

*Spring 2026*

# LIGHT YEARS



## RELATIONSHIP

Annika is a sophomore in psychology. In addition to having an influential AP Psychology teacher in high school, Annika was inspired to go into her field by serving in an internship that following summer at a pediatric neuropsychiatric clinic. “It was so exciting,” she says, “and I love working with kids. I loved doing the psychological testing and evaluations. In my classes here so far, it’s been so amazing, and I’m working in a research lab that’s close to what I want to do as a career. I just love it.”

Annika was raised in the Lutheran church and found the Lutheran Campus Ministry at FestiFall her freshman year. She felt overwhelmed that first year, and so didn’t get very connected to LCM then, but got more involved during her sophomore year. “I wanted a community that was student-oriented but connected me with my faith,” she says.

Annika often comes on Wednesday nights for Bible studies, and got even more connected because she and a couple of other LCM students had a mutual friend. “That ended up strengthening those connections outside of school,” she says. “I’ve developed a stronger relationship with God, and a lot of that comes from more education and hearing experiences from people my age. Our conversations wander to all different topics that relate, and I like that people have such different perspectives on the scripture. It’s often stuff I don’t know about, so it’s really cool to learn about current events or literature, or whatever else gets brought up.”

Annika has found the community here at Lord of Light and LCM to be just what she’s needed away from home. “The people are all so kind, genuine, and down-to-earth,” she says. “Everyone is so insightful about different things.” Annika also welcomes the opportunity to disconnect from a frenzied world. “I love that at LCM, I have time to put my phone down and breathe. I like that it’s a moment to focus on something else entirely without my brain wandering.”



“Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”

John 20: 21

## BE PEACE

Pastor Elizabeth Friedman

The first warm days of spring have arrived, and with them, the realization that we are shifting to the rhythm of summer as finals loom and students contemplate next steps. We are also shifting to the rhythm of sending as we prepare to celebrate 14 graduates the first weekend of May.

In contrast with the frenzy of fall’s rhythm of welcome, winter’s cold allows for deeper theological exploration and a more contemplative time. Throughout Lent, we engaged during weekly Bible studies with texts and reflections from the devotional provided by A Sanctified Art. This year’s theme encouraged us to look for and acknowledge the good things God is doing in the world, and to be inspired to meet the challenges we face, knowing we are not alone. Once again, we partnered with Campus Chapel (Reformed), The Wesley Foundation (Methodist), and Canterbury House (Episcopal) for the Triduum. We celebrated Maundy Thursday with dinner church and foot washing, observed Good Friday with a contemplative Tenebrae service involving several student musicians, and sat vigil on Holy Saturday, culminating in the first Communion of Easter at midnight. Around the ninth reading and silence that night, we heard our student neighborhood erupt in joy at the men’s NCAA basketball Final Four win; several more students joined right afterward to share Communion, and enjoy our traditional post-vigil Funfetti cake, too. On Easter evening, we worshiped together as usual at 5pm, and shared a potluck in which so many brought the best they had to share. On the Sunday after Easter, I was privileged to perform the baptism of a student, and our community was privileged to formally welcome him into Christ’s family.

Now, as new shoots are sent up from the ground, I am preparing to send many of our students out to be peace in this world. I reflect on how grateful I am to be in this energizing, hopeful, and challenging role; for the students I serve; for our partner congregations who support us financially and by bringing meals; and for our alumni and friends, who ensure this important ministry continues to form faithful servants for the sake of the world. Thank you.

Blessings,



Pastor Elizabeth



Above: Ecumenical Maundy Thursday worship hosted at Campus Chapel.

Right: Ecumenical Easter Vigil hosted at Lord Light/LCM.





## FOUND

David is a senior in Math and Computer Science. He was born and raised in New York City, and he sang in the Grammy-nominated Trinity Church-Wall Street youth choir from the age of 6 onwards.

David transferred to U of M his junior year from the University of Maryland, so finding a community at his new university was especially important, and a little tricky. “At Maryland, I’d found a good faith community,” he says, “but at Michigan I was bouncing around a lot of churches. I couldn’t find a community that I could invest in and that would invest in me. Sometimes the churches felt way too big, and some other campus ministries, our values didn’t align. I think that in LCM, I’ve found a place that has the theology, attitude, and values I resonate with.”

It was David’s girlfriend, Jaiden, who first found Lord of Light and LCM over the summer. “We’d been looking for something smaller than where we’d been before,” he says, “and I came, and I liked it too. I think it’s really nice to know that on a weekly basis, there’s a group of people that I can catch up with and spend time with, and that I know where their values lie.”

David grew up in the Reformed church but had never been baptized, so he approached Pastor Elizabeth about whether he might be baptized at Lord of Light. On April 12, the Sunday after Easter, David was formally welcomed into God’s family here. His brother, Peter, flew out from New York and was able to be with David as his sponsor. When asked what he’s most thankful for about Lord of Light and LCM, David says, “It’s the warmth of the people here. I’m just very grateful that after trying so many other ministries, I found this place.”



## REMEMBERED

Devin is a senior in Robotic Engineering. Ever since he saw the movie “The Incredibles” as a child, he’s had a fascination with robots. He says, “I remember seeing the giant robot, and thought, ‘That’s what I want to do.’”

Devin first found out about Lutheran Campus Ministry at a tabling event, and he was drawn in by its emphasis on inclusion. “I had gone to another church on campus I didn’t like,” he says, “and thought I would try this one out. I also like the whole not paying to go to Heaven thing.”

Devin attended Catholic school through high school, and attending church at school was his experience of a faith community growing up. “In college,” he says, “it was the first time I went to church on my own. I had tried another church, but I didn’t like how they were specifically telling members to vote in a certain way, and I thought their sermons were uninteresting. I found LCM and I really like that they talk about God’s love.

At Lord of Light and LCM, Devin has found a community where he is known and fully included. “Everybody’s really nice and they try to say hi,” he says. “A lot of people have remembered my name, even though I’m terrible at names.” LoL/LCM’s open Communion table and explicit welcome help him know he belongs here, too. “Coming to this church, it was the first time I’d ever taken Communion,” he says, “because I only went to church at Catholic school.”

Devin offered that in one of her sermons, he heard Pastor Elizabeth say that “‘God loves you, and there’s nothing you can do to make God love you more or less.’ I hear so often that you have to do this or that in order for God to love you. Whenever people ask me why I go to this church,” he says, “that’s the quote I always tell them.”



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