



# The Love Letter

Volume 37

June 2009

## Lord of Love Office

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

## Lord of Love Staff

### Interim Pastor

Pastor Bob Oleson  
*pastorbob@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. 2*

### Youth Director

Josh Combes  
*402.871.8393 or  
jcombes02@hotmail.com*

### Web Steward

Gwen Edwards  
*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

### Kid's Choir Director

Claudia Rowen

### LOL Brass Director

Brian Lund

### Custodian

Larry Czapla

## Summer Worship Schedule

Sun. 9:00 a.m. Worship Service  
Sun. 10:00 a.m. Breakfast and Fellowship

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

Summer is here! Our **summer worship schedule** began Memorial Day weekend and consists of Sunday morning worship at 9:00 a.m. and breakfast and fellowship at 10:00 a.m. This schedule will continue through Labor Day weekend. Volunteers are still needed to provide **summer breakfasts** (see page 7, Nurture).

June is another busy month at Lord of Love. On Thursday evenings, everyone is encouraged to attend **Appreciative Inquiry sessions**, which include dinner and discussion (see page 2, Pastor's Page). Then on Sunday, June 14, we will celebrate **Lord of Love's 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary** (see page 4, Worship)! Other activities to be involved in this summer include a **summer book study** (see page 7, Nurture) and volunteering in our **Community Garden** (see page 9, Outreach).

Our church council has up-to-date information about many important items, including the **transition process**, Lord of Love's **budget** and current **financial situation**, the new **Worship Enrichment Ministry Team**, and the **youth program**. Please read this month's council report, treasurer's report, and council president Doug Aden's "Bits and Pieces" article for details (see pages 12-15, Council Report & Transition/Call Process Update).

Finally, several of our youth will be attending the **ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans** next month. In this issue, learn what the youth will be doing in relation to "Compassionate Justice" and the environment (see page 18, LOL Youth).

## In This Issue

Pastor's Page .....	2	Transition/Call Process Update .....	14
Monthly Calendar .....	3	Women of Love .....	16
Worship .....	4	LOL Youth .....	18
Nurture.....	7	Just for Kids.....	19
Outreach.....	9	In Our Prayers .....	21
Finance.....	11	Love Notes .....	21
Council Report.....	12	Mark Your Calendar .....	22

# PASTOR'S PAGE

## Moving on Through Appreciative Inquiry by Pastor Bob

Dear Friends in Christ,

It is time now for Lord of Love to move on and become the kind of church God wants it to be.

During the month of June, I would like to invite all members to the beginning of this process called *Appreciative Inquiry*. As I shared with you a few months ago, *Appreciative Inquiry* is a methodology of understanding and enhancing organizational innovation, and I believe it is the most effective and invigorating way to create a new future for Lord of Love based on the best experiences of the past.

What I like about *Appreciative Inquiry* is that it focuses on the spirit and energy that has created the miracle of your church.

*Appreciative Inquiry* values a congregation's history, its personality, and its moments when it has found itself functioning at its best.

Starting with the first Thursday of June at 6:00 p.m., we will gather in the fellowship hall for dinner and conversation. Hopefully this conversation will offer you and Lord of Love a way to build community and enable a collaborative engagement for the future. And if we are committed to the process, the appreciative experience will enable you to realize your vision for Lord of Love.

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 join me June 4, 11, 18, and 25 at 6:00 p.m. for dinner, fellowship, and study.

Peace,  
Pastor Bob



JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

# MONTHLY CALENDAR

June 2009						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	<b>2</b> 9:00am Quilters 5:30pm YWCA Men's Group 6:45pm First Place	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 6:00pm Appreciative Inquiry 7:00pm Boy Scouts	<b>5</b> Synod Assembly 8:00am Coffee Fellowship @ Crane 6:00pm Groom's Dinner 7:30pm AA	<b>6</b> Synod Assembly 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 8:00am Worship Planning 2:00pm Amos/Workman Wedding
<b>7</b> Synod Assembly 9:00am Worship 10:00am Breakfast	<b>8</b> 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	<b>9</b> 5:30pm YWCA Men's Group 6:45pm First Place	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 11:00am Memorial Service for Ed Davenport 6:00pm Appreciative Inquiry 7:00pm Boy Scouts	<b>12</b> 7:30pm AA	<b>13</b> 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study
<b>14</b> Pr Lee Griess Preaching 9:00am Worship & Communion 10:00am Breakfast	<b>15</b> Mary Lou @ Church Staff Conference 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	<b>16</b> Mary Lou @ Church Staff Conference 9:00am Quilters 5:30pm YWCA Men's Group 6:45pm First Place	<b>17</b> Mary Lou @ Church Staff Conference	<b>18</b> 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 6:00pm Appreciative Inquiry 7:00pm Boy Scouts	<b>19</b> 8:00am Coffee Fellowship @ Crane 6:00pm Groom's Dinner 7:30pm AA	<b>20</b> 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 4:00pm Christenson/Comb es Wedding
<b>21</b> 9:00am Worship & Communion 10:00am Breakfast	<b>22</b> 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	<b>23</b> 5:30pm YWCA Men's Group 6:45pm First Place	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 6:00pm Appreciative Inquiry 7:00pm Boy Scouts	<b>26</b> 7:30pm AA	<b>27</b> 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 10:00am Cub Scout Bike Rodeo
<b>28</b> 9:00am Worship & Communion 10:00am Breakfast 1:00pm AA District 18 Mtg.	<b>29</b> 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	<b>30</b> 5:30pm YWCA Men's Group 6:45pm First Place				

# WORSHIP

## Lord of Love's 37th Anniversary!



Lord of Love will observe its 37th anniversary on Sunday, June 14. Please join us for worship at 9:00 a.m. followed by breakfast in the fellowship hall. Everyone is cordially invited!

Pastor Lee Griess will be the guest pastor that day. Pastor Griess will be assisting our congregation later this year when we begin the process of calling a new pastor for Lord of Love. We look forward to meeting Pastor Griess and also to providing him this opportunity to meet our church members. Mark your calendars, and join us on June 14!



## Lund to Share Travels to Holy Land

On June 21, 2009, Rebecca Lund will be sharing stories from her travels in Israel/Palestine in January during the 9:00 a.m. worship service. She will be around for additional questions and sharing after the service in the fellowship hall. Come learn more about the world of the Bible and current Israel-Palestine!



### Lord of Love's Worship Servants

	June 7	June 14	June 21	June 28
<b>Greeter(s)</b>				
9:00 a.m.	Tom and Beth Olson	Kenn and Shari Garder	Brad and Randi VenHuizen	Todd and Lisa Meyer
<b>Liturgist</b>				
9:00 a.m.	Lori Vandeventer		Liz Smith	Deb Lund
<b>Communion Servers</b>				
9:00 a.m.	Vandeventer family		Brenda and Suzanne Mac	Brian and Deb Lund
<b>Nursery Attendant(s)</b>				
9:00 a.m.	Pat Brewer	Lisa Rieff	Sara Horan	Katie Gillespie
<b>Altar Care</b>				
9:00 a.m.	Deb Christenson	Brenda and Suzanne Mac	Ed and Marjorie Keiser	Rowen family
<b>Ushers</b>				
9:00 a.m.	Joe, Josh, and Jason Combes, Ed Guthrie, Brian Shinrock		Dennis Morrissey, Tom Lauritsen, Nathan Olson	

### Tape Ministry: Getting to Know Agnes Wilson by Karen Pickens and Rachel Novak

Today, May 15, 2009, we celebrated a very important occasion: the 97th birthday of Agnes Wilson. Rachel, Esther Welliver, and I arrived around 5:00 p.m. with dinner and a small birthday cake. There were already two birthday cakes there: one a big, beautiful cake that her son, Richard, had brought by and one from her sister and friend. Earlier, she had told me that I need not bring a cake because she had made one the day before and it would be fine. Agnes has learned over the years to take care of herself; making her own cake for her birthday party is a good example of that characteristic. She says that she wants to be independent for as long as she can, and we certainly find that to be true.



We could not celebrate Agnes's birthday without Esther. The two are such good friends, and they go way back. They met at Our Savior's Lutheran Church during the war. Esther's husband was in the service, and Agnes would invite her over after services on Sunday. They have remained close friends over the years and rely on each now more than ever. There is never a dull moment for Rachel and me as we listen to the stories Agnes and Esther tell about their lives. We learn important lessons from them and come away with uplifted hearts.

On a previous visit, we gathered information about Agnes's life story. She served us cranberry juice, coffee, and cookies. If we had had time, she would have given us pot pies for lunch. Agnes always makes sure her guests are well fed. Well, not just her guests, but her mailman, as well. We met him at 11:30 a.m., the time he comes daily to deliver her mail. She makes sure her garage door is opened at that time, and a cup of coffee and two cookies await him on the kitchen counter. For 10 years, this has been customary. Agnes is the highlight of his day; he says it is all downhill from there. We could understand this. Agnes is cheerful, despite the fact that she is nearly without sight and careful in getting around, often using a walker. She keeps up on the current news and shares her opinions. She has many stories to tell, some of them very funny, some very sad.

Agnes, like Anna Jensen and Pearl Garnaas, attended the first worship service at Lord of Love in 1972. Over the years, she has brought her son, her grandchildren, and her great-grandchildren to church. Now, on occasion, her grandson Mark brings her to church. It is always a delight to see her. Barbara Haskins visits her and delivers worship tapes to her so that she can worship and stay connected with Lord of Love.

Agnes's parents came from Norway, her father in 1905 and her mother in 1906. They married in 1907 and had four children: Hawken, Agnes, Inga, and Lief. When Agnes was nearly four, her mother came down with pneumonia and died, leaving her husband with four children to raise. He hired a woman to care for his children, but after a while, the woman told him that she would have to quit her job because she needed to be at home with her daughter. Her father offered them a room in his home so that he could continue to have child care. They accepted, and within the year, the woman's daughter became his wife. Three children were born to them, making a total of seven children in the family. Agnes was moved around a bit during the first years after her mother died. Twice, she lived in South Dakota with an aunt and uncle who had children of their own. They became playmates for Agnes. She remembers playing house with the girls in a grove of trees. They would bring their dolls and have pretend coffee together. Their dolls were homemade and called pillow dolls. They would paint a face on a scrap of material and then tie it onto a pillow and cover it with a little dress. The only other toy Agnes remembers is a little tea set given to her that fits in a cocoa can and is with her still. At night, the children all slept in one bed, the two girls at the top and the boy at the bottom of the bed. Agnes seems to have only happy memories of her early life despite the loss of her mother and the various moves in her life.

Agnes does remember one unsettling day. There was a stream that they had to cross to get to school, and on this day, a bull decided to stand in their crossing. It took them awhile before they could find another place to cross. They also encountered snakes daily, but apparently they were harmless and the children were never bitten. They walked about 2 miles to school, which was a pretty cold trip during the South Dakota winters.

*Continued on the next page*

## Tape Ministry: Getting to Know Agnes Wilson, continued

One day when she got to school, Agnes's teacher thought that Agnes's hand might be frozen. The teacher put Agnes's hand in the water bucket with the dipper. The teacher told the class that they shouldn't mind drinking the water as they all knew that Agnes was clean. Agnes said that her hand had never looked so clean when it came out of that water. At home, Agnes had chores; the first chore didn't last long as Agnes ended up with the milk all over her. Her chore then changed to getting the dirty cobs out of the pigpen.

In 1910, Agnes moved with her family to Omaha. They had several homes in Omaha, one of which burned down. She remembers people from Our Savior's bringing a box with clothing for the family. She attended Webster school on 28th and Webster and Tech High at 32nd and Cuming. While in high school, she made a decision to leave home and live on her own. She lived with a family, working for her room and board plus \$1.00 a week. She saved that money until graduation and then bought dresses. After graduation, she worked for Woolworth's for 6 months, making \$8.92 a week. Following that job, she worked in what is now the OPPD building. There were two businesses there: Norwegian Realty and a Painting company. She did secretarial work for 4 years, earning \$11 a week. In 1934, Agnes married and at the same time lost her job. Jobs were scarce then, and it was thought that only single women should be employed. In 1937, Agnes's son Richard was born. Due to unfortunate circumstances, Agnes was left to raise Richard alone. When Richard was 15 months old, they moved into a boarding house that also provided daycare: the cost was \$39 a month. It seems as if Richard had at least one complaint. Sauerkraut was often served at meals. Fortunately, Richard's high chair sat by a window where they later found his share of the sauerkraut. After that, they lived in small (not so nice) apartments. In 1945, Agnes had saved up enough money to buy a little home on 61st and Seward, where she remains to this day. Over the years, she and Richard worked hard and received their education. With Agnes right by his side, Richard grew vegetables and raised chickens, which he sold around the neighborhood. He learned carpentry, and in later years, Lord of Love would benefit from his talents. Richard built the cross, the lectern, the baptismal font, and the railings of our church. Richard graduated from Tech High in 1955, and in 1968, Agnes got her degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. All this time, they traveled by bus or by foot. It wasn't until Richard grew up and left home that Agnes owned a car (learning to drive that car is a story that only Esther can humorously tell). Throughout all the years, Agnes was employed, working 30 years for the government. Raising her son, however, was Agnes's main priority. At one point in her life, she did meet a man she considered marrying. However, they would have to relocate, and she felt that that move would not be in her son's best interest, so she declined.

When Agnes was asked what was most important to her, she replied "family." Agnes did not have "family" as many of us experienced. Losing her mother at such a young age and being sent to live with relatives two times in her young life taught her to fend for herself, which she did with determination. That determination gave her the strength to raise her child with the love and support she knew was so important to his well being. Richard and his wife, her four grandchildren, and her seven great-grandchildren have become the family she never had, and she has given them the best part of herself.



This is a quilt that Agnes started years ago...it has yet to be finished.

Sitting at the table in Agnes's tiny dining room, drinking coffee and snacking on donut holes, is a break from the busyness of life. For Agnes, time sometimes seems endless, as the hours pass by and she is unable to do what she considers useful. Still, she remains thankful for her blessings and full of humor, which she shares so readily with those she always welcomes into her cozy home. That would include us: we are so thankful for her and to her for her sharing her life story with us. What you read here is only a small portion of a life well lived...drop by for coffee if you want to hear more...you will be lovingly welcomed and kindly treated.

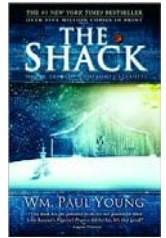
## Summer Breakfasts

Breakfasts are back! They will be served every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall from May 31 through August 30. Please help us out by providing breakfast on one of the Sundays—the menu is up to you. You will be reimbursed for your expenses from the free will offering. The sign-up poster is on the bulletin board in the narthex in the coffee pot area. Contact Ruth Manning at 455-7221 if you have any questions. Thanks for your help!



## Summer Book Study

Men and women are invited to participate in *The Shack* book study, which will be held in the Fellowship Hall from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. on Wednesdays, June 17 and July 1, 15, and 29. Please pick up the reading schedule at the Information Center in the narthex, and read the assigned chapters before class. Please purchase your own book (check out Costco and Shopko for discounted prices). Contact Ruth Manning at 455-7221 if you have any questions.



## Luther Kids by Nancy Shinrock

I would like to thank all of the parents who brought their children to Luther Kids. We had a great year!

We learned new songs and sang in church a couple of times and also in the talent show, thanks to Claudia Rowen. Also thanks to Cathy Petrick for her story times. The stories pertained to every day living—how to be a nicer person, what to do if someone isn't nice to you, manners, etc. The children enjoyed the study on animals and how they pertained to the Bible and teachings.

We made decorations for the Fellowship Hall Christmas tree. This was quite a project, and we worked very hard and fast for it. We also painted crosses and put them up in the Narthex for Lent. The children all did such an excellent job. We did many different crafts this year.

During the last week of Luther Kids, we played games outside and had banana splits.

We hope to see everyone back next year, and all children from 1st to 6th grades are invited to come. Thanks again to Claudia Rowen and Cathy Petrick for all their time and talents.



### Weekly Education Opportunities at Lord of Love

<b>Sunday</b> 9:00 a.m.    Worship Service	<b>Wednesday</b> 6:00 p.m. <i>Lutheran Woman Today</i> Bible Study @ LOL Joseph Room (first Wednesday of month)
<b>Monday</b> 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)	<b>Thursday</b> 9:30 a.m.    Text Study @ Guthries
<b>Tuesday</b> 6:45 p.m.    First Place Bible Study @ LOL Joseph Room	<b>Saturday</b> 7:00 a.m.    Men's Breakfast and Bible Study @ LOL Fellowship Hall

## Preschool Applications for Fall

The Lord of Love Preschool is now accepting applications for the 2009-2010 school year. Preschool classes are available for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds. Please contact the church office for more information.



## What's Happening at Lord of Love Preschool by Michelle Petersen, Director and Teacher

It's hard to believe how quickly this school year flew by! It seems like not too long ago that we were just beginning this adventure.

In May, I held the second semester parent-teacher conferences. It was so awesome to see the amazing progress every child made from the beginning, middle, and to the end of the year. I am so proud of all of the kids for everything they have accomplished this year!

For the last day of school, we had a program highlighting several songs we learned this year. The families all attended and stayed for a pizza lunch afterwards. The kids really enjoyed showing their parents their skills, songs, artwork, classroom toys, and friends. It was a really fun day! Each child received a certificate of excellence, a sticker, a sucker, and a handmade scrapbook of the year's events and memories. Most of the children from the class will be heading off to kindergarten in the fall, which is always a bittersweet transition. I wish them all the best and know that they will do wonderfully!

I am excited to have a couple of familiar faces returning next year! I still have a few spots left for next year's classes! If you or anyone else would like more information, please send them my way!





## OUTREACH

### Lord of Love Mission Ministry Team Update

---

The Mission Ministry Team sponsored a visit to the Food Bank on Friday, May 1, with a potluck BBQ at the Florea residence afterwards. (Thanks, Floreas!) The tour and work at the Food Bank were very gratifying, and the fellowship and food following the Food Bank visit were great, too. Those of us able to get to the Food Bank early enough to work got to repackage huge bags of rice into smaller bags so that more families would benefit. We also got to wear the cutest hairnets, masks, and gloves! Volunteers are needed to sort, shelve, and repackage items throughout each week, so keep the Food Bank in mind when you happen to have a little free time to give to a fantastic cause. And though the focus for special mission dollars will change with the start of the new program year, we will continue to collect nonperishable food items to go to Project Hope. The need is greater than ever, so keep bringing those gifts for our wagon and barrel in the Narthex. Thanks, again, for the faithful generosity!



The Mission Ministry Team distributed a survey at the worship services on Sunday, May 17. The plan is to evaluate the results of the survey at the June 17 meeting, determining the most popular area for our special missions monies and volunteer efforts. After the main focus is decided, the Mission Ministry Team will come up with plans to publicize and carry out that focus for our special missions dollars. More team members are needed on the Mission Ministry Team. Please speak to John Florea, Brian Vandeventer, or Deb Lund if you are interested. And, if you missed the survey on May 17, feel free to complete the survey provided on the following page; put the completed survey in the Outreach mailbox in the north vestibule.

### Lord of Love Community Garden

---

Thanks to everyone who helped plant the garden on Sunday, May 17. Seeds and seedlings were planted in no time flat thanks to the willing workers!

More volunteers are needed to water, weed, and harvest the produce. Let John Florea, Brian Vandeventer, or Deb Lund know if you're interested.



**Garden  
Volunteers  
Needed**

# OUTREACH

## Lord of Love Lutheran Church Mission Emphasis Survey, May, 2009

Below are four areas of ministry that provide opportunities for Lord of Love mission dollars and volunteer work. Under each area are some examples of organizations that could be involved in that area. Please keep in mind that there are many organizations that may be supported that are not on this list. Some organizations meet the needs of people in several areas, as well. Several involve organizations that include global connections.

Please indicate your **#1 choice** for our Mission emphasis for the 2009-2010 school year. The Lord of Love Mission Ministry Team will select the focus for 2009-2010 and determine how they wish to support work in that area by selecting organizations for support.

You may also indicate if you would be willing to assist by serving on the Missions Ministry Team in the 2009-2010 school year. (Four to six meetings held throughout the year, typically on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 pm.) Return to Missions box in Narthex, or place in the Outreach Committee mailbox in the north vestibule. Thanks!

### ***PLEASE NOTE THE AREA WHERE YOU WANT LOL TO PLACE ITS 2009 MISSIONS EMPHASIS***

#### \_\_\_ EDUCATION

Friends of International Students  
(Global involvement)  
Omaha Literacy Center  
Omaha Talking Books  
Pennies for Peace (Global involvement)  
Tanzania Outreach (Global involvement)  
TeamMates

#### \_\_\_ HEALTH

American Red Cross  
Assistance League of Omaha  
Child Savings Institute  
Crisis Line  
Doctors Without Borders (Global involvement)  
Emergency Pregnancy Service  
Heartland Family Services  
Nebraska Aids Project  
Tanzania Outreach (Global involvement)

#### \_\_\_ SHELTER

Lydia House  
Micah House  
Open Door Mission  
Sienna /Francis House  
Stephen Center  
Refugee Settlement  
Together, Inc.  
The Women's Shelter

#### \_\_\_ SPIRITUAL

Cristo Rey Iglesia  
Prison Fellowship

**Please indicate if you are willing to serve on the Missions Ministry Team in 2009-2010:**

**Name:**

**Phone Number:**

Thoughts on Stewardship by Deb Lund

While reading the latest stewardship article in *The Love Letter*, I started thinking about people being in various stages of their feelings towards stewardship—just like each of us is in different stages of our faith. Sometimes, it is difficult for others to accept or understand our fellow Christians when they are not in the same stage or thought process. I have been thinking more carefully about words that can perhaps help deepen one’s sense of stewardship.

I was very blessed to have grown up in a loving, caring, Christian home. My parents and we kids worked very hard on the farm, and though we were not rich in monetary things, we had a good life. I learned to care for the earth growing up on the farm, and I witnessed my parents being excellent models of Christian stewardship in all facets of their lives—time, talent, and treasure.



In addition to being raised by wonderful models of stewardship, my thinking towards stewardship and my response towards God’s gracious love deepened during my freshman year in college. As is true in most Lutheran colleges, I had to take religion classes at Augustana College. I was blessed to have an Old Testament course taught by Dr. Jim Limburg. I remember to this day his explanation of the charge given to Adam and Eve to “have dominion over the earth” and what that really means. Dr. Limburg, a Hebrew expert, explained this as saying that this part of Genesis was written when the Israelites were under the rule and care of a kind and caring king. Someone who had dominion over them saw that all of their needs were met. As God’s people living on God’s earth, we truly have the same responsibility as a King in biblical times had for his people—to do what we can to take care of the earth.



So combining my upbringing with scholarly study and biblical growth, I find myself thinking that of course we must do our best to do everything we can to do our part to take care of everything in this earth. ALL that we have is truly God’s, and 100 percent of what we do and who we are is God’s. We should not think just about the amount of time and money we’re giving to the church, but think about what we do with 100 percent of our time, money, and possessions. We need to consider how we’re living each and every day and how all of our actions affect the earth and everything on it in some way.



## COUNCIL REPORT & TRANSITION/CALL PROCESS UPDATE

### May 2009 Vision and Coordination Report by Don Rowen, Council Vice-President

The Lord of Love council did not meet in May; therefore, this month's report is of the Vision and Coordination Committee's May meeting. The minutes of the meeting are summarized as follows:

- **Nebraska Synod Programs** – The Nebraska Synod asked Lord of Love to participate in a couple of programs. The first was their "Feed The Roots" campaign, in which they are asking congregations to pledge to raise our synod support giving for 3 years. We decided to discuss this in the fall as part of our budgeting process. The second was to recruit a "Congregational Mission Interpreter." This person would work to communicate to our congregation about the mission work done by Lord of Love and the Nebraska Synod.
- **Worship Enrichment Ministry Team** – The Vision and Coordination Committee formed a Worship Enrichment Ministry Team from volunteers and committee nominations. The team will include Randi VanHuzien, Marilyn Thomsen, Clayton Petersen, Del Gust, Mardi Fiske, Sarah Horan, and Pastor Bob. The team will consider what Lord of Love could do to enrich worship life. This team will study what it means to worship and how churches and people worship using a study guide entitled "Worship in Healthy, Effective Congregations," developed by Herb Miller. The team will prepare a report for the council and congregation by next spring.
- **Effectiveness of New Council Structure** – The Vision and Coordination Committee discussed how the new council structure is working and identified areas that need improvement. A couple of concerns that were raised were the need for improved communication between the five ministry teams and the Vision and Coordination Committee and that some of ministry teams under the committees do not appear to be up and running yet. Doug Aden will bring our concerns to the next Strategic Planning Committee meeting on May 19, 2009.
- **Financial Situation** – The Vision and Coordination Committee discussed that giving is less than projected and that a budget crisis could develop if the situation does not improve. The committee decided to examine the situation more closely next month with the updated financial reports and to raise the issue at the June council meeting.
- **Credit Cards** – The Vision and Coordination Committee decided to get credit cards for the church secretary, pastor, and youth sponsor. The cards will have low limits but will make some purchases easier.
- **New Member Program** – The Vision and Coordination Committee discussed what we expected our new members to do before joining the church. We decided that new members will be required to attend two meetings in order to join the church. The meetings will usually be held the Sunday before and the Sunday morning they join. We will also ask New Member Sponsors to follow up with the new members 3 months after joining to encourage them to become involved in the church life.

#### 2009 Lord of Love Church Council and Strategic Planning Committee

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

Finance: Brad VenHuizen\*, Paul Barnett, and Jackie Combes

Nurture: Heather Christensen\*, Angie Meyer, and Liz Smith

Outreach: Deb Lund\*, Brian Vandeventer, and John Florea

Property: Craig Pennell\*, Doug Roberts, and Joe Combes

Worship: Karen Mullen\*, Debra Gillespie, and one other to be announced

Committee chairpersons are denoted with an asterisk; council members are underlined.

The Executive Committee is not part of the Strategic Planning Committee.

# COUNCIL REPORT & TRANSITION/CALL PROCESS UPDATE

## Financial Report by Lisa Meyer, Council Treasurer

The following comments are based on April month-end information. As you review the Available Cash statement below, you will notice the available cash as of 4/30/09 is (\$1,029.72). Please note that this includes money owed to the church from the preschool in the amount of \$7,768.80. With preschool enrollment down significantly for the 2008-2009 school year, the church has assisted the preschool in paying payroll taxes throughout the year. Discussion will take place in the near future to determine when and how the preschool will be able to reimburse the church the money owed.

### GENERAL FUND

Bank Balance 4/30/09		\$1,674.10
Plus Receivables:		
Special Funds	0.00	
Preschool	7,768.80	
Major Improvement Fund	0.00	
Total Receivables		\$7,768.80
Less Payables:		
Special Funds	755.69	
Habitat for Humanity	0.00	
Withholding Taxes	0.00	
Endowment Fund	245.00	
Mission Funds	7,858.81	
Major Improvement	1,613.12	
Total Payables		10,472.62
<b>AVAILABLE CASH AS OF 4/30/09</b>		<b>(\$1,029.72)</b>



We have operated at a net loss position for the first 4 months of the year. This is due primarily to offerings through April being nearly \$9,900 less than what has been budgeted. Our required weekly giving to meet our budget is \$5,231. The average weekly giving through April is \$4,770. Actual giving has met the required weekly budget amount only 5 of the 17 weeks in 2009.

	Monthly Budget	Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Actual
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>23,333.34</b>	<b>19,438.40</b>	<b>93,333.36</b>	<b>83,453.15</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>24,052.10</b>	<b>21,556.93</b>	<b>96,208.40</b>	<b>96,444.91</b>
<b>Income less Expenses</b>	<b>(\$718.76)</b>	<b>(\$2,118.53)</b>	<b>(\$2,875.04)</b>	<b>(\$12,991.76)</b>

Usually we have an excess of cash when going into the summer months, when offerings are typically less. It is concerning that this year we do not have an excess of cash prior to the summer months. As we all know, the church continues to operate and have the same expenses throughout the summer, even when offerings may not be given regularly. Please consider the **Simply Giving** program to keep current with your 2009 pledge, especially through the summer months. Simply Giving enrollment forms are available at the Information Center or through the church office. Completed forms should be taken to the office or placed in the Financial Secretary mailbox.

# COUNCIL REPORT & TRANSITION/CALL PROCESS UPDATE

Bits and Pieces by Doug Aden, Council President

## Lord of Love's Anniversary

On June 11, 1972, the first worship service was held at Lord of Love. On Sunday, June 14, we will celebrate Lord of Love's 37th anniversary! Pastor Lee Griess from the synod office will be our guest preacher. Some say that this is an odd year; we will have our 40th anniversary in 3 years, and we can have a big celebration then. I think every anniversary is worth celebrating because of what Lord of Love is and the many blessings it has given us during the past 37 years.



Did you know that the name Lord of Love came from a line in the third verse of "Pass It On." The whole third verse of "Pass It On" really explains why we should want to celebrate this anniversary. The third verse is:

"I wish for you my friend this happiness that I have found, You can depend on Him – It matters not where your bound. \* I'll shout it from the mountain top, I want my world to know – The **Lord of Love** has come to me I want to pass it on!"

## Youth Program

Josh Combes will be leaving the position of Youth Director after the youth trip to New Orleans this July, so Lord of Love has to look for a new director. There are probably three options for us:



- Option 1 – We could ask several couples and the Pastor to work with the youth program and plan and coordinate all the youth activities. This is the way it was done many years ago.
- Option 2 – We could hire a young person like Josh to work with the youth program.
- Option 3 – We could hire a part-time youth coordinator. This individual could help with the Sunday School Program, Luther Kids, and the Youth Program. This position would require about 20 hours per week.

Give this some thought, and if you have any ideas, please let me know. The last option would add to our budget.

## Budget

Speaking of the budget, at the end of April, Lord of Love had a deficit position in its General Fund. I told the members of the Strategic Planning Committee that our offerings have declined. In 2008, for the first 4 months of the year, the average attendance was 162 and the total offering was \$90,074. For the first 4 months in 2009 our average attendance was 174 and the total offering was \$81,907, or a decrease of \$8,167. I am concerned about this and am worried about the summer months. If you have any thoughts or suggestions please let me know.



*Continued on the next page*

## Bits and Pieces, continued

### Transition Process

Pastor Bob has developed a general plan for our transition. Parts of that plan are the Appreciative Inquiry Meetings to be held in June. Your attendance at each one of these meetings is important. During the rest of the summer and early fall, he has specific objectives that will help us define our mission. He will be communicating those objectives to us during the next couple of months, and he will have individuals coming to Lord of Love to help us in this process. We have set a goal of forming a Call Committee in October. This could change depending on what happens between now and then.



Dinner and Discussion

### Worship Enrichment Ministry Team



The formation of the Worship Enrichment Ministry Team is complete. The members of the team are Marilyn Thomsen, Randi VenHuizen, Del Gust, Clayton Petersen, Mardi Fiske, and Sarah Horan. Because we were looking for specific criteria for the team members, we could not use all of the individuals who volunteered. The criteria were two members over 40, two members under 40, and two members who joined Lord of Love in the last 3 years.

### Guest Speakers

As I said before, Pastor Lee Griess will be our guest speaker on June 14, and we hope to have him back in the fall. Pastor Griess will be working with us when the call committee is formed. Bishop De Freese will be our guest speaker on October 25, Reformation Sunday.



## WOMEN OF LOVE

### Blessings from Ruth Manning, President, LOL Women of Love

---

To my Sisters in Christ,

Oh, the hazy, lazy days of summer! I'm convinced that's a figment of someone's imagination or the subject of a work of fiction. What most of us discover is we just exchange one set of activities for another!

And yes, summer is when we begin to think about fall activities. A number of opportunities are included in this section, so please read through this issue carefully, listen to the Holy Spirit, and participate/volunteer where you are led.

By the way, you are encouraged to speak to anyone on the LOL Women's Ministry Team with your questions, suggestions, comments, etc. The team includes Heather Christensen, Kelly Duffy, Debra Gillespie, Ruth Manning, Beth Olson, Rose Roberts, Brenda Thom, and Randi VenHuizen.

Have a blessed summer!

### Lutheran Woman Today Bible Study

---



Do you wish you had the time to take part in a Bible study? We've got a special invitation for you. On Saturday, July 25, Deb Lund will hold a ½ day retreat at her home at 4720 N. 136th Street. The study will be *Mary: A Woman for all Seasons*. We will begin with coffee and goodies at 8:45 a.m. and will conclude with a potluck salad lunch at noon. Additional details will be available in the July issue of *The Love Letter*.

The study guide is available on line at <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Women-of-the-ELCA/Lutheran-Woman-Today/Bible-study/Summer-studies.aspx>.

### Project Hope

---

Please continue to remember Project Hope over the summer months. The collection baskets are in front of the west entrance, and additional containers are located under the Information Center counter.

Especially needed are non-perishable food of all kinds, personal care items, laundry soap, baby food, diapers, feminine hygiene products, and paper products. Again, thank you for your help!



### Crane Coffee

---

All women are invited to join the Lord's Laughing Ladies for 8:00 a.m. coffee at Crane Coffee, 77th and Cass, on June 12 and 26. Are you a teacher? Come and enjoy coffee over your summer vacation!



### LOL Women's Ministry Team

---

The Women's Ministry Team will meet in the Joseph Room at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 10. All women are invited to attend this meeting.



# WOMEN OF LOVE

## Upcoming Opportunities

---

Nominating committee members are needed for LOL Women's Ministry Team. Please contact Ruth Manning if you would like to help. The committee will be established at the Ministry Team meeting on June 10. (Reminder: assuming that the revised LOL W/ELCA constitution and bylaws will pass on the second reading at our business meeting this fall, ministry team members will be elected as "members at large," and positions will be selected at the organizational meeting.)

The Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization convention will be held September 25-27 in Kearney. *Be Still and Feel Christ's Heart Within You* is the theme.

- Early registration of \$85 is due August 22. Late registrations are due September 11.
- A delegate will be selected at the Women of Love Ministry Team meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 10. LOL Women of Love will cover registration expense. Contact Ruth Manning if you are interested. Delegate registration is due July 19.
- Two scholarships are available for a Metro East first time attendee and a young woman, 35 or younger. Application deadline is July 1. See Ruth Manning for application form.
- Interested in representing NSWO as a delegate the Triennial Convention in Spokane, WA, in July 11-14, 2011? See Ruth Manning for application form; applications are due July 1.

Additional convention details will be in the July issue of *The Love Letter*. Registration forms will be at the Information Center as soon as they are available.

## Fall Festival Dinner

---

There will be no craft show this year, but the Fall Festival dinner and silent auction is still on our agenda for Saturday, November 14. As in the past, this will be our opportunity to raise money for a local mission, as well as fund our treasury so we can continue our ministry as women of Love.

Although we'll enjoy a delicious dinner and have an opportunity to bid on some wonderful silent auction baskets, we're planning some additional components to make this an outstanding event.

Will you help with the planning team? I can guarantee you there will be lot less work this year without the craft fair. An initial planning session will be set up early in July. Contact Ruth Manning at 455-7221 if you have any questions.

## Calendar of Events

---

### June

1	6:00 p.m.	LWT Bible Study, Old Country Buffet, 145th and Center
2	9:00 a.m.	Quilters, Fellowship Hall
10	6:00 p.m.	LOL Women's Ministry Team Meeting, Joseph Room
12	8:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 77th and Cass
16	9:00 a.m.	Quilters, Fellowship Hall
26	8:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 77th and Cass



Women of the ELCA

### Coming Up

September 25-27 Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization Convention, Kearney, NE

## Youth to Learn and Practice “Compassionate Justice” in New Orleans

Last year, when we first started suggesting that you go to the youth gathering website to see what was going to happen in New Orleans this July, the website was, shall we say, a little light on details. If you haven't checked it lately, go to <http://www.elca.org/youth/gathering.html> and see what our kids (and 37,000 others) will be doing next month!

There will be time for worship, music, Bible study, learning, play, prayer, the witness of faithful leaders from around the world, reflection, caring for others, and new friendships. But the kids are also there to learn and do “compassionate justice.” Each day, about 12,000 youth will be sent out into New Orleans on service projects. Here's what the website says: “New Orleans has received thousands of volunteers over the past 3½ years, many Lutheran, but nothing like 37,000 people serving in three days! In fact, we may be the largest serving community ever in the USA. It's hard to imagine what it will be like in July when busloads of people arrive with hearts of compassionate justice.”

There were six service areas to choose from—Health and Wellness, Literacy, Housing, The Environment, The Arts and Culture, and Wealth and Poverty. Lord of Love youth chose The Environment and will be getting more details on what they'll be doing right before they leave. This is the basic information they've gotten so far:

“This interest area is for those passionate about creation, clean water, reducing waste and plastic, or who want to preserve wetlands, wildlife and the earth! Come to New Orleans and learn about the Gulf Coast, why Katrina's floods were so devastating and ways we can change our daily life to impact the future of our world. It's not just about being an environmentalist, joining the green movement or doing good things for the planet, it's about being thankful for and caring of the creation that God has woven us into to sustain and bless us.

“Environmental projects include learning about the water levies and flooding, visiting the marina or wetlands, learning about the impact of waste, planting trees, gardening, grass-mowing or other related work. You will go home with a new awareness of your environment and encouragement to advocate for caring for the earth -- a gift and blessing from God for all living things.”



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

### *Who's going to New Orleans this summer?*

#### Youth

Laura Armitage  
Jason Combes  
Casey Florea  
Lauren Florea  
Matt Garder  
Alex Harris  
Kevin Krause  
Kimi Lueders  
Kira Luxon  
Nadine Rowen  
Sarah Vandeventer

#### Chaperones

Josh Combes  
Carissa Christenson  
Jeri Morgan  
Jim Morgan

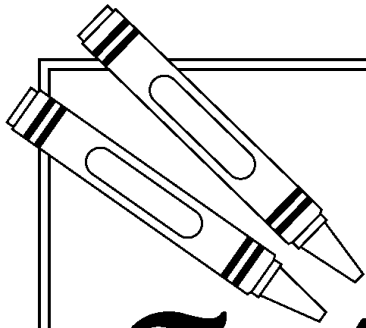


## Calendar of Youth Events

### Coming Up

July 19-26 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans





Just for **KIDS**

# Fathers of faith

Fathers do amazing things for their families, but the greatest gift our dads can share with us is their faith in God.

**Complete this puzzle to read Isaiah's advice to fathers.**

**Directions:** Working left to right, first write down all the 1's in the word blanks. Continue with the 2's and finally the 3's.

<b>1</b> The	<b>2</b> as	<b>3</b> tell	<b>1</b> living
<b>2</b> I	<b>3</b> their	<b>1</b> the	<b>2</b> am
<b>3</b> children	<b>1</b> living	<b>2</b> doing	<b>3</b> about
<b>1</b> they	<b>2</b> today	<b>3</b> your	<b>1</b> praise
<b>2</b> fathers	<b>3</b> faithfulness	<b>1</b> you	

“ \_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_ — \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ .” Isaiah 38:19, NIV

## IN OUR PRAYERS & LOVE NOTES

### In Our Prayers

---

Dick and Jessie Bell  
Ryan Bolen (nephew of Sandy Hall)  
Miranda Brown (future in-law of the Shinrocks)  
Portia Bruning (cousin of Shirley Schuchard)  
Ashley Christenson (daughter-in-law of Paul and Deb Christenson)  
Jan Davis (aunt of Paula Foster)  
Pearl Garnaas  
Norma Gunter  
Claude Hall  
Cindy Harper (friend of Lynda McGraw)  
Matthew Hayek (nephew of Sandy Hall)  
John Hoelsing (friend of Judy Egr)  
Harold and Marj Holbrook (parents of Judy Messerschmidt)  
Rachael Hueftle (student of Linda Christensen)  
Cathy Johnson (friend of Marilyn Thomsen)  
Bob Kasworm and his ministry in Tanzania  
Ken Kellogg (father of Karen Armitage)  
Hannah Knudson (neighbor of the VenHuizens)  
Mike Koesters (friend of David Boarts)  
Paula Lawhead (at seminary)  
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

Bob McKnight (grandfather of Ann Kroll)  
Pastor Elibariki Mtui and all the saints of TPC Lutheran Parish, Tanzania  
Harry Naasz  
Susan Oleson (sister-in-law of Pastor Bob)  
Joe Policky (grandfather of Tamra Johnston)  
Bill and Bev Pugh (former members)  
Berniece Reitan  
Eloyse Rice  
Don St. Ours (brother-in-law of Lynda McGraw)  
Nancy Thoman (stepmom of Ann Kroll)  
Joey Thompson (friend of the Murphys)  
Brody Vermilyea (grandson of Brian and Nancy Shinrock)  
Harlan Walther (father of Brian Walther)  
Dennis Wangsness (father of Pastor Jodi)  
Glenn Wapelhorst (brother of Brenda Mac)  
Esther Welliver  
Agnes Wilson  
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](mailto: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 to all who participated in the Wednesday night suppers. I enjoyed the fellowship and am anxious for the next "season" to start. Thank you again!

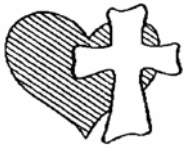
Heather VanArsdale & family

**Big**  
**Thank**  
**You!**

The Quilters had a fantastic trip to the quilt museum in Lincoln on May 5. Thank you to Pastor Bob for organizing the trip. And thank you to Amy Kragnes, Pastor Bob, and Mary Lou Gustafson for being our drivers. We all came back enthused and knowing that we didn't want to make quilts with half-inch (or less) pieces like we saw but will continue to work on our versions with bigger pieces.

The Quilters





The Love Letter  
 Lord of Love Lutheran Church  
 10405 Fort Street  
 Omaha, NE 68134-1298

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

**Return Service Requested**

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**

---

June 4	Appreciative Inquiry
June 5-7	Nebraska Synod Assembly & Festival at Midland Lutheran College in Fremont
June 11	Appreciative Inquiry
June 14	Lord of Love’s 37th Anniversary Celebration
June 18	Appreciative Inquiry
June 25	Appreciative Inquiry

**Upcoming Events**

---

July 19-26	ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans
September 6	Last day of summer worship schedule
September 13	Kickoff Sunday
November 14	Fall Festival dinner and silent auction



*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](mailto:loveletter@lord-of-love.org). Articles must be received by the Love Letter editor by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month.*