



The Love Letter

Volume 37

February 2009

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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: Created by God's gracious love, we are called, as a community of faith, to be witnesses and servants of Jesus to the world.

A Look Ahead

This is a time of great change for our nation with the inauguration of a new president, so it seems fitting that this is a time of great change for Lord of Love as well. Our church council is trying a new organizational structure, consisting of an Executive committee and five supervisory committees: Worship, Nurture, Outreach, Property, and Finance. Some of the section headings of *The Love Letter* have been changed to coordinate with the new council organization.

Both the January council report and council president Doug Aden's "Bits and Pieces" article discuss the **new organization of the council** (see pages 9 and 10, Council Report & Transition/Call Process Update). In addition, Doug Aden brings to the congregation a few **questions that arose at the council retreat** in January. Please take a look at these questions (in boldface type in the "Bits and Pieces" article) and consider how you would respond.

To help the congregation become familiar with the new council organization and to give everyone an opportunity to be involved in upcoming activities, council members will be hosting a **Ministry Job Fair** in conjunction with the **Congregational Meeting** on Sunday, February 8 (see page 4, Worship). Please plan to attend and get involved during this exciting time of change at Lord of Love!

In addition to attending the Ministry Job Fair, read the articles in this issue of *The Love Letter* to learn about opportunities to help plan events, volunteer your time and talents, and participate in activities that are being offered at Lord of Love!

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Appreciative Inquiry by Pastor Bob

Dear Friends in Christ,

One of my major priorities as an Interim Pastor is preparing the church for the transition to a new pastor. This work of preparation will include what Interim Pastors call “coming to terms with our history.” Lord of Love has many wonderful memories from both the recent and the distant past. There are also some painful memories. This is to be expected in any church—in any human organization, for that matter.

It is normally easy for people to talk about the past if it is good; but where there have been hurts, the healing takes time. Over the years, there have been tensions, disagreements, and hurts over a number of issues in this church. When those feelings persist, everyone loses. And when you think about it, after a few years, it doesn't matter who was right and who was wrong. It is Lord of Love that suffers the most. New members and prospective members are usually “turned off” by disputes between congregation members or their pastors. It is hard for a church to be strong and growing if they are in the midst of conflict.

There is healing that has been noticeable in this church since I arrived last September. There is a positive self-image as well. This change is healthy for the congregation. It frees the membership to concentrate on spiritual growth, outreach to the community, and worship and to become the kind of church that others want to join.

It is now very important for our church leaders to try to help members move on and become the kind of church God wants us to be. When old complaints about past problems are repeated, it is the responsibility of church leaders (and everyone) to point to what the church is meant to be and what the church can do now and in the future.

In these next 6 months or so, I would like to introduce to the congregation *Appreciative Inquiry*. Appreciative Inquiry is a methodology of understanding and enhancing organizational innovation and I believe the most effective and invigorating way to create a new future for this church based on the best experiences of the past.

Appreciative Inquiry (or AI as it is now more frequently called) focuses on the spirit and energy that has created the miracle of any church. AI values a congregation's history, its personality, and its moments when it has found itself functioning at its best.

AI is neither a gimmick nor a short-lived panacea for a troubled congregation. But what AI can offer Lord of Love is help in preparing for your new pastor in a variety of ways. Besides building community and enabling a collaborative engagement in the future of your church, the appreciative experience will enable you to realize your vision. Overall, one can imagine that finding a congregation of energized and vibrant people with a clear sense of direction for themselves would be a position any new pastor would covet.

So stay tuned. More information to follow in the coming months....

Peace,

Pastor Bob

For surely
I KNOW THE
plans
I have for
YOU,
says (the)
Lord...
TO GIVE YOU A
future
WITH
Hope.
Jeremiah 29:11, NRSV

MONTHLY CALENDAR

February 2009						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion	2 6:00pm LWT Study @ Old Country Buffet 8:00pm AA & AI Anon	3 9:00am Quilters 5:30pm YWCA Men's Group 6:45pm First Place	4 4:45pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm LWT Study 7:45pm Chancel Choir	5 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	6 8:00am Lord's Laughing Ladies 7:30pm AA	7 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 8:15am Prayer Ministry 9:00am Craft Day 2:30pm Jennifer Novak Haar recital
8 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 11:30am Annual Meeting	9 6:30pm Cub Scout Leaders mtg. 8:00pm AA & AI Anon	10 5:30pm YWCA Men's Group 6:45pm First Place	11 4:45pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm WELCA Board 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:30pm Ventures Stewardship 7:45pm Chancel Choir	12 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	13 7:30pm AA	14 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 8:15am Prayer Ministry 9:00am Morris Shower
15 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 11:30am Youth Un-Baptismal Party	16 8:00pm AA & AI Anon	17 9:00am Quilters 5:30pm YWCA Men's Group 6:45pm First Place	18 4:45pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Brass 7:45pm Chancel Choir	19 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	20 8:00am Lord's Laughing Ladies @ Crane 7:30pm AA	21 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 8:15am Prayer Ministry 5:00pm Blue & Gold Banquet
22 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 1:00pm AA District 18 Mtg.	23 8:00pm AA & AI Anon	24 5:30pm YWCA Men's Group 6:45pm First Place 7:00pm Sunnyslope/Sunview Neighborhood Assoc.	25 7:00pm Ash Wed. Service	26 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	27 7:30pm AA	28 Novak - Suzuki event 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 8:15am Prayer Ministry

Council Restructuring – Worship

Under the new restructuring of our congregational council, Worship is designated as one of the five committees (Worship, Nurture, Outreach, Property, and Finance). Some of the items formerly part of the Worship & Witness committee have been turned over to the Outreach committee (visitor welcoming activities, new members, advertising and signage) and instrument maintenance is moved to Property.

The structure of the new Worship Committee is now divided into two major segments:

- Under Worship Planning (Karen Mullen), the following teams are included: the Worship Planning Team; the Choir, the LOL Brass, Visuals (flowers, banners, and decorations), and Special Worship Services (Ecumenical, Graduation Acknowledgement, etc.).
- Under Worship Support (Deb Gillespie) are the following teams: Scheduling of Liturgists, Bell Ringers, and Communion Servers; Altar Guild; Ushers; Tape Ministry; Greeters; Nursery; and Keeping Attendance Statistics.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AND MINISTRY JOB FAIR

February 8, 2009

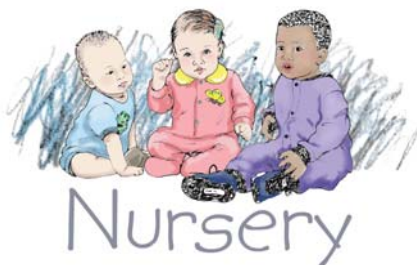
This is your chance to get involved! Each council committee will have a table. Stop by, check out the opportunities to volunteer and participate, and sign up!



Input Wanted Regarding Church Nursery

The way our church nursery will be used is currently being discussed by the church council. It is time to make a decision to either continue to staff our nursery for each service to allow parents to leave their little ones there during worship services or to just keep the nursery as a room parents may take their children to as needed, operating as a “cry room.”

Through the years, we have tried numerous ways to staff the nursery, including using adult volunteers, using junior and senior high youth volunteers, and hiring an individual from outside the church to assume that position. Those who have volunteered are greatly appreciated, but it remains a difficult task to find helpers for nursery duty. At the council retreat in January, it was strongly urged that if we have supervision in the nursery, those who “work” there should be adults and have “Safe Environment Training,” which likely can be achieved through the use of a training video.



Before a decision is made, Karen Mullen and Debra Gillespie would welcome input from parents of young children as well as suggestions from others in the congregation about this issue. Please share your honest opinions about the use of our nursery. How important is it to you to have the nursery staffed for every service? Would you be willing to volunteer once in awhile or to find others to take a turn? Are we overlooking something? We certainly want to explore all options before announcing a decision, and your input will assist us in that goal. Please send your thoughts via email to Debra Gillespie at keith-debgillespie@cox.net.

Lord of Love Hosts Ecumenical “Baptism of our Lord” Service

On January 11, 2009, Lord of Love hosted an ecumenical event that has been celebrated yearly since its inception during the time of Pastor Frank Reisinger at LOL. Eight congregations from the northwest part of Omaha participated: All Saints Episcopal, Holy Cross Lutheran, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic, Northwest Hills Church of Christ, St. Michael Lutheran, St. James Catholic, St. Vincent de Paul Catholic, and Lord of Love Lutheran.

The service focused on our shared celebration of the Baptism of Our Lord. Eight celebrants led us in worship, and a combined choir from many of these churches glorified God in song. The church members attending also renewed their baptism in a procession to the font and mutual blessing of each other with water from the combined churches. A St. Michael Lutheran bell choir and a recorder ensemble as well as our own LOL Brass provided additional musical praise. Those attending were invited to come to the Fellowship Hall following the worship for coffee, cookies, and an opportunity to mingle.



We owe a lot of thanks to Jon Novak and our choir; Brian Lund and the Brass; Deb Lund, who assisted with planning; and Carol Novak at the organ. As always, your contributions were highly appreciated by all who attended!

Lord of Love's Worship Servants

	February 1	February 8	February 15	February 22
Greeter(s)				
8:00 a.m.				
10:30 a.m.				
Liturgist				
8:00 a.m.	Paul Murphy	Marilyn Thomsen	Brian Lund	Karen Armitage
10:30 a.m.	Randi VenHuizen	Lori Vandeventer	Claudia Rowen	Rex Quadhamer
Communion Servers				
8:00 a.m.	Volunteers please	Doug and Cathy Aden	Brian and Deb Lund	Armitage family
10:30 a.m.	Brad and Randi VenHuizen	Concannon family	Rowen family	Edwards family and Quadhamer family
Altar Care				
8:00 a.m.	Evelyn Sacrider, Cathy Aden	Doug and Rose Roberts	Deb Christenson	Ed and Marjorie Keiser
10:30 a.m.	Diana Haye, Marcia Roads	Randi VenHuizen, Debra Gillespie	Brenda and Suzanne Mac	Rowen family
Ushers				
8:00 a.m.	Joe, Josh, and Jason Combes, Ed Guthrie, Brian Shinrock			
10:30 a.m.	Dennis Morrissey, Tom Lauritsen, Nathan Olson			

Nurture Committee Seeks Support

The Nurture Committee serves to take care of or nurture those connected to our Lord of Love family through many ministry teams. We are seeking people who are interested in learning more about our ministry teams and would consider an area of ministry they would enjoy serving in or supporting. Opportunities range from one-time events to several weeks or even longer. Think about your interests and talents, and stop by our table at the Lord of Love Ministry Job Fair on Sunday, February 8. We look forward to connecting with you!



No Experience Necessary

No Experience Necessary, a casual Bible study, meets every other Monday at the Vandeventer's. We meet at 7:00 p.m. and are done by 8:30 p.m. Come relax, learn, and enjoy some fellowship. Call Brian or Lori at 573-5964 for the address, directions, and details. Meeting dates in February are the 9th and 23rd. Meeting dates in March are the 9th and 23rd.



Be a Part of Lenten Souper Suppers!

Can you believe Lent is just around the corner? Soon it will be the time of year that we traditionally come together through fellowship, soup, and Wednesday night worship. Hurry and grab a few friends, your family, or church group to volunteer to cook soup for one of the Wednesday nights during Lent (March 4 through April 1). If you are interested in participating, contact Heather Christensen at rn94@yahoo.com or 415-4571 to reserve your date.



Vacation Bible School

VBS will be here soon. We are in the preliminary planning stages of this year's program offering. We have chosen to bring representatives of Carol Joy Holling to run this year's camp. It's sure to be filled with song, laughter, and learning about God's love in fun ways. Mark your calendar for the week of July 13th! More details to come soon.



Sunday School Students Go Spelunking!

Have you noticed a new enthusiasm for the preschool through 6th grade Sunday School? Not only do we have a new Sunday School coordinator, Cathy Petrick, who is doing a fabulous job, but we also have new curriculum! We are using the Living Inside Out series from Group Publishing. This curriculum explores many areas of the Bible with practical application and learning through fun videos, games, crafts, and plays. Living Inside Out shares Bible truths in fun, memorable ways. Children learn how to practice their faith at school...at home...in friendships... With Living Inside Out, kids move beyond applying faith to actually living it out. By providing Daily Challenges™, kids have the chance to practice faithful living after leaving the Sunday school classroom. Look for weekly handouts to help with this practice.



Our current session is a Spelunkers Module. The Bible lessons in this module help kids see the Bible as a guide as they practice living out their faith with these Bible stories:

- Paul's Charge to Timothy
- Paul Preaches at Antioch
- David Loves God's Word
- Paul Explains How Christians Grow Strong

You may see some Spelunkers activities such as cave hunts, special flashlights, treasure exploration, and a quirky character named Dr. S.P. Lunker sharing experiences with the children.



Weekly Education Opportunities at Lord of Love

<p>Sunday 9:15 a.m. Sunday School (Preschool – High School) @ LOL Classrooms Adult Studies @ LOL Abraham, Mary, and Joseph Rooms</p> <p>Monday 6:00 p.m. <i>Lutheran Woman Today</i> Bible Study @ Old Country Buffet (first Monday of month) 7:00 p.m. <i>No Experience Necessary</i> Bible Study @ Vandeventers (every other Monday)</p> <p>Tuesday 6:45 p.m. First Place Bible Study @ LOL Joseph Room</p>	<p>Wednesday 4:45 p.m. Confirmation (7th & 8th grades) @ LOL Abraham Room 6:00 p.m. Luther Kids (1st – 6th grades) @ LOL Preschool 6:00 p.m. <i>Lutheran Woman Today</i> Bible Study @ LOL Joseph Room (first Wednesday of month)</p> <p>Thursday 9:30 a.m. Text Study @ Guthries</p> <p>Saturday 7:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast and Bible Study @ LOL Fellowship Hall</p>
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Lord of Love Missions Committee Update

Thanks again to all of you who have brought items for the barrel and wheel barrow and for your special offerings for our hunger projects this past year. You have touched many lives with the gift of food! Thanks to your generosity, through our special offerings and mission fund that is 3 percent of our income, thousands of dollars have gone to the Lutheran Pantry, Project Hope, and the Food Bank.

The Missions Committee met recently and decided that we will continue to stress Hunger in the Omaha area through August. We will carry on in requesting items for Project Hope and will send our special offerings and mission budget offerings to the Lutheran Pantry, Project Hope, and the Food Bank.

Later this spring, the Missions Committee will seek input for ideas of targeted mission/outreach that could receive our mission dollars, time, and treasures. The new emphasis would begin in September. Two other activities that will continue are encouraging people to volunteer at the local hunger agencies and having a community garden project for another year.

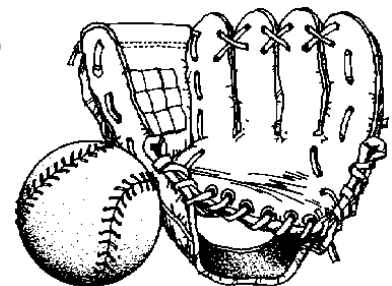
Please maintain your generous gifts. Non-perishable food and health care staples, money, and time are ongoing needs. Thanks to those who have already volunteered for tasks at the Food Bank and Project Hope. Special thanks go to Dan and Ruth Manning and Gary Ramsay for the many carloads of items delivered to Project Hope.



Call the Food Bank (402-331-1213) or Project Hope (402-453-3774) or check the display board in the Narthex and take a tab for contact information for a task you would like to do. There has been a bigger demand than ever for volunteer help and for food and staple items, so your kindness and generosity are truly appreciated.

Good Used Baseball Gloves

How about checking your basement, back entry, and garage for good baseball gloves your family no longer uses? We are collecting them to send to the Oaks Indian Mission in Oaks, Oklahoma. There will be a box in the narthex labeled "Oaks Indian Mission." We need the baseball gloves by Sunday, February 15. Thanks!



COUNCIL REPORT & TRANSITION/CALL PROCESS UPDATE

January 2009 Council Report by Don Rowen, Council Vice-President

The January meeting of the church council was a retreat held on the evening of Friday, January 16 and during the day on Saturday, January 17. On Friday night, the retreat consisted mainly of activities designed to help the council members get to know each other better. Many council members had dinner together at Matt's Grill. Then, activities included sharing our current favorite Bible verse and the reason for our selection, telling our personal history, and playing the "two truths and a lie" game. Pastor Bob also shared his ideas for an Appreciative Inquiry activity he is planning for the church to help the congregation reflect upon and come to terms with our past history.

On Saturday morning, the retreat reconvened. After devotions, the council members were given training about council and church procedures and guidelines. The council then discussed and decided to try the new organizational structure we were considering testing this year. The new organization consists of five supervisory committees: Worship, Outreach, Nurture, Finance, and Property. The council then discussed which ministries, activities, and events should be overseen by each committee and reached an agreement. The council decided when to have the quarterly strategic planning and committee meetings and the quarterly council meetings. After lunch, the council members discussed areas they thought the council should work on addressing during the coming year. The ideas led to discussions about worship style, singability of hymns, how to make worship appealing to all age groups, and the energy difference between services with the choir and without the choir. The retreat concluded with the handling of some business matters. The council passed a continuing resolution relating to the payment of bills after amendment. The continuing resolution describes types of bills (salary and utilities) that can be paid by the treasurer without further approval by another council member. The resolution also outlines the priority of paying bills if the bank account is short. The council decided to move mission giving (to the Synod or other mission projects) from first to fifth behind salaries, staff benefits, mortgage, and utilities in the priority list. The council also approved a motion to ask for approval to have the Renovation Committee develop a proposal to redo the lights and sound system in the sanctuary and minor remodeling of the sanctuary at the February Congregational Meeting.

Upcoming events are as follows:

- February 8 – Congregational meeting
- February 17 – Strategic planning meeting and committee meetings
- March 17 – Council meeting



2009 Lord of Love Church Council

Executive Committee: Doug Aden, President; Don Rowen, Vice-President; Brian Walther, Secretary; Lisa Meyer, Treasurer

Worship: Karen Mullen and Debra Gillespie

Nurture: Heather Christensen, Liz Smith, and Angie Meyer

Outreach: Brian Vandeventer and others to be announced

Property: Craig Pennell and others to be announced

Finance: Brad VenHuizen and others to be announced

COUNCIL REPORT & TRANSITION/CALL PROCESS UPDATE

Bits and Pieces by Doug Aden, Council President

The Church Council held its annual retreat on the weekend of January 16 and 17. Like all retreats of this type, I have a difficult time getting excited about the event, but once I am there, I have good time and it becomes a learning experience. A highlight of the retreat was the devotions. All council members were asked to bring a favorite Bible verse, Bible book, or Bible story and tell what their selection meant to them. We used four for the opening and closing devotions on Friday evening and four for the opening devotions on Saturday morning. The stories almost became one as each person chose to talk about his/her selection and the message became real.



On Friday evening, we experimented with an exercise called “An Appreciative Inquiry and Congregational Change.” We looked at what was happening at Lord of Love and at events outside the church during specific time periods, specifically from 1972, which was the beginning year of LOL, until the present. In discussing the events, we gained an understanding of the relationship between LOL and other activities that happen outside the church. The congregation will use this exercise in the visioning process later this spring.

On Saturday morning, we talked about the reorganization of the council and how the council would function in 2009. Individuals and responsibilities were assigned to committees, which are Executive, Nurture, Worship, Outreach, Property, and Finance. The purpose of the change is to get the congregation more involved in the ministries of the congregation rather than have a council member do all of the work. The committees are now preparing a list of ministries teams that will be needed for 2009, and on February 8, the day of the congregational meeting, we will conduct a job fair, which will give all members the ability to volunteer for a task or two.

Part of our discussion centered on the question, “**if we can’t get volunteers to perform a task, should we keep the activity?**” Two specific items—Lenten soup suppers and summer breakfasts—were discussed. What is your opinion? These two events contribute to the fellowship of the congregation, but are they worth the effort?

Saturday afternoon, we discussed Health Challenges to LOL or what can we do better. Each council member was asked to contribute one idea. The suggestions covered many areas, some of which were worship for younger adults, connecting with members who become inactive, inviting and welcoming, communication issues, inter-generational activities, children’s choir, adult education, “singable” hymns, and the quality of the “non-choir” worship service on Sunday. In the exchange of ideas, one question was raised several times, and it was, **do we need to have two worship services on Sunday morning or should we have just one?** Pros and cons were raised, but many thought it was a question worth exploring. I ask that you give it some thought.

Our attendance at worship services stabilized in 2008. In 2006, we averaged 200 worshipers per Sunday; in 2007, we averaged 160 worshipers per Sunday; and in 2008, we averaged 162 worshipers. We can easily put 170 to 180 worshippers in our Sanctuary.

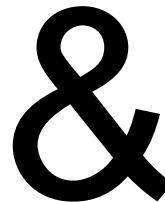
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COUNCIL REPORT & TRANSITION/CALL PROCESS UPDATE

Bits and Pieces, continued

Before the end of the year, we purchased a HDTV for use by the Sunday School and the Youth. In December, we had a break-in, and the HDTV, a computer, a digital camera, and a monitor were taken, and there was some mild vandalism. As a result, we are reviewing the security procedures to see what changes can be made to make our building more secure. At the least, we will probably rekey the building and assign new security codes. Other measures are being considered, and we will communicate those to you as they are being implemented. It is difficult to have a facility that is 100% secure when the building is open to so many different groups. **Should we deny those groups access to the building?** I would say no. For instance, on January 16, AA, Boy Scouts, and the church council were using the building, and on January 17, the Scouts had their Pinewood derby, the Men's Breakfast group met, and the council used the building for the retreat.

Remember the Congregational Meeting and the Ministry Job Fair on February 8. As always, if you have any concerns, come and talk to me, a council member, or Pastor Bob.



MEN'S NEWS CORNER

Men's Breakfast Invitational

The second Men's Breakfast Invitational to be held at Lord of Love will be on Saturday, February 7 at 7:30 a.m. All men are invited. Please come if you are able!



Men's Retreat

Lutheran Men in Mission will be sponsoring a weekend retreat for men entitled *One Year to Live*. This retreat will be Friday evening, Saturday, and Sunday morning, March 27-29, 2009. Limited registrations are still available. Please contact Ron Thom, Paul Christenson, Tom Olson, Dave Lueders, or Brad VanHuizen for further information.



Men's Retreat

WOMEN OF LOVE

Blessings from Ruth Manning, President, LOL Women of Love

To my Sisters in Christ,

Too often, I am remiss in expressing my thanks to those about me who have helped in so many ways to make my life easier. This month, I'd like to acknowledge two women who have been very active in LOL Women of Love ministry.

First of all, Sandy Hall recently left the board after serving years and years and years (o.k., I know she's not that old) on our LOL Women of Love team. She's served in a number of capacities, committees, sub-committees, sub-sub-committees...you get my drift! But she has been a most valuable team member, and for that I give thanks. The good part is, as the most immediate past president of the organization, she continues as my "advisor," and I plan to utilize her talents and advice to the fullest extent.

Because of health reasons, Jessie Bell has just resigned from the board as treasurer. She, too, has been active in many other aspects of LOL women's ministry, and I will miss her wise counsel. Our prayers are for God's special grace on Jessie and her family and complete healing for her. And hopefully, in the not too distant future, we will welcome her back with her many gifts.

Thanks be to God.

Lutheran Woman Today Bible Study

The *Lutheran Woman Today* Bible study continues with *Daniel: Thrown to the Lions* and the theme verse of Daniel 6:26b. All women are invited to attend either one of two study groups: at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, February 2 at Old Country Buffet at 145th and West Center Road, and at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 4 in the Joseph Room at church.



Women's Retreat

Save the Date! Mark your calendar for the annual Women's Retreat to be held at the beautiful St. Benedict Center in Schlyuer, Nebraska, on Friday evening April 24 and Saturday, April 25. This is a time for you to renew, recharge, and connect. Great food, lots of laughs, and Bible study included. Theme and retreat content is being developed and will be released soon along with registration information. So mark your calendar, and think about which girlfriends you'd like to invite to attend this wonderful event!

Crane Coffee

The ladies' coffee fellowship at Crane Coffee, 77th and Cass, is a wonderful time for laughter and friendship. Join us at 8:00 a.m. on February 6 and 20.



Women of Love Ministry Team

The Women of Love Leader Ministry Team will meet in the Joseph Room at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 11. All women are invited to participate. Pick up dinner in the Fellowship Hall and join us for planning and discussion!

WOMEN OF LOVE

Team Players Needed

Are you interested in working with women's ministry at Lord of Love and not signing your life away? Do we have the place for you! We have a number of "one time shot" opportunities for you to help in much needed ways. Check the following chart and see where you might volunteer. Please contact Ruth Manning at cranecoffeekick@gmail.com or 455-7221 by February 10. The pay isn't much, but the satisfaction is great!

Position	No. needed	Time commitment
Assist Rose Roberts in planning a light breakfast and working out program details for the Women of Love meeting 3/28	2	1 planning session; 3/28 meeting
Team members to develop all aspects of women's retreat April 24-26 at St. Benedict's in Schuyler	4-5	Info. due at Retreat Center by April 9
Team member with Beth Olson to develop plan for 2 LOL women to participate in global ministry trip	2	Two years, timeline to be determined by team
Team of young women to plan event (program, speaker, or...) for young mothers	3-4	Date to be determined

Ruth Manning, president, and the Ministry Team are available as resources to the various planning teams.

Metro East Spring Gathering

The women of Luther Memorial Lutheran Church at 61st and Western in Omaha will host the annual Metro East (NSWO) Spring Gathering on Saturday, February 28. Registration fee is \$15, includes lunch and materials, and is transferable but not refundable. Please register by Wednesday, February 18. Registration forms are available at the Information Center in the Narthex.

Meeting under the theme *Seeds of the Heart: Growing in Grace*, Metro East women will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of workshops; do a Bible study with Pastor Martin Russell, assistant to the bishop; and hear keynote speaker, Pastor Pam Ciulla. Pastor Pam joined the staff of First Lutheran Blair a year ago as associate pastor. There also will be displays and information from a number of ministry arms of the ELCA.



Monetary offering will be distributed with half going to Churchwide Women's Organization and the remaining divided equally between the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization and the Lutheran Disaster Fund. Tangible offerings will be brought for the Oaks Indian Mission in Oaks, Oklahoma. Randi VenHuizen is coordinating LOL contributions. Please watch for a collection box in the narthex. The deadline for bringing in tangibles will be Sunday, February 22. Items needed are 12x18 cutting boards, ink pens, hair dryers, baseball gloves, brooms, mops, assorted cleaning supplies, individually wrapped hard candy, curling irons, 2-gallon plastic food storage bins, AAA and AA batteries, and WalMart shopping cards of \$25 or less.

Lord of Love Women Participate in Global Ministry Visit

How would you like to be the subject of that article in *The Love Letter* in a couple of years? It can happen to you!

When our women met in November to plan for the 2009 ministry year, we evaluated our past year's activities, brainstormed wildly (nothing was too weird to bring up) about future activities, and then with Beth Olson's deft hand with colored markers and newsprint, lined up our past activities and future proposals against the Mission Statement of Church-Wide Women of the ELCA: *To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ*, and CWO's Purpose Statement: *As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.*

It was fun to see where the various activities fell...and many of them came under more than one category. However, several things fell by the wayside. We determined that they were good activities, but questioned, "Is this really that important considering our time/energy?", or "Doesn't this duplicate ministry being done by another group?"

But one of the suggestions that elicited a lot of excitement and interest was to work towards sending a couple of LOL women on a global mission trip. As an example, the Nebraska Synod has organized several trips over the past few years. (One leaves for Tanzania the first of February.) We do have an ongoing relationship with sister congregations in both Tanzania and Argentina, and recently two women from each of these countries spent a couple of weeks in Nebraska with our NSWOW. Other mission organizations offer guided trips to help people get acquainted with those in need in other countries and to actually see what happens to our mission dollars. We know that there will continue to be a number of opportunities to become involved in such a mission trips.



*Global
Missions*

And so, we begin our planning. Beth Olson has graciously accepted the opportunity to head up a team of LOL women to help formulate a plan to participate in a "global" visit. She is looking for at least two others to work with her. Perhaps you've participated in a mission trip at some time and your life was changed because of it. Or maybe you would be interested in participating or planning such a trip? If so, please contact Beth or Ruth Manning to share your interest.

Secondly, we have invited Pearl Anderson, a member of Rejoice Lutheran in Omaha, to be our guest speaker at a breakfast meeting at LOL on Saturday, March 28 at 9:30 a.m. Pearl has personally participated in and was a key organizer for Nebraska Synod trips. Most recently, she served as Companion Synod coordinator and organizer of the vision trip mentioned earlier for our sisters from Argentina and Tanzania.

Please pray for LOL's coordinating team and your role in being a support for it. And do come for breakfast on March 28.

WOMEN OF LOVE

LOL Women of Love Breakfast

All women are invited to join together for fellowship and breakfast at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 28 in the Fellowship Hall. Rose Roberts is team coordinator for this meeting and is looking for volunteers to help with planning, serving, etc. Please contact her if you can help.

Pearl Anderson, Nebraska Companion Synod coordinator, will be our guest speaker and share experiences of recent international mission trips. This is in preparation for participation of two women from LOL to participate in such a trip in a couple of years.

Also, revised by-laws for LOL Women of Love will be presented as we further develop a team approach to women's ministry rather than our past board approach.

You are invited, and bring a friend!



Calendar of Events

February

2	6:00 p.m.	LWT Bible Study, Old Country Buffet, 145th and Center
3	9:00 a.m.	Quilters, Fellowship Hall
4	6:00 p.m.	LWT Bible Study, Joseph Room
6	8:00 a.m.	Women's Crane Coffee Fellowship, 77th and Cass
11	6:00 p.m.	Women of Love Ministry Team Meeting, Joseph Room
17	9:00 a.m.	Quilters, Fellowship Hall
20	8:00 a.m.	Women's Crane Coffee Fellowship, 77th and Cass
28		Metro East Spring Gathering, Luther Memorial, Omaha



Women of the ELCA

Coming Up

March 28	Women of Love meeting with Pearl Anderson, guest speaker, 9:30 a.m.
April 24-25	Women's Annual Retreat at St. Benedict Retreat Center, Schuyler

You're Invited...to an Un-Birthday Party!

All youth are invited to an Un-Birthday Party on Sunday, February 15 after the 10:30 a.m. worship service. It's to celebrate everyone's Baptismal Birthdays! There will be a white elephant gift exchange (\$5 gift limit).



Preparations for Youth Gathering Begin

Those going to the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans this summer met in January to begin planning for the trip. The youth were asked to share some of their expectations for the trip, such as what they hoped to learn at this gathering. The youth said they hoped to learn:

- "about the culture of New Orleans, and learn more about my faith and sharing it with others."
- "more about myself and my relationship with God."
- "about New Orleans – about its history and culture."
- "about life in New Orleans."
- "more about all the people going and the community that we'll be staying in."
- "about the culture and life in New Orleans, while mixing what I learn with my faith to expand it even further. I'm excited to see how this trip affects my faith."

Who's going to New Orleans this summer?

<u>Youth</u>	<u>Chaperones</u>
Laura Armitage	Josh Combes
Jason Combes	Carissa Christenson
Casey Florea	Jeri Morgan
Lauren Florea	Jim Morgan
Matt Garder	
Alex Harris	
Kevin Krause	
Kimi Lueders	
Kira Luxon	
Nadine Rowen	
Sarah Vandeventer	



Calendar of Youth Events

February

15 Un-Birthday Party and White Elephant Gift Exchange

Coming Up

March 1 Planning for youth church service
 March 8 Sledding or Movie Day after second service
 March 15 Youth Church Service
 July 19-26 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans

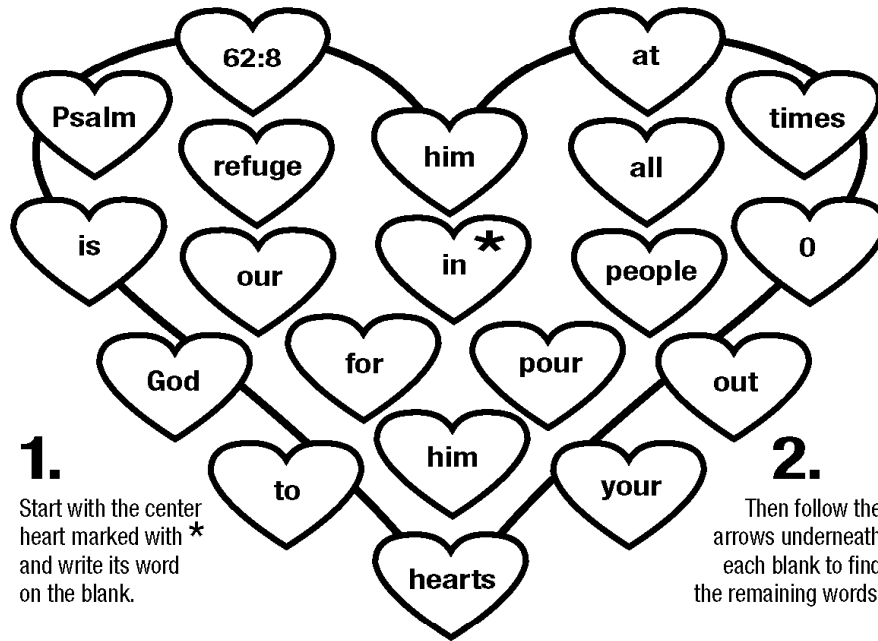


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OUR HEARTS

This special Bible verse from the NIV describes what God wants us to do with our hearts.



1.
Start with the center heart marked with * and write its word on the blank.

2.
Then follow the arrows underneath each blank to find the remaining words.

“Trust _____, _____, _____, _____, _____,
 _____; _____, _____, _____, _____, _____,
 _____, _____, _____, _____, _____,
 _____”
 _____, _____, _____

IN OUR PRAYERS & LOVE NOTES

In Our Prayers

Chris Baker (brother-in-law of Ron Thom)
Dick and Jessie Bell
Ryan Bolen (nephew of Sandy Hall)
Jan Davis (aunt of Paula Foster)
Pearl Garnaas
Norma Gunter
Cindy Harper (friend of Lynda McGraw)
Matthew Hayek (nephew of Sandy Hall)
Harold and Marj Holbrook (parents of Judy Messerschmidt)
Rachael Hueftle (student of Linda Christensen)
Cathy Johnson (friend of Marilyn Thomsen)
Gene Jordan (uncle of Paula Foster)
Bob Kasworm and his ministry in Tanzania
Hannah Knudson (neighbor of the VenHuizens)
Mike Koesters (friend of David Boarts)
Paula Lawhead (at seminary)
Mark Ley
Rose Lubbert (friend of the Rieffs)
Carl Lueders (uncle of Dave Lueders)
Irene Lund (aunt of Brian Lund)
Rebecca Lund (at seminary)
Pastor Elisante Maimu

Chris Miller (nephew of Judy Egr)
Pastor Elibariki Mtui and all the saints of TPC Lutheran Parish, Tanzania
Harry Naasz
Tom Parker (friend of the Lueders)
Dianna Poledna (sister of Jan Miller)
Joe Policky (grandfather of Tamra Johnston)
Berniece Reitan
Doyle Sones (father of Dayla Miller)
Joey Thompson (friend of the Murphys)
Zeffin Thurow (cousin of Deb Lund)
Brody Vermilyea (grandson of Brian and Nancy Shinrock)
Harlan Walther (father of Brian Walther)
Agnes Wilson
Bernie Wolff (friend of Marilyn Thomsen)
Rob Zalk (cousin of Mary Lou Gustafson)

Men's servant ministry
Stephen Ministers and their care receivers
Those deployed around the world
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 Advent Devotions Writers!

The Prophecy of
Bethlehem witnessed by the
Shepherds truly helped me hear the
Angels sing coming home Christmas Eve
after the 11:00 p.m. service.

I thank God for all who shared their struggles,
faith, hope, lives, and blessings from our Lord and
Savior, Jesus Christ. You gave me Aha and
WOW moments to remember.

Continue to let His Light shine in 2009 and help
us do what God would like us to do.

God's Love be to all of His Children - John 3:16,

Lynda McGraw

Many thanks to all who assisted me in any way
while my hands were bandaged from the 2nd
degree burns I got over Thanksgiving. My hands
are totally recovered and functional again! (I think
we'll go out for Thanksgiving next year!)

I want to thank the Men's Breakfast Ministry elves
for collating last month's Love Letter. I put out a
call for help, and you pitched right in. What a
blessing you are, THANK YOU!

My thanks also to Janet Guthrie and Amy
Kragnes for help with the bulletins. I am so
grateful for your assistance. Many others offered
assistance and kind words. I truly appreciate all
of you!

With heartfelt thanks,
Mary Lou


THANK YOU!



The Love Letter
 Lord of Love Lutheran Church
 10405 Fort Street
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Mission Statement: Created by God’s gracious love, we are called, as a community of faith, to be witnesses and servants of Jesus to the world.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

This Month

- February 1 Potluck and Baby Shower for Chris and Renae Rich
- February 7 Craft Day
- February 8 Congregational Meeting and Ministry Job Fair
- February 15 Youth Un-Birthday Party
- February 17 Strategic planning meeting and committee meetings
- February 25 Ash Wednesday

Upcoming Events

- March 8 Daylight Saving Time begins
- March 17 Council meeting
- April 5 Palm Sunday
- April 12 Easter



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.