



The Love Letter



Lord of Love Office

Phone 402.493.2946
 Fax 402.493.3087
 Website www.lord-of-love.org

Lord of Love Staff

Pastor
 Brad Meyer
pastorbrad@lord-of-love.org

Office Administrator, Prayer Chain, and Financial Secretary
 Mary Lou Gustafson
marylou@lord-of-love.org

Community Therapist
 Kim Mueller
 402.354.6891, Ext. 13

Missionary to Tanzania
 Bob Kasworm

Web Steward
 Del Gust
webmaster@lord-of-love.org

Love Letter Editor
 Kim Gust
loveletter@lord-of-love.org

Senior Organist
 Carol Novak

Associate Organist
 Amy Kragnes

Chancel Choir Director
 Jon Novak

LOL Brass Director
 Brian Lund

Bell Choir Director
 Heidi Meyer

Worship Schedule

Sun. 8:00 a.m. Worship Service
 Sun. 9:15 a.m. Sunday School
 Sun. 10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Volume 41

February 2013

Mission Statement: Celebrating and sharing God's love in a welcoming community of faith, while serving others.

A Look Ahead

In February, Valentine's Day reminds us of loving and being loved. Well, there is lot to love at Lord of Love this month! There is so much going on! Here is a peek at some of the events happening in February.

The **diaper derby** for Lutheran Family Services is going on now through Sunday, February 17. Help us meet our goal by donating diapers or money to buy diapers (see page 7, Nurture).

Two special opportunities for **adult education** are being offered this month. On Sunday, February 3, learn about Mosaic from Allison Corson-Brown, and on Sunday, February 24, learn about Immanuel Pathways (see page 7, Nurture).

Lord of Love's second annual **blood drive** will take place on Sunday February 10 (see page 9, Outreach). Sign up now to donate! Also on February 10 is our semi-annual **congregational meeting** at 11:30 a.m.

Ash Wednesday is on February 13 this year, and this is when we kick off our Lenten **soup suppers** and **Midweek Lenten worship services** (see page 6, Nurture, and page 5, Worship).

On Sunday, February 17, everyone is invited to go **Bowling for Jesus** to enjoy fellowship while helping the Women of Love raise funds for an upcoming mission trip (see page 6, Nurture).

Finally, on Sunday, February 24, we will celebrate **Prayer Shawl Sunday** in honor of that ministry's 6th anniversary (see page 8, Nurture). Then, at 11:45 a.m., a **new member session** will be offered for anyone interested in becoming a member of Lord of Love (see page 8, Nurture).

In This Issue

Pastor's Page	2	Church Council	12
Monthly Calendar	3	Women of Love	14
Worship	4	In Our Prayers	17
Nurture.....	5	Love Notes	17
Outreach.....	9	Mark Your Calendar	18
Resources	11		

Love Deeply by Pastor Brad

In the section, "Love Deeply" in the book, "Inner Voice of Love" by Henri Nouwen, he says, "Do not hesitate to love and love deeply. You might be afraid of the pain that deep love can cause. When those you love deeply reject you, leave you, or die, your heart will be broken. But that should not hold you back from loving deeply. The pain that comes from deep love makes your love even more fruitful. It is like a plow that breaks the ground to allow the seed to take root and grow into a strong plant. Every time you experience the pain of rejection, absence, or death, you are faced with a choice. You can become bitter and decide not to love again, or you can stand straight in your pain and let the soil on which you stand become richer and more able to give life to new seeds."



We risk a lot of ourselves when we love another person, but it is worth the risk! To experience the love, compassion, or kindness of a friend, spouse, child, or neighbor is to feel the presence of God. If we do not open ourselves to opportunities of love, we close off the occasions in our lives when we are touched by God's loving presence.

Worship is an occasion when we experience the presence of God as we sing praises, extend a word of peace, and exchange a friendly hug. My week is not complete without the physical connection with the people who gather to worship God together. We experience the presence of God when we make time to be involved in the lives of people around us.

If we allow ourselves to love, to show compassion, to walk this journey called "life" with others, life then becomes richer and more satisfying. We are to follow Jesus' example as he extended great love and forgiveness to all who came into his presence. He wasn't always welcomed or shown compassion, but he continually extended God's love to others, which made their lives even richer.



February highlights Valentine's Day, a "day" to tell someone that they are loved and appreciated. As a community of faith, every day we are called to show love and compassion to others. Don't miss the opportunities. It is well worth the risk!

Peace and God's love,
Pastor Brad



MONTHLY CALENDAR

February 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 8:00am Crane Coffee 7:30pm AA Meeting	2 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry 8:00am Worship Planning 10:30am District 18 AA Talent Show 7:00pm Sr. High Lock-in
3 8:00am Worship 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship 12:00pm Combes Shower 6:00pm & 7:00 PM Bell Choir	4 6:00pm "Gather" Bible Study @ Old Country Buffet 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	5 9:00am Quilters 7:00pm Vision & Coordination Mtg.	6 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 5:30pm Luther Kids 6:00pm "Gather" Bible Study 6:00pm Brass 7:00pm Youth Choir 7:15pm Chancel Choir	7 9:30am Text Study at Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	8 7:30pm AA Meeting	9 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry 9:30am Novak Recital
10 Blood Drive 8:00am Worship 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship 11:30am Semi-Annual Mtg 6:00pm & 7:00 PM Bell Choir	11 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	12	13 5:30pm Soup Supper 5:30pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Brass 6:35pm Youth Choir 7:00pm Lenten Worship 7:45pm Chancel Choir	14 9:30am Text Study at Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	15 8:00am Crane Coffee 7:30pm AA Meeting	16 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry 12:30pm Mullen Music Club
17 8:00am Worship 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship 12:00pm Bowling for Jesus 6:00pm & 7:00 PM Bell Choir	18 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	19 9:00am Quilters 7:00pm Church Council	20 5:30pm Luther Kids 5:30pm Soup Supper 6:00pm Brass 6:35pm Youth Choir 7:00pm Lenten Worship 7:45pm Chancel Choir	21 9:30am Text Study at Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	22 7:30pm AA Meeting	23 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry 12:00pm Cub Scout Blue and Gold Banquet
24 8:00am Worship 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship 11:45am New Member Mtg. 1:00pm District 18 AA Mtg. 6:00pm & 7:00 PM Bell Choir	25 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	26	27 5:30pm Luther Kids 5:30pm Soup Supper 6:00pm Brass 6:35pm Youth Choir 7:00pm Lenten Worship 7:45pm Chancel Choir	28 9:30am Text Study at Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts		

WORSHIP



Lord of Love's Worship Servants

	February 3	February 10	February 17	February 24
Greeters				
8:00 a.m.	Woody and Mardi Fiske	Paul and Peg Murphy	Harry Naasz, Anne Yarger	Doug and Rose Roberts
10:30 a.m.	Rett and Judy Messerschmidt	Lynda McGraw, Paula Foster	Claude and Sandy Hall	Paul and Ann Kroll
Liturgist				
8:00 a.m.	Deb Lund	Paul Murphy	Karen Mullen	Paul Christenson
10:30 a.m.	Ruth Manning	Brian Fanders	Don Rowen	Brad VenHuizen
Communion Servers				
8:00 a.m.				
10:30 a.m.	Dan and Ruth Manning	Edwards family	Nick Olson, Rowen family	
Altar Care				
8:00 a.m.	Janet Guthrie, Nancy Shinrock	Mike and Christie Klos	Cathy Aden, Dayla Miller	Doug and Rose Roberts, Tessin family
10:30 a.m.	Paul and Ann Kroll	Pauline Shaffer, Randi VenHuizen, Deb Quadhamer	Diana Haye, Marcia Roads	Debra Gillespie, Karen Armitage
Ushers				
8:00 a.m.	Combes family			
10:30 a.m.	Dave, Lueders, Adam Lueders, Brad VenHuizen, Lynnette Nore, Chris Boarts			
Nursery Attendant(s)				
10:30 a.m.	Anne Yarger	Sarah Horan	Lisa Rieff	Ashley Meier
CD Recorder				
8:00 or 10:30	Pat Brewer	Paul Christenson	Karen Pickens	Brian Fanders



WORSHIP

Lenten Worship: "Moments of Pause"

Our days are usually filled with things to do and places to go. We rush from one place to the next without rest in between. During Lent, we will focus on moments in our daily lives for "pause." We pause to appreciate stillness, reflect on our relationship with God, contemplate the wonder around us, take time for others, and spend time in prayer.

Please join us for worship on Ash Wednesday, February 13, at 7:00 p.m. Then take a moment to "pause" at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays, February 20 and 27, and March 6, 13, and 20 as we worship and experience moments with God through the LBW Evening Vespers service.



New Process for Scheduling Liturgists and Communion Servers

The Worship Committee is going to start assigning liturgists and communion servers beginning in March 2013. We will assign on a 3-month period as we do for other worship servant positions. In the past, we have had sign-up sheets, but some Sundays do not get filled, and we think this will be a more reliable method of scheduling. If you are unable to serve on your assigned Sunday, we would ask you to trade with someone and contact our church secretary, Mary Lou. If current volunteers would email their preference for the 8:00 a.m. or the 10:30 a.m. worship service by February 15, we can begin to arrange this new schedule. On some Sundays, if a family member is serving as liturgist and they also would like to have their family serve as communion servers, please include in your email whether this works for you. The Worship Committee thanks you who volunteer your time for worship services each Sunday; your contribution helps to make worship run smoothly! Please email Pat Brewer at jpbrewer123@cox.net or Karen Mullen at pkmullen@cox.net with your preference: 8:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m. and whether your family will assist you in serving communion.

In February, we would like to have a 15 to 20 minute training session between worship services for people who are not currently on the volunteer list but would like to be. Please watch the bulletin for an announcement for that purpose.

NURTURE

Volunteers Needed to Keep the Sunday Morning Donut Tradition Alive!

Please consider volunteering your time to either pick up or clean up the Sunday morning donuts. We have had a few Sundays where at the last minute, someone had to go and get the donuts for our hungry members. The sign-up sheets are on the north bulletin board, and the current month's sign-up sheet is on the "Donut Table." Volunteers to wash the coffee cups and coffee pots are also needed. Sign up on the same sheet. P/U means picking up the donuts. C/U means cleaning up the coffee cups and pots.

The donuts are ready at the Hy-Vee on 108th and Fort Streets at 7:30 a.m. Sign the sheet at the bakery, and bring the pink sheet back to church and put it in the coffee can where you put your money for the donuts. Thanks in advance for your help!



Lenten Soup Suppers



It is that time of year again when members of the congregation sign up to provide

Soup Suppers on Wednesday evenings prior to worship during the weeks of Lent.

This year, Ash Wednesday is on February 13. For the Soup Suppers, plan to have about 75 people for soup and whatever else you would like to provide. Traditionally, a few people or a group will sign up to provide these suppers. There is a free-will offering for the meal; the cost of your ingredients is taken from the offering, and the balance goes to a local ministry, Table Grace Café. Table Grace Café feeds people whether they can pay or not, and about 80 percent of the people are not able to pay the full price of the meal. If you add \$5.00 to the free-will offering for your meal, you will help the staff at Table Grace Café continue to provide food for those who cannot afford their meal. Please consider this ministry when adding your free-will donation. One other thing to remember: it is all about the fellowship and service!

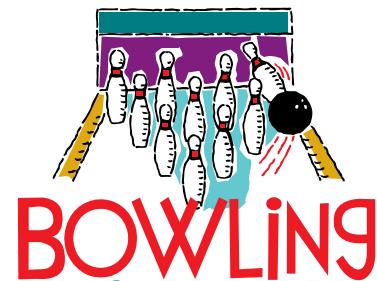
The sign-up sheet will be on the north bulletin board in the Narthex. Please sign up to provide a Soup Supper this Lenten season!

Bowling for Jesus

Please join us for Bowling for Jesus! This family event, which is a combination of fellowship and fundraiser, will be held on **Sunday, February 17**, from 12:00 noon until 1:30 p.m. at Maplewood Lanes, 3030 N. 101st Street. The cost is \$10.00 per person and includes two games plus shoes.

To spice it up a bit, please bring extra \$\$ for the following contributions: 1 strike = 25 cents; 2 strikes in a row = 50 cents; 3 strikes in a row = \$1.00; making a 7/10 split = \$5 (or whatever makes you feel good).

Please sign up in the narthex, at which time you may prepay your \$10.00. Please have your money turned in before arriving at the bowling alley so as not to take time away from bowling. Beth Olson and Ruth Manning will gladly relieve you of your donation! Proceeds go to Lord of Love Women on a Mission fund.



BOWLING

Weekly Education Opportunities at Lord of Love

Sunday

- 9:15 a.m. Sunday School (Preschool – High School) @ LOL Classrooms
Adult Studies @ LOL Abraham, Mary, and Joseph Rooms

Monday

- 6:00 p.m. *Gather* Bible Study @ Old Country Buffet (first Monday of month)

Wednesday

- 5:00 p.m. Confirmation (7th & 8th grades) @ LOL Abraham Room
6:00 p.m. Luther Kids (1st – 6th grades) @ LOL Preschool
6:00 p.m. *Gather* Bible Study @ LOL Mary Room (first Wednesday of month)

Thursday

- 9:30 a.m. Text Study @ Guthrie's

Saturday

- 7:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast and Bible Study @ LOL Fellowship Hall

Lutheran Family Services Diaper Derby 2013!

The Lutheran Family Services Diaper Derby is going on **now through February 17, 2013!** The Centers for Healthy Families provide early intervention and prevention services aimed at reducing child abuse and neglect among at-risk families. The Centers encourage healthy behaviors by providing needed child-care essentials, such as diapers, car seats and Pack N Plays. Parents "purchase" these items with points earned by completing healthy parenting activities. This Diaper Derby supports the Council Bluffs and North Omaha Centers.

Donations of diapers or cash gifts may be made through Lord of Love. Cash gifts provide the greatest flexibility.

<u>Dollars</u>	<u>Diapers</u>
\$1.00	5
\$5.00	25
\$10.00	50
\$15.00	75
\$20.00	100
\$40.00	200
\$60.00	300
\$80.00	400
\$100.00	500

*Basic unit = \$.20 per diaper;
based on averages of size & brand*



Thank you for "Pampering" our kids!

Adult Education Opportunities

You are invited to the following special adult education opportunities on Sundays in February at 9:15 a.m.

February 3 – Allison Corson-Brown with Mosaic



Mosaic provides a life of possibilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities. It helps people define their own happiness. It supports them and empowers the pursuit of their goals. It celebrates their successes, even if that success is as simple as the pursuit itself.

Allison Corson-Brown will share inspiring stories that impact Mosaic's mission and highlight its "Discover the Possibilities" program that raises awareness of people in our community who might not always have a voice.

February 24 – Immanuel Pathways

"Your home. Your Care. Your Pace." is the goal of Immanuel Pathways, which works to keep seniors living in their homes for as long as possible. The presenter will share information about their PACE program: Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly, and the many services that they provide.

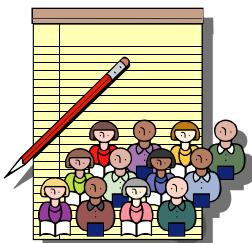
Immanuel Pathways is sponsored by Immanuel, a faith-based organization with a 120-year legacy of providing Christ-centered services.



NURTURE

New Member Session

Interested in membership at Lord of Love? A new member session will be held on Sunday, February 24 from 11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Please let Pastor Brad know if you are interested in attending. A light lunch will be served. Contact Pastor Brad at 402-493-2946 or pastorbrad@lord-of-love.org.



Membership Class

Prayer Shawl Sunday

Lord of Love's Prayer Shawl Ministry celebrates its 6th anniversary in March. During that time, several women have completed about 550 prayer shawls, with 408 of them having been distributed at this writing. Our goal has been to have everyone at Lord of Love receive a prayer shawl.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Adults past high school graduation will have the opportunity to receive one at church on Sunday, February 24. (Prayer shawls will continue to be given out at baptism, confirmation, and to high school graduates if they have not received them earlier.)



We also ask that **if you have received a prayer shawl that you wear it on Sunday, February 24!** What a beautiful sight that will be with the many colors that will fill the congregation that day as we honor our prayer shawl ministry.

Adult Help Needed for Easter Breakfast

On Easter Sunday, traditionally, the Youth Group makes breakfast for the congregation. Adult volunteers are needed to guide the Youth in purchasing the ingredients and making the breakfast. The Youth have made egg and French toast casseroles in the past, but if you have a specialty that you would like to make, that would be wonderful also. The cost of the food is deducted from the free-will offering. The Youth plan to feed about 150 people on Easter Sunday. Please talk with Lori Vandeenter or Paula Foster if you would like to volunteer for this project.



Junior Choir

Children who are in 2nd grade and up are invited to join Lord of Love's Junior Choir! During February, practices will be as follows:

- February 6 7:00–7:25 p.m.
- February 13 No practice: Ash Wednesday
- February 20 6:35–7:00 p.m.
- February 27 6:35–7:00 p.m.

The Junior Choir will sing during our worship services on occasion. If you have questions, please contact Jane Hawkins at 402-343-1680 (please leave a message).



Junior Choir Rehearsals

OUTREACH

Lord of Love Blood Drive

The American Red Cross bloodmobile will be at Lord of Love on Sunday, February 10, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for our annual blood drive. You can schedule your appointment online at www.redcrossblood.org (search sponsor code 0092657) or call 1-800-RED-CROSS. Remember, blood cannot be manufactured—it comes from generous donors like you!



Mission Possible Update



Thanks so much to everyone who supported the local Lutheran Family Services *At Ease* program with special Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas offerings. The *At Ease* program provides trauma treatment and therapeutic support for active military, veterans, and their loved ones.

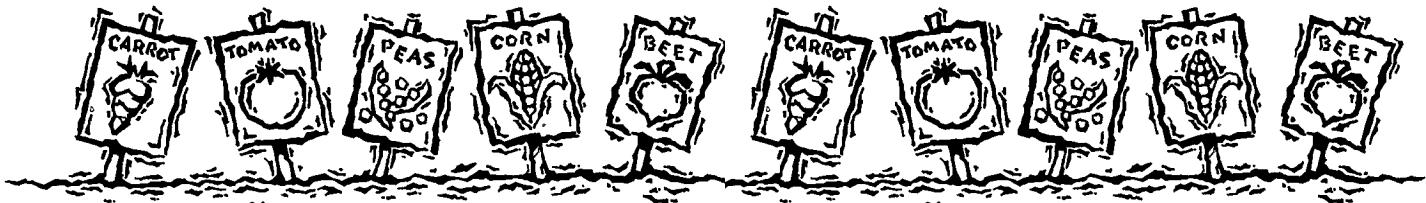
Offerings given at the Wednesday night Lenten services, proceeds from the soup suppers, and the special Easter offering will all go to Table Grace Café. Table Grace Café is a community restaurant that serves gourmet pizza, soup, and salad lunches to customers, regardless of one's ability to pay. Those who need assistance are encouraged to work at the restaurant, go through a training program in restaurant work, and participate in music ministry. The goal is to nourish the body and soul of all those who need assistance.



The costs of Table Grace Ministries are now \$7,000 each month. The majority of folks who eat at the cafe pay very little. Our goal is to provide sponsorship for at least one-half month. In addition, please visit the cafe for a delicious, nutritious lunch, and/or volunteer to assist with a meal. Let's give generously to help the hungry!

Lord of Love Community Garden

Some of us start getting antsy to get our hands in the dirt, so we start dreaming and planning our gardens early. Lord of Love will again grow vegetables to donate to area pantries. Not only is the work rewarding, but the gardeners have great fun, too. The more help, the better. No experience necessary. Talk to Deb Lund or Jeri Morgan, if interested.



Christmas Message from Jerusalem

"God is with us. We must accompany one another, just as God in Christ accompanies us," says Bishop Dr. Munib Younan, president of The Lutheran World Federation in his Christmas message from Jerusalem. Remembering Mary and Joseph's flight to safety, the bishop, a Palestinian refugee himself, says that the Federation currently cares for 1.5 million refugees around the world. Watch the video at www.ELCA.org/federation-video.



ELCA Malaria Campaign and Nebraska Synod

To lift up the 25th anniversary of the ELCA and the 20th anniversary of our companion synod relationship with the Northern Diocese in Tanzania, the offering collected at the 2013 Synod Assembly in Kearney has been designated for the ELCA Malaria Campaign for use in combating the disease in Tanzania.

In Tanzania, the ELCA Malaria Campaign is funding a malaria project that is a partnership between Lutheran World Relief and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. The ELCA Malaria Campaign will supply \$250,000 of the funding for this project, which will focus on underserved zones with high malaria occurrence.

The ultimate goal of the malaria work in Tanzania is to increase access to and use of malaria control resources for 1.5 million community members in 13 rural dioceses of the ELCT, including the Northern Diocese. These resources include:

- Education about timely fever management, correct and consistent use of nets, early prenatal care for pregnant women, and information about malaria control resources
- Livelihood development programs
- Medication and diagnostic
- Organizational support

The project will focus on underserved zones with high malaria prevalence.

Working as a church, through churches in Africa, the ELCA has the structure in place to reach individuals and communities that other organizations cannot reach. Your prayers, your leadership, and your financial support are needed to meet the campaign's goal of \$15 million by 2015.

For more information about the ELCA Malaria Campaign, go to www.elca.org/malaria.



ELCA Malaria Campaign
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

RESOURCES

Together, Inc., Volunteer Opportunity



On Saturday, January 12, a group of us went to Together, Inc. at 1616 Cass and volunteered. It's amazing how much work a small group of people can do in a short amount of time! We must have hung up 6 to 8 large boxes of coats on coat racks. We also worked in the basement and organized leftover Christmas toys and books into different age groups and gender. We took a basement that was a huge mess and made it ready for the next big mess to happen!

In all seriousness, Together provides a great service of providing emergency food and coats, financial assistance, and other things for people in need. With only four staff members, Together relies heavily on volunteers to provide these services.



Mathew 25: 35-40 *For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me. Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And Jesus will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of my brothers, you did it to me.*



Legacy of Giving

Gather with us on Sunday, April 14, for a Legacy of Giving presentation from 11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at Lord of Love. A catered meal will be served at 11:45 a.m.



**Lutheran
Planned
Giving
Services**

Craig Stirtz of Lutheran Planned Giving Services will give a presentation covering estate planning basics, including ways people can give to loved ones and to ministry or charity, as well as on mistakes people make when creating their wills or trusts (for example, paying too much in taxes, giving the wrong assets to their children, and not taking advantage of charitable vehicles).

Lutheran Planned Giving offers free, confidential, focused planning including creating your first wills and power of attorney, personal property lists, living trusts, or updating any of these instruments.

This will be a very beneficial presentation to help in the responsible planning of your estate. Please consider attending this presentation! No products or services will be sold.



RESOURCES

Stewardship by Doug Armitage

2 Corinthians 9:7 *Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

Matthew 6:1-4 *Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

Just the other day at work, our senior management sent out an email asking us to go to a website and record any volunteer giving and hours that we had donated in the last few months. It spawned a conversation among my colleagues about whether we should record the volunteer time we had donated at our church or our church giving. The main question about the email request was “what was the point of it?” The most common thought was that someone in upper senior management had community service as a goal for the year.

This exercise seems to fly in the face of what Jesus said in Matthew. I was pleased that others in my office saw the same conflict. At the same time, the company will match contributions with cash. What a conundrum! Why is this never easy? In the end, I decided that I should give some food and let the company contribute some cash to match.



We are to give cheerfully and quietly. We are to give to God as a response to his wonderful gifts to us, “not reluctantly or under compulsion.”

Thank you for all that you give to the church in response to Christ’s gift of Grace and Love!

CHURCH COUNCIL

2013 Lord of Love Church Council

Executive Committee: Brian Lund, President; Kenn Garder, Vice-President; Judy Messerschmidt, Secretary; Barb Haskins, Treasurer

Nurture: Paula Foster, Lori Vandeventer

Outreach: Mike Klos, Karen Anderson

Resources: Rex Quadhamer, Paul Concannon

Worship: Randi VenHuizen, Pat Brewer



CHURCH COUNCIL

From the Council President – February 2013 by Brian Lund, Council President

Matthew 6:31-33 (NRSV) *Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

At our council organizing retreat this January, Pastor Brad talked about gratitude, being grateful for the many blessings we experience each day of our lives. He had the council members list the people and things for which we are grateful in response to several specific questions. In just a few minutes, I had nearly filled my half-sheet with names of people, opportunities, and experiences in my life for which I feel blessed and helped to shape me as a person. Pastor Brad figured that this would happen. When we take time to think about it, we become more aware of the way God works through us and through others in positive ways.



We also got our first look at the year-end financial report of our congregation. Lord of Love is certainly blessed with caring, giving members who faithfully respond with financial gifts to support our ministries and mission. Thank you for being generous in your giving in 2012! For the first time in a number of years, we are truly operating in the black, with funds remaining in our General Fund checking account after paying all our bills. Our strong financial position is allowing us to invest in growing our staff in 2013 to improve our Christian Education and Youth Ministry programs. In the coming months, you will hopefully hear more about this plan becoming a reality.

Lord of Love has a wonderful Pastor who helps us to form a strong relationship with God through Christ. My hope is that as we grow in faith and love, we will be even more of a blessing to those in need within our community and beyond. Faithful giving of your time for service to others is a part of being a blessing to others. I encourage you to find your passion for ministry and give of yourself to be that blessing to those around you.

Psalm 100:1-5 (NRSV) *Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing. Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name. For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.*

Let us give thanks for all that we have, for all who are a blessing to us, and for the One who brings hope into the world.

Thank you for helping support the ministry programs of Lord of Love. Many of our faith-filled members give much time and energy in support of our ministries. Please take time to thank those you know who help to make our ministries a success.

Please continue to pray for the ELCA, Bishop Hansen, our Nebraska Synod, Bishop Brian Maas and his staff, Pastor Brad, our congregation, and our ministry together.

Blessings in faith and service,
Brian Lund

WOMEN OF LOVE

Annual Women's Retreat

We need your help! Our annual Women's Retreat will be held at St. Benedict Center in Schuyler, Nebraska, from Friday evening until Saturday afternoon, April 5 and 6. We are in need of women to help plan the retreat. Please contact Val Florea, coordinator of Women's Ministry, at JVFlorea@aol.com. Thanks in advance for your help!



Secret Angels



All women are invited to participate in the Secret Angel program in 2013. Forms are available at the Information Center. Place your completed form in the large red coffee can by Sunday, February 3. You will receive your Secret Angel assignment in time to remember your new angel on Valentine's Day.

What do secret angels do? The most important thing is to pray regularly for your angel. Also, a note of encouragement, greeting cards, and perhaps a token gift on special occasions are a good way to let your secret angel know she's in your thoughts and prayers.

Gather Bible Study

Session 6 of the Bible study will continue the theme from January, "Gathered for Rest and Community: Koinonia Calling," based on I Corinthians 1:9, *God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ the Lord.*



You are invited to attend one of two study groups. The Monday evening group will return to the Old Country Buffet, 145th and West Center Road, on February 4 at 6:00 p.m., and the Wednesday evening group will meet on February 6 at 6:00 p.m. in the Mary Room.

Saved to Serve



NSWO has announced the two "Saved to Serve" events for the summer of 2013, the 15th year of this ministry. Sprucing up the grounds at Bethphage Mission in Axtell will take place June 7-9. From August 9-11, Prison Ministry in Lincoln will be the recipient of our volunteer hours. Additional information will be provided soon.

Ladies Coffee Fellowship

Ladies, you're invited to join coffee fellowship at Crane Coffee, 77th and Cass Streets, on Fridays, February 1 and 15 at 8:00 a.m.

Women's Ministry Team

The Women's Ministry Team meets on Wednesday, February 13 at 6:00 p.m. in the Mary Room. Most of the business for women's ministry is handled at these meetings. All women are invited to attend.

It's Coming Soon

Watch your mailboxes for the 2013 Women's Ministry Brochure. It includes the monthly events for our women's ministry, and we'd love to have you participate!!



WOMEN OF LOVE

Winter Retreat

Gwen Edwards, Randi VenHuizen, and Ruth Manning, along with some 150+ other women, attended the Nebraska Women of the ELCA winter retreat on January 19 in Grand Island. (It should have been called the “Spring” retreat -- 54°!) This was at least the 16th year the women of St. Paul’s Lutheran hosted this annual event, and once again they did a superb job.



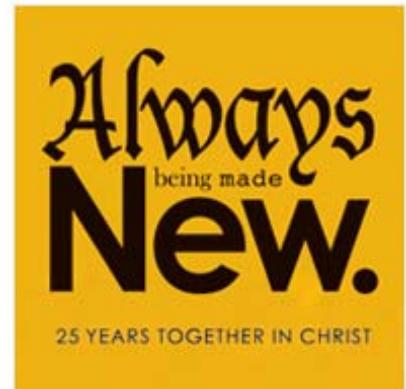
Coffee and doughnuts were available at 8:30 a.m., followed by opening devotions from Kandy Pflaster, our NSWO president. Using Chapter 29 of Rick Warren’s *Purpose-Driven Life*, she challenged us by saying: “Service is not optional. What is holding us back from serving Jesus?”



Kandy shared some information on the Women of the ELCA’s 25th anniversary. Church-Wide W/ELCA has announced a special 25th anniversary appeal. Money directed towards that appeal will be split 50/50 between the Women of the ELCA and the ELCA Malaria Campaign. The Nebraska Synod is part of Region 4, which has declared a goal of \$25,000 for the campaign. To date, NSWO has raised \$2,125 of its \$5,000 share. Kandy also encouraged us as individuals to make our personal donations to the cause.

Presenters from Lutheran Family Services and Mosaic shared videos on their respective anniversaries: LFS recently marked its 120th anniversary and Mosaic celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. Winter retreat offerings were designated to be divided evenly between the two organizations.

Other highlights included keynote speaker Jenny Herrick, humorist from Sioux City, who challenged us to laugh at least 10 times a day for our health (those attending have several weeks of laughter under our belts). The Nebraska Synodical Women were Bishop Dave deFreese’s most ardent fan club, particularly because of his Bible studies. However, Bishop Brian Maas quickly captured us with his Bible study and joined the list of a wonderful Bible study leaders. His presentation centered on the theme verse for the ELCA’s 25th Anniversary, “Always Being Made New.” He challenged us to go home to our congregations, being vulnerable in Christ, and help remove the barriers that have broken relationships and allow those relationships to be “made new.”



Closing the day was the hilarious Bottle Band from Trinity Lutheran Church in Hildreth, Nebraska, followed by the closing devotional. (RHM)

*Note: LOL women will be having a special recognition of the 15th anniversary. Please watch for further announcements.



WOMEN OF LOVE

Spring Gathering

The annual NSWO Metro East Spring Gathering will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. on Saturday, March 9. St. Paul Lutheran Church, 13271 Millard Avenue, will host the Gathering that will meet under the theme of "Lift up Your Hands in Praise and Prayer."

A registration fee of \$15 covers meals and materials, and should be mailed by February 28. Registration forms are available at the Information Center in the narthex. The events include a business meeting, Bishop's Bible study, a Happy Birthday Luncheon with clowns and more, and workshops focusing on the theme.



Tangible offerings will be gathered for Mosaic. They include art and craft supplies: water color paints, markers, paper; dishes: 4-piece place settings of Corelle; silverware and cooking utensils; bake ware: mixing bowls, casserole dishes, baking pans; and all sizes of towels. Gift cards are welcome, and cash donations will be used to purchase adaptive equipment for Mosaic clients.

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this inspirational event.

Thank You!



Many thanks to the eight men and women who helped serve Lutheran Women of Omaha on January 8. We served 55 women, and they expressed a great appreciation for all who worked and for the meal. After expenses, we were able to add \$145.82 to the Women of Love treasury.

Dates to Remember

February

- | | | |
|----|------------|--|
| 1 | 8:00 a.m. | Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 77 th and Cass |
| 4 | 6:00 p.m. | <i>Gather</i> Bible Study, Old Country Buffet,
145 th and West Center Road |
| 5 | 9:00 a.m. | Quilters, Fellowship Hall |
| 6 | 6:00 p.m. | <i>Gather</i> Bible Study, Mary Room |
| 13 | 6:00 p.m. | Ministry Team Meeting, Mary Room |
| 15 | 8:00 a.m. | Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 77 th and Cass |
| 17 | 12:00 p.m. | Bowling for Jesus, Maplewood Lanes |
| 19 | 9:00 a.m. | Quilters, Fellowship Hall |
| 24 | | Prayer Shawl Sunday |



Looking Forward

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| March 9, 2013 | Metro East Spring Gathering, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Millard |
| April 5-6, 2013 | Annual Women's Retreat at St. Benedict's, Schuyler |
| September 20-22, 2013 | NSWO Convention, Holiday Inn, Kearney |
| July 24-27, 2014 | Ninth Triennial Gathering of the Women of the ELCA, Charlotte, NC |

IN OUR PRAYERS & LOVE NOTES

In Our Prayers

Diana Baker (friend of the Thoms)
Chris Beckman (friend of Jane Gehringer)
Dick Bell
Mary Boyd
James Cantrell (uncle of Gwen Edwards)
Ann Christiansen
Claire Foral (friend of Dave and Lisa Rieff)
Nick Gehrig (grandson of the Schuchards)
Katie Gillespie
Keith Gillespie
Mike Gillotte (neighbor of Bill and Karen Pickens)
Joei Harris (friend of Gwen Edwards)
The Jipp family (friends of the Messerschmidts)
Cathy Johnson (friend of Marilyn Thomsen)
Cheryl Jones (friend of Nancy Shinrock)
Dolores Jordan (aunt of Paula Foster)
Jude Konvalina
Jane Loquist (sister-in-law of Kristi Omar)
Donna Lueders (mother of Dave Lueders)
Lisa Lueders (sister-in-law of Dave Lueders)
Brenda Mac
Jim Mahler (brother of Jane Hawkins)
Marj Mahler (mother of Jane Hawkins)
Debbie Michalak (co-worker of Jackie Combes)
Brenda Nobles (friend of Gwen Edwards)
Karen Pickens
David Pippin (nephew of Lynda McGraw)

Judy Quest (friend of Jane Gehringer)
Isaac Schroeder (infant son of Clay and Kelly)
Jill Sheridan (sister-in-law of Rebecca Lund Sheridan)
Ron Stoffers (friend of the Millers)
Ron and Brenda Thom
Roslynn Thom (sister of Ron Tom)
Marilyn Thomsen
Ted Whitfield (former co-worker of Brian Shinrock)
Jeff Wise (friend of the Thoms)

Those deployed around the world:

Kelvin
Veronica Barnes and her fiancé Jake Harmon
Andrew Briggs
Terry Duke
Zach Gehrig
Jesse Kinney
Nash Oltman

Children waiting to be adopted & those seeking to adopt
Men's servant ministry
Stephen Ministers and their care receivers
Those seeking employment
Those who mourn

If you would like to add a name to the In Our Prayers section of *The Love Letter*, please contact the office at 402.493.2946, send an email to marylou@lord-of-love.org, or fill out a prayer request note available in the narthex and place it in the basket. **Please help keep this list current by informing us when a name can be removed.** Thanks!

Love Notes

Thank you! Heidi and I extend our deepest gratitude and thanks for the generous Christmas gift. We are blessed by the ministry of Lord of Love and enjoy the variety of opportunities to serve.

God's continued blessings,
Pastor Brad and
Heidi Meyer



Thank you for your prayers, your cards, and your care, especially during the past two months. We also want to thank those individuals who contributed to the fund to have the heater repaired in our truck. We understand that you wish to remain anonymous. We are so happy to be traveling warm again and appreciate your help.

Bill and Karen Pickens





10405 Fort Street
Omaha, NE 68134-1298

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
OMAHA, NE
PERMIT NO. 368

Return Service Requested

Mission Statement: Celebrating and sharing God's love in a welcoming community of faith, while serving others.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

This Month

February 10	American Red Cross Blood Drive Congregational Meeting
February 13	Ash Wednesday Soup Suppers and Midweek worship services begin
February 17	LFS Diaper Derby ends Bowling for Jesus
February 24	Prayer Shawl Sunday New Member Session

Upcoming Events

March 31	Easter Sunday
April 14	Legacy of Giving presentation
May 31-June 2	2013 Nebraska Synod Assembly in Kearney



Articles for The Love Letter can be submitted to the editor, Kim Gust, in the Love Letter mailbox at church or by email at loveletter@lord-of-love.org. Articles must be received by the Love Letter editor by the 20th of the month.