester, Immanuel Baptist, Brockport First Baptist

Church, York Baptist and First Baptist Church of Ithaca, just to name a few.

The mission of the Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists is to create and support a community of churches, organizations and individuals committed to the inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons in the full life and mission of Baptist churches.

At our recent Potluck supper, folks from 4 of these churches gathered to socialize, reaffirm our commitment to the AWAB mission and explore where God may be leading us in 2020.

Recently, while listening to a radio show about the United Methodist Church, I heard a pastor of a "mega church" state that over several years, 5 youth in his church committed suicide because of issues around sexual identity and gender identity. We do not want any of our youth to think that life is hopeless due to questions about sexual orientation or gender identity. We want our church community to be a safe place where anyone of any age can bring themselves in all their uniqueness. That is part of the reason we are members of AWAB.

Lake Ave. strives to be a community where all are welcome! And where we can express God's amazing love for each of God's children. Thanks be to God! Amen.

**MISSION  
MUSINGS**

***Reflect, Collect, Connect***

Thanks to all who decorated the "mitten tree" in December. The hats, scarves, and other donated items have found homes at School 5, the House of Mercy, and Cameron Community Ministries. Based on the success of this collection, your Mission Committee has decided to initiate the following program beginning in February: REFLECT, COLLECT, CONNECT!

We are asking church members to collect various items in each of the coming months. As we bring the desired items to church, we ask you to REFLECT on the ministry that happens through your donations. For example, we will COLLECT paper products for Cameron Community Ministries' new Youth Center through February, (Read more about it in this newsletter). In worship and in your own quiet time,

please REFLECT on this ministry to the youth of that nearby neighborhood—please hold the youth and their leaders in your prayers and REFLECT on some way you as an individual might CONNECT to that effort—perhaps by praying for that community or volunteering in the future.

In March we will COLLECT cereal. We hope to have one hundred boxes. And who knows what we will do with them? Hmm....build a wall? A tower? Our youth will help us to decide. The cereal will be donated to MEEK (Maplewood Edgerton Emergency Kupboard), to Cameron Ministries, and.....we will gather your ideas about other places where we might make a CONNECTION.

Let's all work together to INJECT a bit of fun in our efforts to COLLECT!

## A NOTE FROM KAREN BROKAW

**REFLECT, COLLECT, CONNECT** How appropriate is this phrase in naming our new mission endeavor? The month of February we are focusing on the new Cameron Community Youth Center. In addition to prayerful reflection and connecting as community, we ask that you bring to our collection station at LABC, any of the following items: 39 gallon black plastic garbage bags, white kitchen garbage bags, non-latex food prep gloves, toilet paper, paper towels, bulk hand soap, or sponges. Let the collection begin!

## Resource and Support

Our Resource and Support ministry is responsible for the maintenance of our church property, provides financial guidance for the efficient performance of our church operations, and personnel administration regarding church staff and contractors.

During the past year we have resolved a number of small property issues such as roof leaks and plumbing problems. We also resolved an ongoing ceiling water leak in our classrooms. Please keep in mind that our last major property renovation was over 20 years ago. We should expect and anticipate more issues as our building and systems age.

We had a very successful church yard and kitchen clean up event with the help of volunteers from St. John Fisher College. Our playground area and raised bed garden were enhanced thanks to the efforts of many volunteers.

You may have noticed that the beautiful stained-glass windows at the front of the sanctuary are now illuminated properly at night. We fixed this lighting issue with replacement energy efficient LED lighting.

We had a smooth budget process this year and we feel confident that we can accomplish all of our ministry goals without a major increase in our budget. We were able to provide a modest increase in compensation for our non-ordained staff. This was completed along with much needed updates to staff job descriptions.

Our Church Council approved our recommendation to donate our church van to a local non-profit agency which could make better use of this vehicle. We have not been using the van to justify the annual \$3,000 expense.

Looking forward we will be researching and hopefully present a program to use solar energy at church and offer this program to church members to reduce your energy costs.

Our church endowment has performed quite well this past year. We continue to be faithful to our past donors and manage this account in an efficient manner. We hope to review the investment choices of our financial management firm (Manning and Napier, Inc.) to make certain we are following our established financial guidelines for companies we are invested in.

If you are interested in helping in any of the areas mentioned above, please contact me or the church office.

Mike Donatucci, Chair  
[Mdonatucci18@gmail.com](mailto:Mdonatucci18@gmail.com) (585) 455-2885

*Greetings.*  
from Nurture and Care

This is my first greeting for 2020. I hope everyone is doing fine. We did not have any special event for the last two-three months and everything is business as usual for now. We are still meeting every other month and are planning some special activities for the New Year. For example, our first all church event will take place on February 9th when we will

be celebrating everyone's birthday (from January through December). We will be planning our Easter Sunday brunch, and, of course, begin to make plans for our church picnic.

We will continue to do coffee every Sunday. We may also plan other activities to get to know each other better. Again, however, most activities and celebrations will remain the same as last year.

**REMEMBER:** Our All Church Birthday celebration is coming up on Feb. 9. A sign-in sheet will be available if you would like to donate cake for this event. (12 cakes are needed) There will also be a sign-in sheet for your date of birth (only the date and month are necessary). If you sign in with your name and date of birth and address, if possible, you will receive a birthday card from the Nurture and Care Committee.

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## OUR CHURCH FAMILY

•Congratulations to Soprano Choral Scholar **Alexandra Rose Hotz** who is playing a lead character in the two one act Eastman School operas, *Prima la musica, Poi le parole* by Salieri and *The Impresario* by Mozart. She will be singing in the performances scheduled for Friday, January 31 and Sunday, February 2. Most of the performances have been sold out but there may be some seats left for the 2:00 pm Sunday, February 2 performance. If you are interested in attending, please call 274-3000 or go to [www.Eastmantheatre.org](http://www.Eastmantheatre.org)



**All women of the church** are invited to the home of Jane Grant for supper, fellowship, and a few games. This will take place on **Saturday, February 15 beginning at 6:00 pm**. Please bring a dish to pass. If you have any questions, please speak with Jane Grant after service

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## SPECIAL EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY AT LAKE AVE. BAPTIST CHURCH

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**Sunday, February 2:** Worship and Communion for all

**Thursdays, February 6, 13, 20, and 27, 7:00 pm:** Adult Book Study with Michael Ford, Conference Room

**Sunday, February 9: 11:45 am:** All-Church Birthday Bash, Social Hall

**Saturday, February 15: 6:00 pm:** Women's Potluck and Game Night at Jane Grant's home

**Monday, February 17:** President's Day, Church Office Closed

**Wednesday, February 26: Lent Begins:** Ash Wednesday Service: 7:00 pm in Social Hall.

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## ONGOING WEEKLY EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

**Sundays in February:** 10:00 am: Worship Service for All and Children's Sunday School, 11:15 Fellowship, Social Hall; 11:30 Youth Sunday School, 11:45 am: Adult Education Classes, Conference Room, 12:30 pm: Myanmar Christian Fellowship service

**Mondays in February:** 6:30 pm: Pass It On AA Group, Social Hall

**Wednesdays in February:** 6:30 pm: Good News Singers Rehearsals, 7:30 pm: Chancel Choir rehearsals

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## OTHER LOCAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

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**St. Olaf Choir, Tuesday, 2/4/20 @ 7pm:** Join the St. Olaf Choir, conducted by Anton Armstrong. The 2020 St. Olaf Choir tour marks the 100th anniversary of the choir's first East Coast tour in 1920 (which included their first performance at Carnegie Hall), along with Dr. Armstrong's 30th anniversary of leading the ensemble. During this past century, touring has played an important role in the St. Olaf Choir sharing its artistry and beauty of sound with audiences around the world. The performance will be held at the Roberts Wesleyan College Cultural Life Center. Tickets may be purchased by calling 585-594-6008 or going to [www.roberts.edu](http://www.roberts.edu).



**SNOW DAY REMINDERS:** The following precautions will be followed if we are expecting a severe winter storm on a Sunday morning. Ken Setera will send out an "alert" on Friday to give you a heads up. If the storm does hit and makes travel impossible on Sunday morning, an email will be sent out a 7 am Sunday morning announcing the cancellation of the church service. We will also announce it on our website and our Facebook page. Lastly we will announce it to the local TV and

radio stations. You may also want to check with a church member if you do not have email or a computer. Hopefully, the rest of the winter will be peaceful and calm and there will be no need for these precautions

**Church Moderator:** Laura Tubbs

**Church Staff:** Sr. Pastor: Michael Ford; Music Educator, Chancel Choir Director, & Organist: Lee Foster,  
Good News Singers Director and Accompanist: Julia Fedor, Refugee Coordinator: Hkadin Lee;  
Director of Youth and Children's Ministry: Austin Pettigrew, Myanmar Christian Fellowship: Pastor Simon Kui;  
Assisting Minister - Susan Maybeck, Church Accountant: Bonaventure Moulogho;  
Office Manager: Kenneth Setera; Custodial Services: Lloyd Cuyler