



The Love Letter

Volume 40

March 2012

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Worship Schedule

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

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

A Look Ahead

We are now in the season of Lent, when we are encouraged to reflect on our relationship with Jesus. Many people challenge themselves during Lent, either by giving up something, such as chocolate or television, or by taking on something new, such as daily exercise or volunteer work. Regardless of how you choose to observe Lent, you are encouraged to join us at Lord of Love on Wednesday evenings for our **Lenten soup suppers and worship services** (see page 8, Nurture, and page 4, Worship).

On Sunday, March 4, everyone is invited to go **Bowling for Jesus** (see page 8, Nurture). This is a fundraiser to send two women from Lord of Love on a mission trip in 2013.

Lord of Love is celebrating its 40th anniversary this summer, and preparations are underway to publish a **new Lord of Love cookbook!** Everyone is invited to submit recipes by Thursday, March 15 (see page 8, Nurture).

As spring is approaching, so is garage sale weather! If you are doing some spring cleaning, please consider donating items for the **Preschool Garage Sale** on Saturday, April 14.

Finally, looking ahead to summer, several youth from Lord of Love will be attending the **ELCA National Youth Gathering**. To help pay for this trip, the youth are seeking sponsorships, which are donations of any dollar amount. Sponsors will receive a postcard or letter from the youth during the gathering and will be invited to a special evening program after the youth return (see page 16, LOL Youth).

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Spiritual Assessment by Pastor Brad

This week I completed my online health assessment through the ELCA health plan. I answered several general health questions, and then the big question: “How intentional are you going to be about improving your diet or exercise patterns over the next six months?” NOT! It was easy to answer the height and weight questions but more difficult to “honestly” answer the questions about my plans to eat better or exercise, because I have no plan.

The health assessment made me think of the season of Lent as our “Spiritual Assessment.” To complete our spiritual assessment would involve a statement like:

Rate your current prayer practice:

- Great!
- Okay
- Needs improvement
- No plans to change in the next six months.

Depending on how you respond gauges how you will proceed in the immediate future to make changes or improvements in your spiritual journey.

Lent offers a time of reflection and connection with God as we walk with Jesus on his way to the cross. Lent provides the opportunity for us to examine our hearts and to become more



attentive to our spiritual lives and our connection to God. We focus on Jesus’ obedience to his Father and what that means for our lives as followers of Christ.

At the end of the health assessment, I was given the option to sign up to have someone check in with me concerning my progress and to help me achieve my goals. I feared it would be a person calling me to chastise me for my lack of exercise or poor dietary choices. But then I realized that being accountable to someone might not be the worst idea! In fact, maybe the person would encourage me and support my efforts. (We’ll see what happens.)



Just like the health assessment, your Lenten meditation plan is personal; you do it by yourself, or with other members of your family or your church group to keep you accountable to your spiritual journey. We, as the church, are there to encourage, support, and challenge you in your efforts. The church—all of us—is to foster your commitment to spiritual growth during Lent and throughout your faith journey.

May Lent be filled with personal and communal reflection times as we go on this journey together.

Peace,
Pastor Brad

MONTHLY CALENDAR

March 2012						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	2 8:00am Crane Coffee 7:30pm AA	3 Fellowship Hall being painted 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 9:30am Novak Recital
4 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 12:00pm Bowling for Jesus 6:00pm & 7:00 PM Bell Choir	5 8:00pm AA & AI Anon	6 9:00am Quilters 6:00pm Property Comte Mtg. 7:00pm Vision & Coordination	7 5:30pm Soup Supper 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm "Gather" Bible Study 7:00pm Lenten Worship 7:45pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	8 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	9 7:30pm AA	10 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 8:00am Worship Planning 10:00am Violin Recital
11 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 11:30am Jr. & Sr. High event 1:00pm Eagle Scout Ceremony 6:00pm & 7:00 PM Bell Choir	12 8:00pm AA & AI Anon	13	14 5:30pm Soup Supper 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Women's Ministry Team Mtg. 6:00pm Brass 7:00pm Lenten Worship 7:45pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	15 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	16 8:00am Crane Coffee 7:30pm AA	17 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study
18 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 6:00pm & 7:00 PM Bell Choir	19 8:00pm AA & AI Anon	20 Church Council Mtg. 9:00am Quilters	21 5:30pm Soup Supper 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm Luther Kids 7:00pm Lenten Worship 7:45pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	22 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	23 7:30pm AA	24 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study
25 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 1:00pm District 18 AA Mtg. 6:00pm & 7:00 PM Bell Choir	26 8:00pm AA & AI Anon	27	28 5:30pm Soup Supper 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Brass 7:00pm Lenten Worship 7:45pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	29 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	30 8:00am Crane Coffee 7:30pm AA	31 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study

WORSHIP

Worship Servants Needed

Greeters, liturgists, and communion servers are needed. If you would like to volunteer, there is a sign-up sheet on the information board in the Narthex. If you have any questions, contact Pat Brewer at 402-496-4771 or jpbrewer123@cox.net.

Gluten-Free Communion Wafers

We are now offering gluten-free communion wafers to those who would like them during Holy Communion. Please let Pastor Brad or the communion server on your side know that you would like one, and they will be happy to provide one for you.

Worship Services for Lent

Wednesday Lenten worship services begin at 7:00 p.m. and will focus on The Character of Christ: Forgiving, Peaceful, Obedient, Humble, and Loving. A simple supper will be served at 5:30 p.m. each Wednesday.



Lord of Love's Worship Servants

	March 4	March 11	March 18	March 25
Greeter(s)				
8:00 a.m.	John and Val Florea	Dan and Ruth Manning	Paul and Sue Dieter	Paul and Peg Murphy
10:30 a.m.	Barb Haskins, Pauline Shaffer	Paula Foster, Harry Naasz	Paul and Ann Kroll	Claude and Sandy Hall
Liturgist				
8:00 a.m.	Tom Olson	John Florea	David Hild	Doug Aden
10:30 a.m.	Heather Christensen	Brad VenHuizen	Dave Rieff	Karen Armitage
Communion Servers				
8:00 a.m.	Combes family	Florea family		Doug and Cathy Aden
10:30 a.m.		Lynette Nore, Christopher Boarts	Barb Haskins, Julia Ritonya, Abby Rieff	Armitage family
Nursery Attendant(s)				
10:30 a.m.	Anne Yarger	Sarah Horan	Lisa Rieff	Ashley Meier
Altar Care				
8:00 a.m.	Connie Walther, Lisa Meyer	Janet Guthrie, Nancy Shinrock	Mike and Christie Klos	Cathy Aden, Dayla Miller, Deb Quadhamer
10:30 a.m.	Karen Anderson, Mardi Fiske	Paul and Ann Kroll	Pauline Shaffer, Randi VenHuizen	Diana Haye, Marcia Roads
Ushers				
8:00 a.m.	Dave Hild, Paul Murphy, Claude Hall, Mike Klos, Eric Klos, Bob Christensen			
10:30 a.m.	John Edwards, Dan Manning, Rex Quadhamer, Gary Ramsay, John Ramsay			

The Faith Journey of Keith Gillespie by Karen Pickens

Keith, Debra, and Katie Gillespie were looking for a new church home when they first visited Lord of Love in 2002. They were looking for a Lutheran church where Katie could start Confirmation. Friendliness is what brought them back. I first became acquainted with Deb and Katie on a Saturday "clean the church" day, and then got to know Katie very well as I mentored her class in Confirmation. In the years ahead, I got to know bits and pieces about Keith. Recently, I have had the privilege of getting to know a lot more about him, and today I am sharing his story with you.

Keith Gillespie came into the world on September 17, 1937. He was born at home in the country, near Somers, Iowa. Vera Ethel Bogard was his mother, and Donald LeRoy Gillespie was his father. He had an older brother Kenneth and four younger siblings: Karen, Harley, Everett, and Leadayle. Keith's father held various jobs before going into the Navy in World War II. At that time, the family left the country and moved into an apartment over the pool hall in Renwick, Iowa. Keith's maternal grandfather owned the pool hall. They lived there for 2 years, and Keith loved it; the hustle and bustle of the town, cars lined up and down the streets, people moving about doing their business. At that time, Renwick was a booming town of about 700 people with 5 grocery stores, 2 hardware stores, a feed store, 2 car dealerships, a bank, a theatre, and 2 restaurants. A vivid memory of Keith's is when the German prisoners of World War II were brought to Renwick to dig the ground for water main pipes. The school Keith attended was the same school his mother went to and where she excelled in Latin, receiving a scholarship to college. However, in those days, it wasn't common for girls to continue their education, and she was not allowed to do so. She worked as a hired girl, helping farm families with cooking and household chores until she married at the age of 18.

Keith's mom and the children attended the Lutheran church in Renwick until Keith's father opposed the fact that the Lutherans didn't believe in participating in the Masonic Lodge. The Baptist church then became their church, and Keith was baptized at about the age of nine or ten. After the Baptist church burned to the ground, services were held at the parsonage. Keith's favorite Sunday school teacher was the preacher's wife; she was also his third grade teacher. Keith had high energy and was very adventurous, which often got him into trouble. Some said that Keith's middle name was trouble. Here I want to say that I don't think Keith has changed much. He still has that high energy, and I wouldn't be surprised if it doesn't still get him into trouble now and then.

When Keith was a junior in high school, he was more interested in making money than in getting an education, so he quit school and went to work for Wilson Plumbing and Heating in Goldfield, Iowa. In 1956, at the age of twenty, he enlisted in the army and was sent to Korea. The war had just ended, and there was much rebuilding to be done. Keith's high energy and adventurous nature became an asset for the US Army. Back home in Iowa, he and his older brother had climbed to the top of a windmill for fun. In Korea, he assisted in erecting a 300-foot-tall radio communication tower. He climbed the full height of that structure numerous times during its construction. For his work on this tower, Keith's picture made the cover of Stars and Stripes, the military newspaper distributed worldwide. Eventually, he became a company clerk, using his typing ability to type up reports. While in the army, he also received his GED. Keith spent 2 years in the army, during which time he also married. After being discharged from the Army, Keith and his wife Doris made their first home in Storm Lake, Iowa. Eventually, two children, Brad and Diane, were born to Keith and Doris.

Continued on the next page

The Faith Journey of Keith Gillespie, continued

Back home in Iowa, Keith began his academic career. In 3 years, he received his Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from Buena Vista College, after which he taught sixth grade for 5 years. Drake University was next, where he received his Master's Degree in Elementary Administration and Supervision. He then became an Elementary Principal and worked for 16 years in this capacity in Iowa and Minnesota schools. Again, he pursued his education, this time attending the University of South Dakota where he received his Specialist Degree in Curriculum, going on to become the Director of Elementary Education in Estherville, Iowa.

Keith loved going to school; he loved learning and being part of academia. One of his extra-curricular activities as an undergraduate student at Buena Vista College was participating on the Intercollegiate Forensics Debate Team. On weekends, his team traveled to various colleges and universities to debate both sides of an issue, such as: "Should Congress have the power to overturn decisions made by the Supreme Court?"

While working in elementary schools, he also was involved in extra activities. As Assistant Principal in Keokuk, Iowa, he was in charge of the Safety Patrol. His was no ordinary Safety Patrol. The students wore uniforms and they learned drills and marched in unison under Keith's command. They were so good, that for several years they took first place at contests with other elementary schools in Iowa. First prize was a trip to Washington D.C., which his school won 2 years in a row. Keith also loved teaching, and the students loved him. Keith did whatever he could to help them. Recently, one of his sixth grade students (from 40 years ago) wrote to thank him for going out of his way to see that she got her education. Keith saw the young woman's potential and was concerned that for many reasons, including financial, she would be unable to go to college. Keith spoke to her mother and offered to help find ways to finance the girl's college expenses when the time came. This former student attributes her ability to believe in herself and her success in life to Mr. Gillespie's interest and encouragement, saying that "he was a great teacher, a wonderful safety patrol leader, and an awesome human being."

In 1980, Keith returned to college for more education. He received his Certificate of Advanced Studies in Education Administration at Iowa State University and was certified to be a school superintendent. Keith and his first wife divorced soon after. Keith completed his degree at Iowa State. He then worked as Superintendent of Schools for 10 years in Rolfe, Clearfield, and Mormon Trail Community Schools in Iowa. It was during that time that he and Debra started dating. Again, Keith took an interest in pursuing an education; this time it was Deb's. He encouraged her to enroll in college, which she did, receiving a degree in Education, majoring in English and Speech. Later, in 2000, Keith still advocating for her advancement, Debra received her Master's Degree in Business from Bellevue University. On February 14, 1988, in the Clearfield, Iowa, Methodist church, Keith and Debra were married. Their daughter, Katie, was born in 1989, and she was nearly 2 years old when they moved to Nebraska.

In Nebraska, Keith became Superintendent of Bennington Public Schools. Upon retirement from school administration, he was not ready to hang up his hat, so he accepted a sales position at Boone Brothers Roofing. Later, he went to work for John Kraft Chevrolet, where he made the General Motor's Hall of Fames as a top salesman. Keith completed his working career by returning to school, where he did substitute teaching in the Ralston, Millard, and Omaha school systems for several years.

Continued on the next page

The Faith Journey of Keith Gillespie, continued

When I arrived at the Gillespie's to write Keith's story, the first thing I noticed in their living room was a beautiful pew-like bench designed with a cross. I was told that it was one of several that Keith has made. Wood working was just one of his hobbies. He also collected and repaired antique clocks, his favorite being displayed on the wall coming into their home. Fishing was a favorite past time also, and in 1969 in Spirit Lake, Iowa, Keith held the record for the biggest Northern Pike, weighing in at 18 pounds. While still in college, Keith taught himself ballroom dancing. He and Debra have enjoyed dancing together through the years. Wine making is a hobby Keith took up in 1980 and one that he still enjoys. Along with his many interests and hobbies, Keith has some strong disciplines, one of which is being prompt. Keith stated, "If you are late for work, you must think that your personal activities are more important than your job."

There came a time when Keith decided it was time to pass on his wood working tools. "Your mind shouldn't wander when you are using saws," he stated. One day he put up a sign in the front yard and before the day was over, most of his tools were sold. Keith was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in March 2011. A few days after undergoing shoulder surgery, Keith fell in his home on September 30, 2011, smashing his face and shattering his hip. He spent 12 days in the hospital before being transferred to the Immanuel Fontenelle Rehab Center, where he spent 6 weeks recovering. Keith couldn't wait to return home. However, life at home is a little different these days. While Deb is at work, Keith spends 2 days at New Cassel's Adult Day Center, and the other days of the week, a lady comes to the house to stay with Keith. Debra is at home with Keith the rest of the time. While at home, Keith is content to watch a little television and enjoys war movies and documentaries. However, Antique Road Show is what he seriously watches! When he wants to go downstairs, he uses an electric chair lift, which takes him down and back up again.

Keith and Debra are both very proud of their daughter, Katie, who is following in her Dad's footsteps pursuing advanced education. She will be graduating in May from William Jewell College in Liberty, Missouri, with a double major in Psychology and Religion. Her plans are to pursue a 5-year PsyD program that will lead to a doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology. Her goal is to work as a Christian family therapist.

Keith and Debra celebrated their 24th wedding anniversary on Valentine's Day of this year. When I asked Keith about his passions and what it is that makes his heart sing, he replied "Being married to Debra!" This brought tears to Deb's eyes. Besides Katie, they are blessed with two children from Keith's previous marriage and two children from Debra's previous marriage. They have a total of six grandchildren. Their lives are full and happy, and on two Saturday afternoons, they welcomed me into their home to share their joy and listen to the story of Keith's life. I've learned that Keith is right where he wants to be...with Debra.



Bowling for Jesus

Please join us for the 3rd annual "Bowling for Jesus." This event is to raise money for "Women on a Mission," a fundraiser to send two women from LOL on a mission trip in 2013.



This family event will be held from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 4 at Maplewood Lanes, 102nd and Maple Street. The cost is \$10 per person, which includes 2 games and shoe rental. Sign up on the bulletin board in the narthex, and pre-pay your money to Beth Olson. Come and enjoy the fun!

Lutheran Campus Ministry at UNO

Join the adult forum on Sunday, March 11 at 9:15 a.m. to hear about Lutheran Campus Ministry at UNO from the Campus Associates and students who participate in its ministry. Campus Ministry is important to the faith lives of students attending college and a significant opportunity for them to grow in ministry in the church.

Lenten Soup Suppers

The sign-up sheet for volunteering to provide a Lenten Soup Supper each Wednesday during Lent is on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Please plan to be at church around 5:00 p.m. to set up your soups, salad, and dessert.

40th Anniversary Cookbook

Just a reminder that March 15 is the deadline for submitting recipes for the new cookbook honoring Lord of Love's 40th anniversary. (A submission form with instructions is included in this issue of *The Love Letter*.) Please place your recipes in the box at the Information Center in the narthex.

You also may submit your own recipes electronically at www.typensave.com/login.asp. The group login is: *womenoflove*. Contributor password: *nectarine443*.

We encourage you to submit at least three recipes (and preferably more) to make this the best cookbook of the four we've published. Thanks!



Easter Breakfast

The Youth Group will be providing Easter Breakfast again this year. Lynette Kistler would like a couple of adults to volunteer to assist the youth group in preparing the breakfast the Saturday before Easter. Please contact Lynette, Pr. Brad, Paula Foster, or Lori Vandeventer if you are interested.

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

Dear Friend,

In honor of Lord of Love's 40th anniversary, LOL Women of Love is preparing a taste-tempting custom cookbook featuring favorite recipes from our members. These cookbooks will be professionally published and contain special pages of interest, a table of contents, an index, helpful cooking hints, and recipe category dividers. It is sure to be treasured for years to come.

Please submit at least 3 recipes, and preferably more, to make this the biggest and best of the cookbooks we've printed. Follow the instructions below. A recipe collection box is located at the Information Center in the Narthex. **Please note that the deadline to submit recipes is March 15.** We will be sending the recipes electronically, and each recipe will be retyped into the system. Therefore, it will be very helpful if you submit them as soon as possible so we don't have a backlog at the end.

You may also submit your own recipes electronically. Go to www.typensave.com/login.asp. The group login is: womenoflove. Contributor password: nectarine443.

Please direct any questions to Ruth Manning at cranecoffeekick@gmail.com or at 402-451-0221.

Your Cookbook Committee

Instructions

- Print neatly in **ink**, only one recipe per page. Additional forms are available at the Information Center in the Narthex.
- Write legibly as this greatly reduces errors.
- Include container sizes; e.g. "16 oz. pkg., 24 oz. can."
- Submit in paragraph form, not steps.
- Use names of ingredients in directions, e.g. "Combine flour, sugar, and baking powder," not "Combine first 3 ingredients."
- Include temperatures and cooking, chilling, baking, and/or freezing times.
- Be consistent with spelling of your name on each recipe submitted; e.g., always "Ruth," not "Ruthie."
- Your recipes should fit into the following categories:
 - Appetizers and Beverages
 - Breads and Rolls (all types – yeast, quick breads, bread machine)
 - Breakfast and Brunch
 - Cooking for a Crowd (including recipes you've used or that would be good for Lenten soup suppers or summer breakfasts)
 - Crockpot (It's back in vogue!)
 - Healthy Eating (diabetic, heart healthy, low calories, etc.)
 - Holiday Favorites (your favorites for birthdays, Easter, Christmas, Thanksgiving, St. Patrick's Day, Halloween, etc.)
 - Main Dishes/Meats (casseroles, sandwiches, beef, chicken, pork, seafood, etc.)
 - Mom and Grandma's Recipes (I have my Mom's handwritten recipes in a cookbook she got for her wedding shower 75 years ago – priceless!)
 - Soups and Salads (also include your favorite salad dressings)
 - Sweets and Treats (cakes, cookies, bars, pie, other desserts, jam and jelly recipes)
 - Vegetables and Sides

(Over)



RECIPE COLLECTION SHEET

For office use only

Recipe No.

Category

Recipe Title

Submitted By

INGREDIENTS: Use abbreviations: pt. qt. pkg. env. c. ctn. tsp. T. oz. lb. gal. doz. sm. med. lg.

Multiple horizontal lines for writing ingredients.

DIRECTIONS:

Multiple horizontal lines for writing directions.

Lord of Love Community Garden

Plans for the 2012 Community Garden are underway. We hope to spread more OmaGro on the area again this year in the early spring and then get it tilled so we can get potatoes planted sometime in April. The rest of the vegetables will be planted sometime in May. Please consider giving of your time and energy to help with this local community project. We'll need plenty of hands for tilling, planting, weeding, watering, and harvesting. Talk to Deb Lund or Jeri Morgan if you'd like to get involved.



What is Mission Field Nebraska?

The Great Commission calls all of Christ's followers to share the Good News. In the Nebraska Synod, we heed that call for those in our backyard who need to experience God's love by participating in and supporting our Mission Field Nebraska ministries.

Mission Field Nebraska ministries build partnerships that address critical needs within the Nebraska Synod by ...

- caring for those in need
- providing a spiritually welcoming place for newcomers to our communities, our state, and our nation
- seeking to share the Gospel in places where the Church has traditionally been unfamiliar

No matter the locale or mission, each Mission Field Nebraska ministry takes to heart Christ's words at the end of Matthew's Gospel:

Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age. (Matthew 28:19-20)



NebraskaSynod.org

Our Ministries:

- Followers of Christ Prison Ministry
- Fontenelle Community Church
- Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey
- Lakota Lutheran Center & Chapel
- Lutheran Metro Ministries
- Sudanese Outreach Ministry
- Todos los Hijos de Dios
- United Asian Ministry
- Welcome Center
- Mission Starts

Mission Investment Fund by Doug Aden

Lakota Lutheran Center and Chapel Scottsbluff, Nebraska



Mission Investment Fund
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

How do you make a ministry or mission successful? Usually help and support from several organizations, resources and individuals are needed. Such is the case with the Lakota Lutheran Center and Chapel in Scottsbluff, Nebraska.

According to a Nebraska Synod document, the Lakota Lutheran Center is one of a "handful" of ELCA ministries among American Indians. The Center offers congregation-based social ministry with regular worship, youth education, and pastoral care.

From the dedication service bulletin of the new facility, we are told that in addition to worship, the Lakota Lutheran Center ministers to the community by feeding the hungry, caring for the homeless, providing hospitality and Native American fellowship, distributing donated goods, providing parish health services, convening wellness workshops, and sponsoring young adult sports.

Pastor Voss, the Center's Pastor, points to the Center's parish nursing and soup kitchen programs as highlights of the Center's ministry efforts. The Lakota Center is able to make a parish nurse available to individuals at no cost, and Voss said the Center's noontime meal program is among the best in the area.

Since 1989, the Center has been supported in a many ways by various arms of the ELCA and Nebraska Synod. In 2006, the Center was forced from its rented space and had to operate in an inadequate space. Because the Center was well thought of, Scottsbluff gave a plot of land to the Center at a nominal cost. With help of many supporters, including an offering from the 2006 ELCA Youth Gathering, a building fund was established, and in 2008, a modest building was constructed and dedicated.

To help the dream of this facility come true, the Center received help from many sources, including the Nebraska Synod, the City of Scottsbluff, ecumenical partners, the Youth Gathering, and three Nebraska Mission Centers. The total cost of the project was \$485,000. The estimated cost and value of the building and property, had it not received assistance, contributions, and in-kind help from contractors, may be closer to \$750,000.

The Mission Investment Fund also participated by providing two \$75,000 matching grants and a \$40,750 cash flow loan in 2008. This loan was paid off in 2010.

By investing in the Mission Investment Fund, you too can help support the work of similar projects and provide loans to congregations and church ministries that need capital to improve and expand their facilities. The Mission Investment Fund offers several different types of investments, such as Mission Term Select products, Mission future4kidz, or IRA accounts. Brochures about the Mission Investment Fund and the products they offer are located in the Information Center in the Narthex. Take a minute to read about the fund.

RESOURCES

Stewardship All Year Long: Sharing by Kathy Christiansen

The stewardship word for March is "Sharing."

"...and God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work." 2 Corinthians 9:8.

As we have mentioned in the recent past, everyone has a faith story, and those stories should be shared. Just think...one of our stories might have the potential to inspire or inform another person. Stories can bring us together; as well as speaking to our head, they can speak to our hearts.



**SHARE YOUR TIME,
TALENT AND TREASURES**

As we share our stories of the gifts and blessings we have received, we need to continually remember the needs of others. God asks us to "share abundantly" the gifts and blessings that we have received. These gifts are for the good of the community of God and help build up the body of Christ in our world. By using and sharing our gifts, we can be assured that others know the grace of Christ's salvation.

COUNCIL REPORT

Our Giving Status by Barb Haskins, Council Treasurer

Our financial picture for the month of January 2012 is as follows:

- Income: \$29,836.31
- Expenses: \$27,528.70

Thank you for your continued support of Lord of Love and our Mission.



2012 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: Jeri Morgan, Mike Klos

Resources: Doug Roberts, Rex Quadhamer

Worship: Randi VenHuizen, Pat Brewer



COUNCIL REPORT

February 2012 Semi-annual Meeting Summary by Judy Messerschmidt, Council Secretary

On February 12, 2012, fifty-eight people attended the semi-annual congregational meeting to review the annual report, hold elections, and participate in a visioning activity.

One of the high points this year has been the Capital Campaign. Pledges just over \$70,000 were made during the past year, and the church has received approximately \$52,000 to date. The capital projects, including the roof, the parking lot, and the recent mold remediation, have all come in under budget. The narthex ceiling will be completed during the upcoming year.

Elections for the Endowment Committee, the Nominating Committee, and the Nebraska Synod Assembly were held.

Endowment Committee

Doug Aden (re-elected)
Paula Foster (re-elected)

Nominating Committee

Shawn Lorenzen
Deb Lund
Brian Shinrock

Nebraska Synod Assembly

Ruth Manning
Randi VenHuizen



Annual Church **ELECTION**

For the Nebraska Synod Assembly, Brad VenHuizen, Randi VenHuizen, Ruth Manning, John Edwards, and Don Rowen were nominated. Two members were needed. A vote was held, and Randi VenHuizen and Ruth Manning were elected. They will attend the 2012 Nebraska Synod Assembly for the election of the new Nebraska Synod Bishop at Bethany Lutheran in Elkhorn, May 31-June 2, 2012.

The church will celebrate its 40th anniversary on June 9 and 10. The theme for the weekend is "Service, Worship, Community." Saturday activities will include several service projects during the day, a worship service, and a pig roast/potluck followed by a talent show and sharing of LOL stories by members. One of the goals for the weekend is to have 40 or more members participating in special service projects. On June 10, there will be a festival-type worship followed by breakfast and fellowship. The theme of the 40th anniversary ties in nicely with this year's council theme: "Serving in Faith and Love," and our newly updated mission statement "Celebrating and sharing God's love in a welcoming community of faith, while serving others."

Following the annual meeting, members were served lunch and participated in a visioning activity. Members were encouraged to discuss the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities of the attributes that define Lord of Love. The attributes discussed related to our new mission statement.

COUNCIL REPORT

From the Council President – March 2012 by Brian Lund, Council President

Philippians 1:9-10 (NIV) *And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.*

At our 2012 council orientation retreat in January, we went through a word exercise. We identified the words and short phrases that we would use to describe Lord of Love to others. We narrowed the set of words and phrases to a smaller list by “voting” for those that we thought best describe us. Next, we took the subset of words and phrases, grouped them, and then drove out a small, concise list of our key characteristics: we celebrate God’s love, we are a community of faith, we share God’s love, we serve others.

Out of those key characteristics came a new mission statement:
Celebrating and sharing God’s love in a welcoming community of faith, while serving others.

What do you think? Does that statement describe Lord of Love to you? I hope it does. But, if not, please share your thoughts with members of our church council. We would appreciate the feedback.

So what? Does a new mission statement change who we are and what we do? No. The statement reflects who we are today or who we want to be. Going forward, it should further influence how we plan our annual programs and how we operate. It should help us focus on being the church and sharing God’s love in the world in which we live.

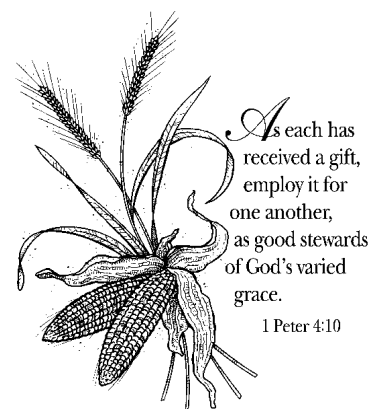
“Serving in faith and love” is the general theme for our 2012 congregation council. The theme came from that word exercise from our January retreat. Just like our mission statement, this theme helps us focus on who we want to be for this year. I’m excited that we can continue to be a congregation that is blessed with many good gifts and faith-filled members. I trust that we will be willing to share our faith and our blessings with others.

1 Peter 4:10-11 (NIV) *Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.*

We will celebrate our 40th anniversary as a congregation in June. A special day of service and celebration is being planned for Saturday, June 9. More information will be available in the months ahead.

Please continue to pray for our congregation, Pastor Brad, our congregation council, for all of God’s children with special needs, and for our ministry together.

Blessings in faith and service,
Brian Lund



Women's Retreat

St. Benedict's Retreat Center in Schuyler is a beautiful setting for a retreat! LOL ladies are returning there after a 1-year absence for the annual spring retreat. The retreat is scheduled to begin at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 27, and it will end Saturday afternoon.

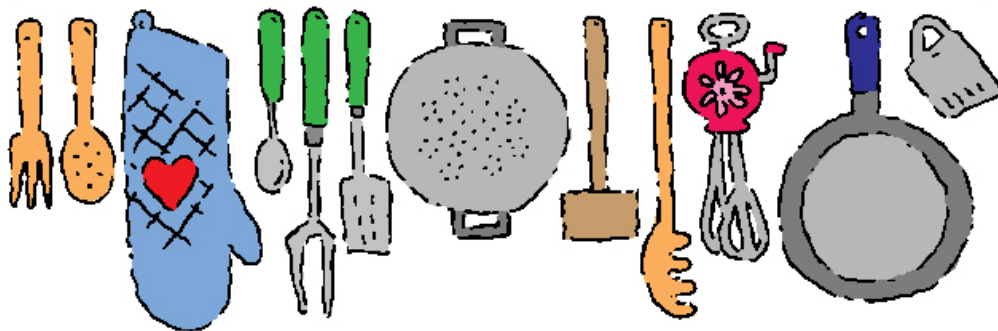
The committee currently is working on the program, and that will be announced as soon as it's available. Watch for the registration form and plan now to attend. Registration fee is \$75 and will cover all meals as well as materials.



Kitchen Cleaning

Thanks to our LOL men, the kitchen looks fantastic. It's great what some fresh paint and new floor tile will do! We also have a new Bunn coffee maker to replace the old one, which was "dying a horrible death"; we could have had a fire!

However, there is more to do. We need your help beginning at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 24. The work agenda includes unloading/loading and cleaning out all the cupboards and drawers; cleaning both ovens (includes oven racks—especially in the convection oven), cleaning the refrigerator, and going through odds and ends of kitchen items, relegating useable but unnecessary items to the preschool garage sale. With great minds working together, we'll make a list of items that need to be purchased from the women's kitchen fund, and get that done as soon as possible after the cleaning date.



Lord's Laughing Ladies

Great news—the coffee group will meet three times this month! All women are invited to join us on March 2, 16, and 30 at 8:00 a.m. at Crane Coffee at 76th and Cass.



LOL Women's Ministry Team

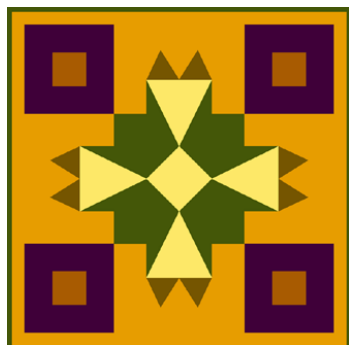
The women's ministry team will meet on Wednesday, March 7 at 6:00 p.m. in the Mary Room.



WOMEN OF LOVE

Metro East Spring Gathering

Mark your calendar for the annual Metro East Spring Gathering to be held on April 14 at Bethany Lutheran Church in Elkhorn. Registration is from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m., and the session will end at 3:00 p.m. Registration is \$15, which includes the noon luncheon, and must be submitted by April 1. Forms are available at the Information Center in the Narthex.



Discover how “Christ Makes Life Exciting” through the stories shared by Diane Gobbles of Coleridge, NE, on how she was inspired to create many of the quilts she has made. Mitch McCartney, Assistant to the Bishop of Nebraska Synod, will lead the Bible study. Speaking on Project Harmony will be Amy Chisholm, Develop Specialist, and Nola Jeanpierre will inspire us with her beautiful music. Churchwide Women’s Organization of Women of the ELCA will receive half of the offering with the remaining divided equally between the Nebraska Synodical Women’s Organization and Nebraska Synod Mission Field Nebraska.

Gather Bible Studies

Session 7 of the study of Matthew focuses on “Rising Expectations.” The theme verse is Mark 13:51, “Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will not pass away.”

The Monday night group will not meet this month. However, the Wednesday group will meet on March 7 in the Mary Room at 6:00 p.m. All women are invited to attend.



Dates to Remember

March

2	8:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 76th and Cass
4	12:00 p.m.	Bowling for Jesus, Maplewood Lanes, 102nd and Maple
5	6:00 p.m.	Gather Bible Study, Old Country Buffet Cancelled
6	9:00 a.m.	Quilters, Fellowship Hall
7	6:00 p.m.	Gather Bible Study, Mary Room
14	6:00 p.m.	Women’s Ministry Team, Mary Room
16	8:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 76th and Cass
20	9:00 a.m.	Quilters, Fellowship Hall
30	8:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 76th and Cass



Coming Soon

April 14	Metro East Spring Gathering, Bethany Lutheran, Elkhorn
April 27-28	Retreat at St. Benedict Center, Schuyler
September 15	Autumn Renewal, Lord of Love



Scavenger Hunt

During the month of February, the youth had the opportunity to meet together! We had an epic scavenger hunt in the church looking for items in the Bible.

Here are some of the examples of what verses the youth had to look up. Can you figure out which items they had to find?

Ezekiel 37:16 _____

Numbers 20:2 _____

Luke 15:8 _____

Note to Parents

If any of you would like to help with any youth events, please let Lynette Kistler know. I will definitely need volunteers for the Easter Breakfast on April 8. Thank you so much in advance for all of your help! My email is kistlerlf@gmail.com. See you all soon!



LORD OF LOVE YOUTH GROUP

2012 National Youth Gathering Sponsorships



Nine Lord of Love members will travel to New Orleans, LA, in July to attend the 2012 National Youth Gathering with 39,000 other Lutheran youth. We are looking forward to this life-changing trip! With the trip come expenses. Would you consider offering a Sponsorship for the youth? A Sponsorship is a donation of any dollar amount toward the youth participating in the Gathering. With your Sponsorship, you will receive a postcard or letter from one of the youth while they are attending the gathering to let you know what they are experiencing. Also, after the Gathering, you will be invited to attend a special evening program that will include the youth and adults presenting highlights of their trip and a time to offer their appreciation for your support. The cost to attend the National Youth Gathering is approximately \$850.00 per person.

You may make your sponsorship check out to Lord of Love and place it in the offering or drop it by the church office.

Calendar of Youth Events

March

- March 4 Bowling for Jesus Event – The youth can bowl as a team for this!
- March 11 Both Jr. and Sr. High Youth Meeting

Coming Soon

- April 8 Easter Breakfast
- April 22 Youth Meeting
- May 6 Youth Sunday!



IN OUR PRAYERS & LOVE NOTES

In Our Prayers

Adrienne (staff member/friend of Rose Roberts)
Karen
Dick Bell
Marty Beutler (son of Gary and Connie Beutler)
Ruth Cooley
Jill Coster
Janet Duckworth (friend of Marilyn Thomsen)
Claire Foral (friend of Dave and Lisa Rieff)
Patty George (friend of Dave and Lisa Rieff)
Keith Gillespie
Kaye Haar (friend of the Novaks)
Marilyn Haworth (friend of Brenda Mac)
Cathy Johnson (friend of Marilyn Thomsen)
Cheryl Jones (friend of Nancy Shinrock)
Gene and Dolores Jordan (uncle and aunt of Paula Foster)
Jude Konvalina
Lisa Lueders (sister-in-law of Dave Lueders)
Jim Mahler (brother of Jane Hawkins)
Marj Mahler (mother of Jane Hawkins)
Ruby Mathis and Jada (aunt and cousin of Lynnette Nore)

Debbie Michalak (co-worker of Jackie Combes)
John Patrick Nicholson (friends of the Novaks)
Charlotte Peters (sister of Karen Mullen)
Luana Salerno (friend of Sandy Hall)
Isaac Schroeder (infant son of Clay and Kelly)
Phyllis Strasser
Brenda Thom
Marilyn Thomsen
Ted Whitfield (former co-worker of Brian Shinrock)

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



IN NEED
OF PRAYER

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

Dear Lord of Love family,

Thank you for your support during the last couple of months and what you are continuing to provide. Thank you for the prayers. Thank you for the visits and cards, notably Pastor Brad for his hospital visits. Thank you for the food and the household help. You truly have been "Jesus with skin on." Three surgeries, one after the other, haven't been easy.

Marilyn Thomsen



Despite the construction and the kitchen being out of commission, a light lunch was a great success after the semi-annual congregational meeting on February 12. Thanks to all who pitched in to move tables and set up the sanctuary.

Paula Foster and Lori Vandeventer,
Nurture Committee

Thank you to all those who helped hang drywall, painted, finished the kitchen floor, and reconnected everything in the Kitchen and Fellowship Hall in February. Your work is greatly appreciated by everyone. Thank you for sharing your talents!

