

Josh Mangelson 00:17

Welcome to the Project Zion Podcast. This podcast explores the unique spiritual and theological gifts Community of Christ offers for today's world.

Carla Long 00:33

Hello, and welcome to the *Project Zion Podcast*. I'm your host, Carla Long, and today you're listening to the series "What's Brewing", where we talk about different ministry and mission opportunities that happen all over the world. And today, I'm here with Linda Stanbridge. She is the Mission Center Invitation Support Minister in Michigan and she, it just feels like she has mission coming out of her ears. Every time I hear from her, or talk to her, there's just always something new that's happening and fun and creative, and I cannot wait for you to hear about it. So, hello, Linda. Thanks so much for being here.

Linda Stanbridge 01:06

Hi, Carla. Thanks for having me.

Carla Long 01:08

So, Linda, first things first. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

Linda Stanbridge 01:14

Yeah, so I'm Linda. I am from Lexington, Michigan. We, my family and I, live at Bluewater Campground, which is right on Lake Huron. My husband is the campground manager. And we have a four-year-old and a six-year-old, two little girls. There's really not a better place to be raising two really wild kids than the campground, especially one with a lake. We have lots of area to run and, kind of, stretch our legs and have fun. I graduated from the Community of Christ Seminary in 2019, and I've been doing the MCISM, or (ma-kism'), role for about two years.

Carla Long 01:58

Oh, my gosh, you know what? I knew you lived on a campground. I knew you had two little girls, but it just was this moment when I realized how incredibly cool to grow up at a campground. It is like every person's, it was, it would have been my dream as a child to grow up on a campground 'cause camp is my favorite place in the whole planet. I don't care what camp, I just love camp.

Linda Stanbridge 02:18

Yeah, it's pretty magical. And it's, I don't even, like, sometimes Kurt and I will just look at each other like, "Do you think they realize how lucky they are? No, they probably don't. They have no idea." But, you know, the camp appeal doesn't go away either, because we went to another campground in Michigan, Sanford, for one of their Camp-o-ween weekends. And we had so much fun that the last night Arbor's laying in bed and she's just bawling, "I don't want to leave camp." You know, it's like, "We're going back to camp. We live at camp." But it's just such a cool experience.

Carla Long 02:48

It is a cool experience. And no, I'm sure that they don't understand how very cool it is. You know, remember when you were a kid and they pulled out the parachute to play during gym class, we didn't realize those are the most magical days either.

Linda Stanbridge 03:00

No, no.

Carla Long 03:01

Those were very magical days. Okay, I could probably talk about this forever, but I'm sure our listeners want to hear about how mission is part of what you do and really what ebbs and flows from you. So, you know, what keeps you, tell me a little bit more about the MCISM role, maybe?

Linda Stanbridge 03:19

Yeah, so I look at it as, kind of, a blend of two different mission initiatives, one, "Invite People to Christ," or, I think of it as, invite people to experience the living Christ, Christ among us and between us, and "Developing Disciples to Serve", because I think the connection between invitation and justice is something that we tend to miss. So, some of the work that comes out of my role in Michigan is training disciples. I work with, our team is called NCAC, "Naming, Claiming and Acting the Change". It's our diversity and inclusion team. I work with some pretty amazing individuals on that team to provide diversity education. And then we tried to wrap that into, What is our own ministry context?, knowing that we can't copy/paste a mission or a ministry from one place to another, looking at who it is that really, you know, needs to be served in our area and how we can be the best community to invite those people into. So, it's, kind of, a, it's a blend, but I love the creativity of it. And I like that it's different all the time. It's really exciting to get to work with so many different pastors and pastor teams and see what people are passionate about.

Carla Long 04:39

I love that and what did you say the naming, claiming, what is that again?

Linda Stanbridge 04:43

Naming, Claiming and Acting the Change.

Carla Long 04:46

That's awesome. I actually preached a sermon on how important names are and being named and the song, "I Have Called You by Your Name" in our hymnal, I think, is always really beautiful, and I think that that is a really important concept that we don't talk about very often and I think it's really cool. I'm really glad it's called that. That's awesome.

Linda Stanbridge 05:05

Thanks. We wanted to be as inclusive as we could be, and the more we sat down, we realized there's no way we could ever name every oppressed group that needs liberation, or every, you know, category

of human, and so, it's, kind of, that constant call to go back into naming, knowing that if we think we arrived at inclusion, we have to keep starting over. It's just this ongoing process. So, yeah, they, we spent quite a lot of time coming up with that name. So, NCAC for short, it's a little easier.

Carla Long 05:36

Because we're Community of Christ, we always have to use acronyms. That's just what we do.

Linda Stanbridge 05:41

We love an acronym, even my, I also work in public housing, even my co-workers there will say, "You, you guys just love acronyms." And, like, it's true. It's our bread and butter.

Carla Long 05:52

It's true. And it is a little bit confusing for people but, gosh, it makes it so much easier to speak about it.

Linda Stanbridge 05:57

It does. It does.

Carla Long 05:59

So, this might be a silly question, given you're a MCISM, but how is mission played out either in being a MCISM, or in your public health workspace? Like, how do you support mission in that way?

Linda Stanbridge 06:14

I think that, I mean, it's a complex question with a lot of different layers, but one thing that I've been thinking a lot about lately is that I do a lot of work with new expressions. That's one of the things that we focus on a lot right now as our leadership team, and I think that what I've seen recently is that when we think about inviting people, a lot of it is about the relationships that we develop outside of church, and the way that we are able to be God's love in the world, the way that we ourselves are able to represent that. And so, I've had a lot of people say, you know, because I am very public about it, I talk about it on Facebook, and I tend to have a big, you probably don't know this on me, I do have a big mouth, I say what I think a lot. And so, and I know that you're not familiar with that, Carla, um, but you know, I've had a lot of people say to me, "You're, kind of a, like, you're a weird, Christian. I don't know very many Christians like you." And so, I think some of it is just being yourself, and, you know, being clear about the source of, you know, my own passion for justice, that that is based on my relationship with my God, and my faith community, and the things that we discern as important, and being Christ in our workplaces. And then I, kind of, a lot of people say, "Where do you go to church? Can I come with?" You know, and we're inviting them to spaces. I think that is really important. For me, in my career in public health, that's a little more complicated. And I'll give you the honest answer, the super honest answer. When the pandemic first started, I really felt, like, God was calling me to work in that way. People were in so much pain, and there was so much fear, and all the hard questions got harder. But, you know, my experience throughout the pandemic, even the hardest parts was that, you know, God had not abandoned us, that God, to me, seemed to be very, very active in the world, and I sensed God's closeness during those most desperate times, and that really helped me get through, you know, what it was like to work at a health department during the pandemic. And we dealt with a lot of, a *lot* of verbal abuse and threats, and it was a really hard time, but for me, mission in that moment, was that

God was inviting me to stretch. And, um, you know, I would go to work in the morning, and I would go and work at the vaccine clinics, and I would use the mission prayer a lot to help me focus my energy, knowing I'd have to get through something really, really hard, but I had this thing to rely on. And I had some pretty incredible experiences and ways that God was able to use me. I had a woman who had come in for her COVID vaccine, and it was really hard to get appointments then. And she had gotten her vaccine, and she was doing her 15-minute waiting period, and I could just feel that her energy was off, and I sensed that I should go over and talk to her, and she had told me that morning that, you know, her husband had been put in the hospital, but it was so important to get, to her, to get that vaccine that she showed up. You know, there were times when we had emergencies at work, and I had to respond. And I've sensed so much, in those moments, that I had an opportunity to be a minister even though I was at work and even though I wasn't using ministry words. I have found that, you know, if I'm willing to focus myself on that, and where God could use me, God pretty reliably shows up, no matter what I'm doing.

Carla Long 10:06

Well, you're gonna make me cry a little bit, which is not weird for me in a podcast, but I think that's so beautiful. Two things that you brought up for me, one, when you were talking about when people tell you, you're not the normal kind of Christian. I've had that happen to me as well. And they're like, "Well, I'd go to church if you were the head of my church or part of my church." And I was like, but, but, but, but, let me point you to the person, why I act that way. So, I'm like, just look at this Jesus. This Jesus is the cool Jesus. This is the Jesus that I follow, and it's the Jesus that I don't think, not everyone sees all the time. And I'm sure that you do the same thing. I mean, it's so easy to, like, I want to follow you 'cuz you have a great personality or whatever, but I feel like I am this way because of that. So, I always try and do that. And I'm sure you do, too.

Linda Stanbridge 10:54

Yeah, it's because really, mission is never about pointing to ourselves, or even pointing to the church. You know, mission is when we point to God as the source.

Carla Long 11:04

Absolutely. And like that mission initiative you mentioned. It's not invite people to church, it's "Invite People to Christ".

Linda Stanbridge 11:11

Yeah.

Carla Long 11:11

So, I think that that's very, very cool. I, and I do think we have very similar personalities, I'm guessing. It would be probably be a very loud room if we were in the same room together.

Linda Stanbridge 11:20

That's true.

Carla Long 11:22

The second thing, I loved your stories about working in the vaccine clinic or in the health department. It just sounds to me like you're very intentional about your ministry there. And it's ver-, it is so difficult. I think you're right. I think it is a little bit exhausting to maybe carry both of those at the same time, your job and being a minister. But if we can find ways to mesh those together, and it sounds like you have, then it can be less exhausting, hopefully. But that intentionality does take a lot of work.

Linda Stanbridge 11:57

It does, and I think some of it is, you know, you have to do boundaries in your life period, and you have to do boundaries in ministry and at work. And, you know, for me, I've been working throughout the pandemic, and I'm coming to the point where, you know, I think I'm ready to move on from that, and, look at what's new that's coming out of the pandemic, and what creative energy can come from there, not to give the pandemic any credit at all, but to see that, you know, it's fast forwarding us a little bit and just trying to stay, kind of, present. We started doing the, praying the Mission Prayer, as a family, when I started going back to work. I was off for two months, when the pandemic first started, before they called us all back, and we started praying that when I went back. And it's been a pretty amazing experience and way to focus yourself, and I have to admit, it's just extremely cute, coming out of a three or four-year-old's mouth. We have a wall calendar, so there's not too much arguing about whose turn it is to go first, or who gets to do the whole prayer for the day. But, you know, it's, for me, just been about taking out, kind of, one day at a time and trying to listen to how I'm doing mentally and emotionally with my mental health, you know, and what God is asking of me.

Carla Long 13:20

I stayed home, like, the entire pandemic, and I can't even imagine the amount of strength and the amount of courage that it would take to leave every day and go out into a place that was so unknown, at the beginning, and that even now, there's a bit of unknown out there. But at the beginning, when it was so unknown that was, that, it just, I'm just so grateful to people like you who found that reserve of strength and courage to do that, so that I could stay home because I had a newborn baby. So, you're talking about all the creative stuff that was happening, and maybe you're ready to move forward. And I was wondering what new and creative, you know, "stuff" to use a word that I probably shouldn't use, what new and creative stuff is coming out of Michigan right now that you can tell us about?

Linda Stanbridge 14:10

So, we have a couple of pretty exciting things going on right now. I think, probably the thing I'm most excited about right in this moment is that we are moving forward with some initial plans for an LGBTQ Ministry Center in Michigan, associated with a congregation, and it's in an amazing location right in town, and it's an area that has a lot of need. And there's a congregation that's been filling that need for a while. And so, this feels like this, kind of, natural progression of this ministry that Otter Lake congregation has been working on for a long time. So, it's really exciting to see these opportunities where we have a group that we know experiences a lot of oppression and an opportunity to do some community building and some healing work through a church context, which will be really different for, I think, a lot of people. But we have some incredibly experienced and gifted ministers that have so much to offer. It's, kind of, a, it's, kind of, a situation where, I think, when we think about mission and we look around, what are the things that we can offer? What is the need? And how do those things go together?

This is the perfect situation. There's a deep need and we have some really talented people that can fill that need. So, I'm super excited about that one right now.

Carla Long 15:38

That sounds really wonderful. Because, you know, like, there are so many times when what we can offer and that need do not match. Either we have different talents and nobody needs them, or where there's a great, great need, and we have no have nobody to fill that. So, it's really exciting. And it feels like a Christ-incidence, not coincidence, a Christ-incidence, when those things come together and can happen. So, I'm really excited to hear more about that, too. I hope that that goes well. Like nothing's started yet, right, like, you're moving into a place.

Linda Stanbridge 16:07

Yeah, we, it's, we're still in conversations with the congregation, and we still have to figure out budget stuff. But I think that we have enough early approvals that there's, it's looking really good for early next year, and I am just I'm so excited. You're absolutely right. This is one of those Christ moments where it just feels like, gosh, everything is, kind of, lined up, and we have an opportunity to do so much good.

Carla Long 16:37

It's really exciting to hear. It's really exciting. So, what else is happening in Michigan? I know, I feel like Michigan is, like, this little, like, boiling, like, something that's getting ready to, like, just spill over. So, I feel like there's a lot happening there.

Linda Stanbridge 16:52

We have a, I mean I hate to brag, but we have a pretty amazing Mission Center. Dan Nawiski is the Mission Center President and I tell everybody about what a great boss he is, and he's a great human. And he is, he's really great about being willing to do new things and be creative, which to me makes mission so much more sustainable, because it can be exhausting. And when you have the opportunity to put some of the best of yourself in, for me, I get more out of it. I'm also a D.Min. student right now at Ecumenical Theological Seminary in Detroit, which has some really cool Urban Ministry programs and is, kind of, really seated in the Detroit, prophetic, black church tradition, and they have some really amazing programs. And we are entertaining some meetings with them right now about a grant they received to help strengthen the relationships between the seminary and the local congregations in Detroit. So, it would be an ecumenical effort, which is, when we think about mission, is always awesome, because we have so much more when we work together than when we try to all work separately, and we have a ton of need in the Detroit area. Michigan does have a congregation, Detroit Hope, that's in the area, and a few others, one in Highland Park. It's located quite close to Detroit. So, we'll be doing some meetings with them and doing some exploration about how the seminary can help support some of our Detroit churches and to get us better partnered with some of the other churches in the area.

Carla Long 18:27

A couple things came up for me. I do know Dan Nawiski. I think, one time I was sitting next to him at some world church meetings, and I was being Carla, and I don't think he knew how to take me exactly. So, I think I, kind of, scared him a little bit. But I do love that guy. I think he's an awesome guy as well.

Linda Stanbridge 18:43

He's a great human. Yeah, and he puts up with me a lot. And, like, as you said, I, we have similar personalities.

Carla Long 18:51

So, if you're listening, Hi, Dan. I haven't forgotten you. And I really love, oh, and I want to make sure the listeners heard, Linda didn't say she's a demon. She said she's a D.Min. student. So, she's getting a doctorate in ministry, which is very cool. So, is this an online program that you're doing? Do you have to go to Detroit to do that? How does that all work out?

Linda Stanbridge 19:14

Well, COVID has made things easier. So, it is, has been fully online since I started. I started in January of 2021, so I am just rounding out my second semester. And it's actually similar to the system that the Community of Christ seminary uses where we have two, kind of, intensive, or we call them emergent weeks per year. And they cram, like, nine hours a day of lecture into, you know how it feels, Carla. I know you know, and when I did Community of Christ seminary, I had just had our younger daughter, Emmy. She was like six or eight weeks old, so I haven't had very many brain cells since then, but so, it's sort of a similar program. We meet monthly in between and a lot of the work is done on your own. But it's, you are put into small colleague groups. There's actually just three of us in my graduating class, myself and two other, two gentlemen, so you get to learn, and we all read each other's research and papers, so you get to learn not only what you're studying, but what your other members of your cohort are studying too. So, that's a pretty cool program.

Carla Long 20:22

It sounds amazing, and I'm actually pretty jealous. I, I'm a lot older than you, but I wouldn't, when my baby was six to eight weeks old, there was no way, no way that I was going to be jumping into any kind of doctorate in ministry program. I was still just diving into dirty diapers and all that stuff. I, that's all I could handle at the time. So, bless you, Linda, bless you. You're amazing.

Linda Stanbridge 20:44

I was technically, I was getting my MAR at the time, so it was less, well, I had a lot of Tony, so I don't wanna say it was that much less. It was maybe less than the Doctor of Ministry program. But, yeah, I have a lot of pictures, and it's just me with the Boppy, you know, and I'm breastfeeding my baby on the Boppy, and in front of the Boppy is me, and I'm trying to type on the keyboard overtop of a nursing baby. And that's how I write my papers and...

Carla Long 21:10

Oh, bless, bless, that's, you're amazing. You're amazing.

Linda Stanbridge 21:15

I think it's high functioning anxiety, probably, but we'll go with anything.

Carla Long 21:19

Well, you got it done. I think it's amazing. I'm gonna go with amazing, personally. So, I also have heard whispers, maybe from you, Linda, about how Michigan is also, kind of, doing some campground work and reimagining how it's going to look at their campgrounds and since you live on a campground, maybe you're getting some of that good juju, you know, and, like, figuring all that stuff out because you're living on a campground. So, what is Michigan thinking about all their camp-, 'cause Michigan has four campgrounds, three campgrounds?

Linda Stanbridge 21:50

We have three. So, when, originally, we had five, which, you know, campgrounds are a sensitive thing. We have a lot of sentimental attachment. So, it's been a hard thing in Michigan. We have three campgrounds now. I live at Bluewater Campground, and my husband, Kurt, is the caretaker. And then we have Park of the Pines, which is in Boyne City, and Winnie and Bill Johnston are the caretakers there, and they're also amazing. And then we have Sanford Campground, which is, kind of, in mid-Michigan, and that one operates, like, three seasons. It doesn't really operate in winter. So, part of what we've been asking ourselves is how campgrounds help us tell our story. That's one question, and how campgrounds are part of the inward and the outward journey of the church. And part of my role as the MCISM is thinking about that. So, some of the things that I'm looking at doing are prayer trails. On the campground, we have, like, 38 acres on this side, and a lot of it is wooded. Kurt has gone through and made some trails, kind of, based on the deer's trails and having, kind of, guided experiences through there. You know, we could have a Mission Prayer trail, and have, you know, these phrases that would, kind of, walk you through as you're experiencing it. We did a little bit of work with "Sacredness of Creation". We put in a butterfly garden recently. It's actually a monarch waystation. And so, thinking about, you know, how we can be a resource for the environment, and also trying to offer programs that would interest the community. A lot of times when we would offer, a few years ago, we had our environmental stewardship team, or stewardship team, excuse me, had an event here and it was supposed to be about sustainability. But we only invited our own people, because that's usually what we do. And we've started realizing, you know, that we do a lot of things and we educate ourselves and each other about stuff that the community would benefit from too, so starting to think about offering nature walks, and, you know, conversations here, lectures, things that people would enjoy doing, but also really easy things like hay rides. We had an event here in the spring. One of the kids at the local high school plays on, I think it was the soccer team that Kurt coaches, and so he knew that we were here and had his graduation party here. And as all, hundreds of people are pulling in, like, "I had no idea this place was here. How long have you guys been here? Wow, it's really nice back here." It's like, okay, so we have some work to do, and letting the community know that we're here. So, some of it is, you know, we've had the opportunity to get involved in the community here and at Park of the Pines. Winnie and Bill live there and are involved with the community. So just getting to know a little bit what the needs are, and not just thinking about it as a place that we come as a church, but that mission also grows out of.

Carla Long 24:54

I think that is so wonderful because, you know, like, you talked about the inward and outward journey, and, like, we as a people are getting better, and better, and better at that inward journey with, through spiritual practices, through recognizing God's presence in our lives at any moment. We're getting better and better at it. What we might not be getting better and better at is letting people be a part of that journey with us, and helping people to understand that we are here. So, I think you opening up the campgrounds, which is a sacred space, you know, all of our campgrounds are sacred spaces, and I have a feeling, I could be wrong, but anybody who walks into, I hope, our campgrounds, could feel that there's something different there. And so, that automatically makes them a part of that journey, as well. So, I think that it's really important to offer people a chance to walk that journey, too.

Linda Stanbridge 25:51

Yeah, we've had a lot of those experiences. We have marching band camps that rent here about four weeks out of the year, which is wonderful for us 'cause it helps us pay our bills, which is important. And we've had several people who, they came here as kids and they're not tied to the church, they came here as kids for marching band camp, and they come back and they have their weddings here. Just two days ago, we had someone here who, they went to marching band camp here, and they came to have their senior pictures taken. You know, there is something that connects and draws people to this sacred ground. It's pretty amazing to witness. We, one day over the summer, we had a, I can't remember which marching band it was, it was one of our bigger camps, and they bring like five busloads of kids. It is a huge camp, so these types, it's so much, Carla, even for an extrovert. It's so much. So, these, like, five school buses come, you know, around the corner, and they're going to pull into our campground and Kurt and I are sitting on the back porch, and we're, like, "Okay, here we go. You know, it's gonna be a week of this." And I realized I can hear them screaming. They're screaming at the top of their lungs, because they were so happy to be at camp. And they didn't get to come the summer before because of COVID. And they were just, I mean, it was just joy, just total, pure joy. And of course, I started crying, because I'm, like, "This is amazing", you know? And it was it. It was amazing. It's just beautiful how connected people get to this space. And I think there's things that we can do with the campground to keep telling our story even more.

Carla Long 27:28

Well, I'm crying now, because that is exactly how we would go to camp. You know, when you pull into the driveway, and Mom's like, "Don't start screaming yet." But we couldn't help ourselves. We had to start screaming in the back of the station wagon, you know, those old, old station wagons that, you know. You know what I'm talking about? Oh, so, I totally understand what those band kids were thinking. But five busloads. That's, that's a lot of instruments.

Linda Stanbridge 27:53

A whole bunch, yup. And they, I mean, they really take over too because they're so, I mean, there's hundreds of kids. So, I have had these moments when I'm, like, sitting at my breakfast table eating cereal, and I swear to you, if I opened my front window, I would be able to put my arm out and touch a kid because there's so many of them, they just have to find all these little places. They're doing their sectionals and their little solos, and it's crazy. We can hear them up late at night playing basketball on the basketball court. And it's really, it's a cool experience to share with them.

Carla Long 28:25

It's always fun to have your campground be alive, right, with people who love it as much as you do. I think that's very cool. And I do think that speaks to something that Community of Christ does very, very right with our campgrounds and with people like you and Kurt who take care of the campgrounds. You obviously are offering a ministry that is desperately needed. And who knows if those kids are church kids or unchurched kids, or if they have a spiritual life at all, but something draws them back there. And it is something beautiful and unexplainable. God is mystery beyond comprehension, right? So...

Linda Stanbridge 29:00

Yes.

Carla Long 29:01

...that makes me really happy to hear that. So, and I love the idea of just trying to open up these campgrounds to new and different experiences, like your, the spiritual trail that you're talking about. And all of the hopefully, hopefully, there's a lot of different experiences that we can open up to people because I would imagine this, I'm gonna make up something right now, but I think I'm right, that, like, a vast majority of people would say that huge spiritual moments came to them at church camp, not just in Community of Christ, but I would say across the board. And so, if we could find a way for more people to have that sort of experience, that's exactly what we're called to do. And that's what, that's who we need to be so, I'm really grateful for you and Kurt and Bill and...

Linda Stanbridge 29:46

Winnie.

Carla Long 29:47

Winnie, for making sure that happens. I think it's really cool and really important, although it's hard work. Hard work.

Linda Stanbridge 29:55

It is, yeah. It is and it's, it can be overwhelming. It's nice to have Winnie and Bill too, and Winnie created a Facebook page for some of the campground managers. So, if you're a campground manager and you're not in our group, let me know and we'll add you, for us to say, you know, "Do you guys have problems with X, Y, and Z? Or what are you doing at your campground because of..." blah, blah, blah. Because sometimes we do get isolated in our types of ministry. We were just having this conversation about our Detroit congregation. Context is a lot different than some of our other more suburban congregations. And making those peer connections helps keep our cup full and it makes the mission a lot more bearable together.

Carla Long 30:37

Yeah, I'm, there is definitely a huge difference between an urban congregation and a suburban congregation and I don't think people really realize that. I don't think I even realize that, and I've worked for the church for 16 years now. So, I don't even know what it's like to work in an urban congregation either. I've done, yeah, so it's a huge difference, huge difference. And it's a huge difference for people just to go to the campground once a year versus living there the entire year. That's...

Linda Stanbridge 31:07

Yeah

Carla Long 31:07

...a really big difference as well.

Linda Stanbridge 31:09

But you know, we get to have lake time, which is pretty amazing. My kids get to swim in Lake Huron almost every day. They're swimming in the lake well into October, which I think is bananas. You wouldn't catch me in there, but they don't mind the cold water. And that does, that takes a little bit of the pain out of it, having the lake there.

Carla Long 31:28

Absolutely. You know, I found that kids, as young as our kids are, they either don't care at all about that kind of stuff, or they care deeply about that kind of stuff. It's rarely in the middle. Well, Linda, it just sounds like so many good things are happening in your life and in the life of the church in Michigan. And it's really, really good for me to hear about them. Was there anything else that you wanted to mention that you didn't get a chance to mention or I didn't ask about?

Linda Stanbridge 31:55

Well, I always like to mention too that, you know, I'm the Harmony chaplain, so if you are a person who is LGBTQIASS+, come find us. We have a pretty amazing and supportive community. It's one of my passions, as evidenced by the LGBTQ Ministry Center we're looking at here too. But there is a community. There is love and affirmation for you. So, come find us, Harmony.

Carla Long 32:24

Yes. And they can find you on Facebook or maybe message you on Facebook, too.

Linda Stanbridge 32:29

Yeah. My email address is linda@harmony.lgbtq, no lgbt. There's no q, that was a lie, harmony.lgbt.

Carla Long 32:41

Um, I think that was the only lie that Linda told you throughout this whole podcast though, so you should believe her otherwise? Well, yes, Harmony is a wonderful, wonderful organization. And there's a lot of materials that you can learn from and every, once a month, don't you have something called Sacred Pause where you can get together and have a worship service together?

Linda Stanbridge 33:02

We do. Yeah, we have a worship service. It's the last Monday of every month, except we don't meet in December and it is at eight Central. It's usually about an hour long and it is worship that's not just LGBTQ friendly, it is actually LGBTQ centered. So, we are taking a unique look through our own lens at what it means to be on this journey together.

Carla Long 33:27

And so, Linda, thanks so much for all the work that you do. I know that you do a lot. And, I mean, I can't even imagine your life, being a mother, and MCISM and a healthcare, working in health care and helping your husband run this campground. Oh, my gosh, I, that's a lot of stuff. So, thank you so much for taking time out of your super busy schedule to talk to us about all the good things that are happening in Michigan. I really appreciate it.

Linda Stanbridge 33:54

So, it's so good to talk to you. I really appreciate the opportunity to share about what we're doing.

Carla Long 33:59

Thank you so much.

Linda Stanbridge 34:01

Thanks.

Josh Mangelson 34:09

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