



The Love Letter

Volume 42

January 2014

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Worship Schedule

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

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

A Look Ahead

Happy New Year! As we begin 2014, many of us will be making resolutions and setting goals for the year ahead. This is a wonderful opportunity to think about how we can be involved in worship, education, fellowship, and outreach at Lord of Love!

The women at Lord of Love have two events scheduled in January. The **Epiphany potluck lunch and birthday party for Jesus** will be held on Sunday, January 5 (see page 14, Women of Love). Then the **NSWO Winter Retreat** will be held on Saturday, January 18 in Grand Island (see pages 14 and 16, Women of Love).

The Youth Group also has two events in January. On Sunday, January 12, all youth in grades 7 through 12 are invited to enjoy **Winter Fun with Cookies & Cocoa** (see page 7, LOL Youth). Then middle school students in grades 6 through 8 are invited to attend the **Nebraska Synod Middle School Gathering** at Bethany Lutheran in Elkhorn on January 18 and 19 (see page 7, LOL Youth). The next youth lock-in will be held on February 8 and 9 (see page 7, LOL Youth).

The men at Lord of Love will be meeting soon to **pre-assemble and build baptismal boxes**, and then will attend the **Nebraska Lutheran Men in Mission annual gathering** in Lincoln on Saturday, February 22 (see page 13, Men's News Corner).

On Sunday, February 9, Lord of Love will host its next **blood drive for the American Red Cross**. Information on how to sign up to donate will be coming soon (see page 9, Outreach).

Finally, another opportunity to be involved is by volunteering to serve on a small committee to **review and plan for educational opportunities for all ages** at Lord of Love (see page 5, Nurture).

In This Issue

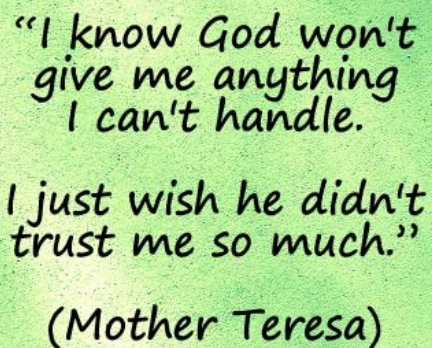
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God is Faithful! God will Provide! by Pastor Brad Meyer

God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it. 1 Corinthians 10:13b (NRSV)

We are welcoming in another new year! For some, 2013 was filled with ups, and for others downs, and for many, a little of both. Through it all, we trust that God is faithful! We may have a variety of both ups and downs in 2014 as well, but again, God is faithful!

I often hear people tell those who are going through a difficult time in life, "God only gives you as much as you can handle." My response to that is, "God gives me more credit that I give myself." Or people might say, "God is testing our faith—because that is what it says in scripture." Well, let's look at that a little further.



*"I know God won't
give me anything
I can't handle.
I just wish he didn't
trust me so much."
(Mother Teresa)*

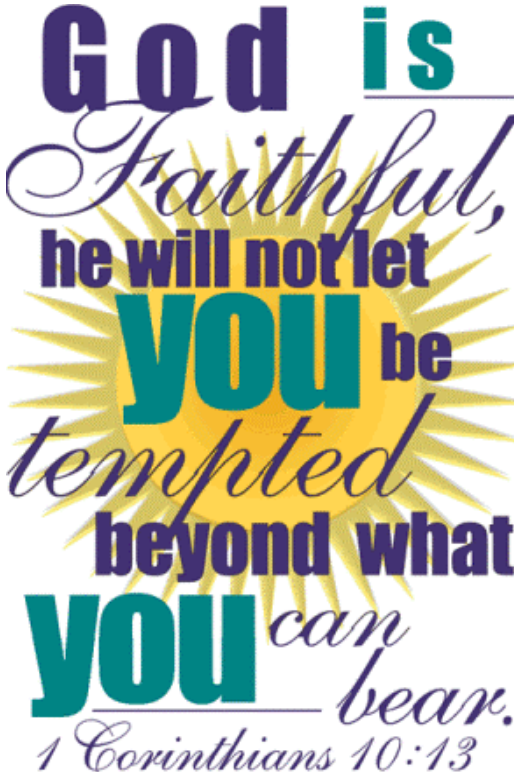
Yes, scripture says that God will not test you beyond your strength—BUT, also read the rest of the passage—"he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it." God is faithful; God will provide!

God provides loving and caring people that surround us and who are willing to walk this journey of life with us. God provides outstretched arms to give support and encouragement. God is faithful by giving us his Son so that God's love and grace may be showered upon us. God is faithful in supplying the people to help us—our task is to accept the support, the love, and the care that comes from God and from others.

This new year may be filled with more of the ups and downs of life, but the promise that comes with all of life is that "God is faithful! God will provide."

May you be blessed in 2014!

Peace,
Pastor Brad



God is
Faithful,
he will not let
YOU *be*
tempted
beyond what
YOU *can*
bear.
1 Corinthians 10:13

MONTHLY CALENDAR

January 2014						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Church Office Closed	2 9:30am Text Study at Guthrie's	3 8:00am Crane Coffee Fellowship 7:30pm AA Meeting	4 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry
5 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 11:30am Epiphany Lunch 6:00pm Bell Rehearsal	6 6:00pm "Gather" Bible Study 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	7 9:00am Quilters 6:30pm Hy-Vee Banquet 7:00pm Vision & Coordination Mtg.	8 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm Ministry Team Mtg. 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm High School Bible Study 6:50pm Jr. Choir 7:15pm Sr. Choir	9 9:30am Text Study at Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	10 7:30pm AA Meeting	11 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry
12 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 11:00am Youth Group "Winter Fun" 6:00pm Bell Rehearsal	13 6:30pm Cub Scout Leaders 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	14	15 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm High School Bible Study 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Brass 6:50pm Jr. Choir 7:15pm Sr. Choir	16 9:30am Text Study at Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	17 8:00am Crane Coffee Fellowship 7:30pm AA Meeting	18 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry 8:00am Worship Planning
19 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 11:45am New Member Gathering 6:00pm Bell Rehearsal	20 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	21 9:00am Quilters	22 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm High School Bible Study 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:50pm Jr. Choir 7:15pm Sr. Choir	23 9:30am Text Study at Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	24 7:30pm AA Meeting	25 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry 8:00am Pinewood Derby 8:30am Church Council Retreat
26 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 1:00pm District 18 AA Mtg. 6:00pm Bell Rehearsal	27 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	28	29 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm High School Bible Study 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:50pm Jr. Choir 7:15pm Sr. Choir	30 9:30am Text Study at Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	31 7:30pm AA Meeting	

WORSHIP

Worship Committee Notes of Thanks

A special thanks to Evelyn Sacridier for her gift of the new purple paraments! They have arrived and are very beautiful, and we are excited to use them for Lent 2014.

Also, thank you to Kenn Garder for all his hard work on the parament closet in the Sacristy. It turned out wonderfully.



Lord of Love's Worship Servants

	January 5	January 12	January 19	January 26
Greeters				
8:00 a.m.	Paul and Peg Murphy	Jim and Jeri Morgan	Dave and Susan Lueders	Doug and Cathy Aden
10:30 a.m.	Paul and Ann Kroll	Debra Gillespie, Paula Foster	Rett and Judy Messerschmidt	John and Gwen Edwards
Liturgist				
8:00 a.m.				
10:30 a.m.				
Communion Servers				
8:00 a.m.				
10:30 a.m.				
Altar Care				
8:00 a.m.	Wayne and Joan Witt	Deb Christenson, Angie Meyer	Doug and Rose Roberts, Caroline Tessin	Brewer family
10:30 a.m.	Deb Quadhamer, Judy Messerschmidt	Diana Haye, Marcia Roads	Debra Gillespie, Karen Armitage	Brenda and Suzanne Mac
Ushers				
8:00 a.m.	Paul Dieter, Dennis Hindemith, Brian Walther			
10:30 a.m.	Brian and Deb Lund, John Edwards			
Nursery Attendant				
10:30 a.m.	Anne Yarger	Kylie Kulp	Lisa Rieff	Ashley Meier
CD Recorder				
8:00 or 10:30	Pat Brewer	Paul Christenson	Dave Lueders	Paul Murphy



Nurture Committee News

Thank you to Lori Vandeventer for her faithful service on the Nurture Committee. You will be missed, and your gifts have been very much appreciated!

Welcome to Lisa Willard, who is the new council member on the Nurture Committee!

A small group will be forming to review and plan for educational opportunities at Lord of Love for all ages. Please consider serving on this short-term committee.

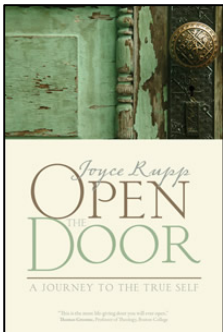
Junior Choir

The next Junior Choir practice will be on Wednesday, January 8 at 6:50 p.m. The rest of the January practices will be at the same time on Wednesdays, January 15, 22, and 29. We will sing at church on Sunday, January 26. Junior Choir, your singing is a blessing! If you have questions, please call Jane Hawkins at 402-343-1680. Thank you.



Junior Choir Rehearsals

Open the Door!



Open the Door: A Journey to the True Self, written by Joyce Rupp, will be offered Sunday mornings, 9:15 to 10:15 a.m. as an additional choice of study, reflections, and sharing, beginning in January 2014.

The book is designed as a 6-week daily prayer guide; however, we will be discussing and reflecting over it for 12 weeks. Each day has a scriptural reference, original prayer, and a thought provoking question. Journaling is encouraged! The book encourages the reader to open their hearts and "listen" to what God wants us to hear. This book discussion will be led by Gwen Edwards. The book can be purchased from Amazon.com.

Join us beginning January 12, 2014, as we explore how the image of the door can guide us in a process of discovering our true self. If you have any questions, please see Gwen Edwards or Judy Messerschmidt.

Weekly Education Opportunities at Lord of Love

Sunday

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

Monday

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

Wednesday

5:00 p.m. Confirmation (7th & 8th grades) @ LOL Abraham Room

Wednesday, cont.

6:00 p.m. Luther Kids (1st – 6th grades) @ LOL Preschool
6:00 p.m. Senior High Wednesday Night Study @ LOL Paul Room
6:00 p.m. *Gather Bible Study* @ LOL Mary Room (first Wednesday of month)

Thursday

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

Saturday

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

Congregational Advent Gathering

Nearly 40 people gathered on the 1st of December to welcome the Advent season and begin waiting for the birth of our Savior. This intergenerational event had something for everyone. There were stories and snacks, things to make, things to take home, and little ones to share an afternoon with. This was a wonderful opportunity to spend time in fellowship. Many thanks to the volunteers who helped to make this event successful! We hope you will plan to join us next year!



Operation Baby King was a Success!

Thank you to the many children and adults who helped share the meaning of Christmas through this year's Christmas play by our Sunday School children. Our preschoolers shared a finger play about Baby Jesus, asleep on the hay, and then posed as animals in the stable. Our cow, goat, sheep, and mice did a fantastic job!

Our older Sunday School children told a story of Jesus being for EVERYONE, not just one nation or another. In a fun spy operation way, the story unfolds with angels and shepherds along the way. There were wonderful accents, a bit of fun and humor, and a gift in sharing the story that Jesus came to bring Joy to the world.



Winter Fun with Cookies & Cocoa

On Sunday, January 12 from 12:00 to 3:00 p.m., **all youth in 7th through 12th grades** are invited to enjoy Winter Fun with Cookies & Cocoa! If there is snow, we'll go sledding or ice skating. If not, we'll bake cookies and play games in the fellowship hall. Watch for details based on the weather. Regardless, meet at the church at noon!! Drivers will be needed if we go sledding or skating.



February Youth Lock-in: Minute to Win It

The next Youth Lock-In will be held on Saturday, February 8 at 7:00 p.m. to Sunday, February 9. The theme is Minute to Win It! Adult volunteers are needed to make this event a success. We will be playing short game challenges that will need helpers, and we'll need an emcee for this competition. If you are interested in helping to plan this fun event for our youth or assisting the night of, please contact Heather Christensen. The game challenges will begin at 7:30 p.m. and run about an hour on Saturday, February 8.



Middle School Gathering

The annual Middle School Gathering (MSG) will be held from 10:00 a.m. Saturday, January 18 to 2:00 p.m. Sunday, January 19 at Bethany Lutheran in Elkhorn.

All 6th through 8th graders are invited to attend the Nebraska Synod's MSG. Join other youth from across the state for an overnight adventure filled with service, worship, and fun! The cost to attend will be covered by the Lord of Love youth fund! So there is no cost to you to attend. You **MUST** register by Sunday, January 5.



Registration forms are available in the Youth Corner in the Narthex, or contact Heather Christensen at heather@lord-of-love.org or 402-206-9205 (this is my new cell number).

November Youth Event Recap by Heather Christensen

November's youth event was a new adventure! During a month in which we remember to be thankful for all that we have, the youth spent some time learning about the food insecurities experienced in our community, at our schools, and by our neighbors. We talked about why there is food insecurity and where, and we learned about programs available to help those in need. We also discussed what we could do to make a difference and how our faith can help us from being hungry in spirit.

Following our discussion and devotion, we took a fun spin in creative cooking. (The point was that when you don't have a lot to choose from and your cupboards are bare, you have to be creative and might just come up

Continued on the next page

November Youth Event Recap, continued

with something amazing!) We broke into teams, received a “basket of secret ingredients,” and competed for the best creation from our basket and pantry. This is a play on the Food Network show “Chopped.”

So our brave volunteers, Allison Vandeventer and Rolie Christensen, joined me and served as emcee and judges to our competition. Challenge: To Create a Tasty Dessert. Secret Ingredients: vanilla dessert cake cups, bacon bits, Milky Way candy bars, and pickles! To our amazement, there were some pretty good concoctions.

On the field, there was a fierce competitive spirit. Teams were conspiring and concentrating on how to be the winners of this competition. You could have the tallest creation, the tastiest, the best named, the best seasonal theme, most ingredients used, most creative, best presentation, and best overall or “CHOPPED” winners.

We had a great time, lots of laughs, and lots of bonding. Several of the youth brought their friends, too! So our Lord of Love youth events are cool enough to share with our friends! I'm very grateful to spend the time with these amazing youth. Together, we are building strong and faithful youth in our congregation and touching others outside our walls.

Note to Self: If you want the youth to go to sleep at some point during the next lock in, don't have a dessert competition filled with sugar. They will be up all night and sleep through the sermon the next morning. Sorry PB!



OUTREACH

Deacon's Fund

On the first Sunday of each month, the loose cash offering in the offering plate goes into the Lord of Love Deacon's Fund. The Deacon's Fund is used to assist those who request financial assistance and is issued at the discretion of the pastor. This fund is another way that we can support the needs of the community.



Blood Drive

The next blood drive at Lord of Love will be held on Sunday, February 9, 2014. We will start enrolling donors in January. Please consider giving blood. It is important to sign up ahead of time if at all possible so that the Red Cross can have the appropriate number of personnel.



Mission Possible Update

Thank you so much for your faithful offerings during this past Advent and Christmas. Those gifts will be given to the Siena/Francis House to support those without homes or resources to overcome mental illness and joblessness. The results of these special offerings will be reported in the February issue of *The Love Letter*. The Mission Possible Team is meeting in January for a plan of action for the special offerings of Lent and Easter. Thanks so very much for helping us do God's Work and be God's Hands.



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

So much is done through our larger church. Here is a glimpse of that work:

Philippines: Aid is still needed after typhoon

Lutheran Disaster Response has provided \$1 million for cooking utensils, shelter repair kits, and debris removal for survivors of Typhoon Haiyan. But the recovery will be long and the need is great. Your help is still needed. Gifts designated for this disaster will be used 100 percent to support relief efforts. To donate, see www.ELCA.org/Typhoon. For more information, see www.ELCA.org/Typhoon-urgent.

Climate change creates great global need

People living in poverty around the world are affected the most by climate change, said Mary Minette, ELCA director for environmental education and advocacy, while attending a recent conference on global climate change. Providing aid after the typhoon that struck the Philippines is just one example of how the ELCA is committed to supporting people around the world who live in poverty and are affected by extreme weather events. See www.ELCA.org/ClimateChange.

Continued on the next page

Mission Possible Update, continued

Living in "accompaniment" in South Africa

"We are not sent to fix, to change, or to rectify. ... [but rather] sent to be continually awed and humbled by our experiences within our new homes," says Rachel Swenson, who is spending a year in South Africa as an ELCA Young Adult in Global Mission. See www.ELCA.org/YAGM-Swenson. **(Former Lord of Love members Rebecca Lund Sheridan and Megan Buccholz are recent participants in the YAGM program in Slovakia and the Holy Land.)**

India: Helping empower female leaders for the church

Sanchita Kisku, an International Leader and ELCA scholarship recipient from India studying in Chicago, wonders why there are so few female Lutheran leaders or pastors in India, when so many women fill leadership roles in Indian tribal culture. "If you give leadership to women, the church will grow," says Kisku. Read more by downloading the fall Hand in Hand bulletin insert or newsletter at www.ELCA.org/resources/globalchurch.

Myanmar: A thriving Christian community

"We Americans talk about ecumenism, but these folks are living it," the Rev. Christa VonZychlin and the Rev. Wayne Nieminen write after visiting Kachin Theological College in Myanmar (Burma). The ELCA missionaries in Hong Kong also describe an inspiring visit to a refugee camp for children during their trip to Myanmar. See www.ELCA.org/MyanmarTrip.

Jerusalem/West Bank: Support and follow Young Adults in Global Mission!

This Christmas, as we remember Christ's birth, celebrate also the six young adults serving for a year with schools and congregations of the Lutheran church in the Holy Land. Learn more about them and make a gift for their support at <https://community.elca.org/Jordan-HolyLand>, or ask for a profile and their blog listings by contacting globalchurch@elca.org.

Latin America: Celebrate with our missionaries!

Celebrate with the Rev. Justin and Kari Eller, ELCA missionaries, as new Sunday school materials are completed in Bolivia (see www.ELCA.org/Bolivia-SundaySchool) and as they work with ministries throughout Latin America (see www.ELCA.org/MissionSupport). Learn more at www.ELCA.org/Argentina-Uruguay or request a profile at globalchurch@elca.org.

Building up God's global church—together

Because ELCA missionaries have helped establish churches throughout the world, we are now part of a much larger story—a global community of more than 70 million Lutherans in 79 countries. To find out how you can be engaged in this global church, see www.ELCA.org/globalchurch.

Author explores faith, integrity, global injustice

In a new book from Fortress Press, *Solidarity Ethics: Transformation in a Globalized World*, Rebecca Todd Peters argues for an ethic of solidarity as a new model for how people of faith can live with integrity in the midst of global injustice and shape a more just future. See <http://store.fortresspress.com/store/product/19186/Solidarity-Ethics-Transformation-in-a-Globalized-World>.

Mexico: International Volunteer Week, June 15-22, 2014

Participate in an intercultural service trip like none other! Provide valuable resources to malnourished communities in Oaxaca, Mexico, and at the same time get to know like-minded service-oriented individuals. See www.Facebook.com/GlobalLinks.

A Pastoral Letter on Community Violence

“A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.” (Jeremiah 31:15 and Matthew 2:18)

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

Every faithful caregiver who sits with victims of violence knows what we know—as God’s church, we are called to reduce violence and should, in most cases, restrain ourselves from using violence. Whether or not statistics show that overall violence has declined in recent years, every person wounded or killed is a precious child of God.

As bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we lament the tragedy of gun violence in our country. We are grieved by the way violence threatens and destroys life. We affirm the current soul searching and shared striving to find a way to a better future.

While the church grapples with this call to reduce violence and make our communities safer, we recognize that before God we are neither more righteous because we have guns nor are we more righteous when we favor significant restrictions. Brokenness and sin are not somehow outside of us. Even the best of us are capable of great evil. As people of God, we begin by confessing our own brokenness—revealed in both our actions and our failure to act. We trust that God will set us free and renew us in our life’s work to love our neighbors.

In this time of public attention to gun violence, local communities of faith have a unique opportunity to engage this work. As bishops, we were thankful to recognize the many resources our church has already developed. We begin by listening: listening to God, to Scripture, and to each other. Providing a safe place for people to share their own stories, together we discern courses of action. Together we act. And together we return to listening—to assess the effectiveness of our efforts to reduce violence.

In the Large Catechism, Luther says, “We must not kill, either by hand, heart, or word, by signs or gestures, or by aiding and abetting.” Violence begins in the human heart. Words can harm or heal. To focus only on guns is to miss the depth of our vocation. Yet, guns and access are keys to the challenges we face.

We recognize that we serve in different contexts and have different perspectives regarding what can and should be done. But as we live out our common vocations, knowing that the work will take many forms, we are committed to the work of reducing and restraining violence. This shared work is a sign of our unity in Christ.

We invite you, our sisters and brothers, to join us in this work:

- The work of lament – creating safe space for naming, praying, grieving, caring for one another, and sharing the hope in God’s promise of faithfulness
- The work of moral formation and discernment – listening to scripture, repenting, modeling conflict resolution in daily life, addressing bullying, conducting respectful conversations, and discerning constructive strategies to reduce violence
- The work of advocacy – acting to address the causes and effects of violence

Knowing that we are not saved by this work, we undertake it trusting in Christ Jesus, who laid down his life for the world and who calls us to be peacemakers, to pursue justice, and to protect the vulnerable.

In this, as in all things, Christ is with us. Thanks be to God.

RESOURCES

Share What You Have Been Given by Pastor Brad Meyer

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

I haven't done an official study or looked up information about it, but I wonder how much time during our day we spend standing in front of the rack of clothes in our closet trying to decide what to wear or gazing into the refrigerator to find something to eat. Most of us have the luxury of having choices to make during our day, verses many who have little choice as to what to wear or what to eat. We are a blessed people.



Ultimately, what matters isn't what choice we make concerning clothing or food, but how we choose to live out our lives as children of God and good stewards of what we have been blessed with overseeing.



We have journeyed again through the Advent and Christmas season preparing our hearts for the Christ child. Hopefully we have also prepared our hearts for how we might share of what God has blessed us with through our time, talent, and treasures for the year to come.

And then the next time you find yourself standing in front of the closet or refrigerator, maybe look also into your heart to see how God is calling you to share of what you have been given.

CHURCH COUNCIL

Our Giving Status by Lisa Meyer

General Fund financial information for November 2013 is as follows:

- Income: \$25,117.50
- Expenses: \$25,890.91



General Fund financial information for the year to date (through November 2013) is as follows:

- Income: \$273,243.75
- Expenses: \$287,127.02

2014 Lord of Love Church Council

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

Nurture: Paula Foster, Lisa Willard

Outreach: Karen Anderson, Mardi Fiske

Resources: Paul Concannon, Rex Quadhamer

Worship: Kathy Christiansen, Joan Witt



Men's News Reporter Needed

Hey there! Hi there! Ho there! You're as welcome as can be.... Have you ever wanted the chance to grow "outside the box"? Ever felt a growing talent and need to express yourself in a worthy cause or project? Want to be challenged to do more? No, I am not asking you to enlist in any of the Armed Forces, but I am extending you an invitation.

An immediate position is available for any man interested in promoting and propagating the Men's News at Lord of Love. This position is often shared by several men, but at least one man has to make sure the calendar of events and noteworthy items are respectfully submitted to *The Love Letter* editor in a timely fashion. The only other requirement is the willingness to serve.

So if you have a talent for expression and a desire to share your passion in written words, seize this opportunity and let us help you fulfill your ambition. Please contact Pastor Brad or any member of the Men's Breakfast Ministry group and advise him of your request....and let us help make your dream come true....

Men's Ministry Events

2013 is behind us, and 2014 is unfolding ahead of us with several items filling in the Men's calendar. An ongoing event is the Men's Breakfast Ministry, which meets every Saturday morning at 7:00 a.m. in the Lord of Love Fellowship Hall. All men are welcome to join us for spiritual study and fellowship.

January

TBD – The **baptismal box pre-assembly and box build** is coming soon. Watch for additional information.

February

February 22, 2014 – The **Nebraska Lutheran Men in Mission annual gathering** will be held at Spirit of Hope Lutheran Church, 5801 NW 1st Street, Ste 2, Lincoln, NE 68521. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m., and the meeting concludes with a 3:30 p.m. sending service. Aside from the business meeting, the agenda includes the election of new state officers and nominees for Nebraska delegates to the National LMM 2014 conference. Contact any member of the Men's Breakfast Ministry for more information, including car pooling.

April

April 18, 2014 – The annual **24-hour prayer vigil event and Men's Ministry fundraiser** will begin after the Good Friday evening church service and will continue until Saturday morning. This gathering is traditionally held at Paul and Deb Christenson's home and concludes when the last person completes their 30 minute prayer slot in the overnight prayer vigil. Plan to join us in this fundraising and fellowship event.

July

July 18-20, 2014 – **Guys, Guts, and God's Glory, the Lutheran Men in Mission 2014 National Triennial Gathering**, will be held in Nashville, TN, at Loews Vanderbilt Hotel. Lord of Love has been involved in this event as ambassadors/hosts in Omaha in 2008 and as attendees in Denver in 2011. Lord of Love is planning on having attendees at the Nashville 2014 gathering as well. You are welcome to attend and experience men's fellowship at this spiritual event. Plans are being made for travel and hotel reservations.

Contact any member of the Men's Breakfast Ministry for more local information, including car pooling/travel info. It is about 750 miles from Omaha to Nashville. This is approximately 30 days travel by horse; 10.7 hours travel by car averaging 70 mph, or a 5-hour flight with one layover.... Plenty of choices for travel and traveling companions are still available. Let's hear from you so we can have your input in deciding how to travel. Log in to Lutheranmeninmission.org for additional national updates and information.

WOMEN OF LOVE

Epiphany Luncheon



All women are invited to join us for our biennial Epiphany potluck luncheon on January 5 at 11:45 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Details are available in the December issue of *The Love Letter*. Bring a dish to share for lunch and a birthday present for Baby Jesus for Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska – Centers for Healthy Families. Items needed are diapers, baby wipes, shoes (up to children's size 12), car seat combos, and clothing (newborn to 5T).

Gather Bible Study

We continue to learn some fascinating things about women in the Bible. Who is Abigail? The Bible study author calls her a "calm strategist." Come and learn more about this remarkable woman at the January *Gather* Bible study, which focuses on the theme verse, "Then Abigail hurried and took two hundred loaves, two skins of wine, five sheep ready dressed, five measures of parched grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs. She loaded them on donkeys and said to her young men, 'Go on ahead of me; I am coming after you.' But she did not tell her husband Nabal." I Samuel 25:18-19.

Because the regular Wednesday study falls on New Year's Day, the Wednesday evening group will join the Monday evening group on January 6 at 6:00 p.m. at Village Inn, 3304 S. 143rd Plaza, near Oakview Mall. If you have any questions, contact Gwen Edwards for the Monday group and Ruth Manning for the Wednesday group.

Winter Retreat

The annual Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization Winter Retreat will be held on Saturday, January 18 in Grand Island at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. The focus is on "Faith Trends," and the retreat theme is "Concrete or Clay." Coffee and registration is at 8:30 a.m., with the session beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Registration is \$18 and includes the noon meal and materials. A registration form is enclosed in this issue of *The Love Letter*, and additional forms are at the Information Center in the narthex. Please submit your registration by January 11.

Triennial Gathering



The churchwide executive board reported at its October meeting that over 600 women are registered for the Triennial Gathering in July. Rumor has it that at least two LOL women (besides Gwen and Ruth) are considering attending. Just a reminder that the early registration rate expires January 6. After that date, the cost goes up to \$350. Ruth Manning is the Triennial "junkie" from LOL; she has attended six of the eight previous triennial gatherings and strongly encourages other women to attend.

Ladies Coffee Fellowship

Ladies, you're invited to join the coffee fellowship at Crane Coffee, 77th and Cass Streets, on Fridays, January 3, 17, and 31 at 8:00 a.m.



Women's Ministry Team

The women's ministry team will meet on Wednesday, January 8, at 6:00 p.m. in the Mary Room. All women are invited to participate.

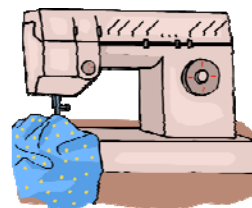


WOMEN OF LOVE

Quilters

We just purchased two new sewing machines for our quilters to replace two that were worn out from heavy use. Each year, the quilters complete about 200 quilts for Lutheran World Relief, the Fall Festival silent auction, and other local needs. Thanks to Ann Kroll who took a lot of her time to research machines and to purchase them.

Volunteers are needed to help with the quilting at 9:00 a.m. on the first and third Tuesdays of the month in the Fellowship Hall. You do not need to know how to sew...help is needed to pin the fabric pieces together (they also serve coffee and goodies!). In addition, the quilters can use sturdy fabric and used blankets and sheets in good condition. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Shinrock.



QUILTING GROUP

Thank You!

The cold weather kept the numbers down when we served Lutheran Women of Omaha on December 10, but after expenses for the luncheon, we still added \$50 to our bank account. Thanks to Gary Ramsay, Cathy Aden, Lynda McGraw, and Deb Christenson, who helped set up and serve.



Lots of cookies and treats came in for goodie containers for our shut-ins, elderly, and those with special needs. Thanks to all of you who provided the goodies, and to the carolers for delivering them.

Project Linus received 20 new fleece blankets thanks to Jackie Combes and her helpers. Thanks to all who participated!

Dates to Remember

January

3	8:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 77 th and Cass
5	11:45 a.m.	Birthday Party for Jesus and potluck luncheon
6	6:00 p.m.	Gather Bible Study, Village Inn at Oakview Mall
7	9:00 a.m.	Quilters, Fellowship Hall
8	6:00 p.m.	Ministry Team Meeting, Mary Room
17	8:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 77 th and Cass
18	8:30 a.m.	NSWO Winter Retreat, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Grand Island, NE
21	9:00 a.m.	Quilters, Fellowship Hall
31	8:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 77 th and Cass



Women of the ELCA

Looking Ahead

March 1, 2014	Metro East Spring Gathering, St. Michael's Lutheran Church, Omaha, NE
May 9-10, 2014	Annual Women's Retreat, St. Benedict's Retreat Center, Schuyler, NE
July 22-24, 2014	Ninth Triennial Convention of the Women of the ELCA, Charlotte, NC
July 24-27, 2014	Ninth Triennial Gathering of the Women of the ELCA, Charlotte, NC

WOMEN OF THE ELCA NEBRASKA SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION

WINTER RETREAT 2014



Saturday, January 18, 2014,
St. Paul's Lutheran Church
1414 Harrison St., Grand Island, NE

Focus: Faith Trends

Retreat Theme: Concrete or Clay?

We have a choice. We (individuals/congregations/Women of the ELCA groups) can be concrete or clay. Concrete is hard, rigid, has to be pushed and manipulated and once it sets up, it is permanent. Clay is soft, pliable and something we can mold into a new creation. Concrete or clay – which do we want to be? Let's look at the church, try to digest what it means to be spiritual but not religious, examine our heritage and grounding as Lutheran Christians and reflect on the call and challenge of being a disciple of Christ in the year 2014. What are the facts? Where are we headed? What are we called to do? What's the point? Concrete or clay?

Winter Retreat will be led by Sunni Richardson, Associate in Ministry in the ELCA. She is Director of Discipleship at First Lutheran Church in Lincoln, NE.

Sunni is also a Retreat and workshop leader, program consultant, mentor and life coach. She served 17 years with Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries as Director of Programs. As professional with Camp Fire she served in Iowa, Alaska, Minnesota and then in Lincoln. Her roles included District Director, Camp Director and Executive Director.

Bishop Brian Maas will ground us in scripture with a morning Bible Study.

**Come! Be informed
and energized by others!**

Coffee/Registration – 8:30 a.m.
Singing & devotions – 9:00 a.m.
Bishop Maas, Bible Study
Session I
Lunch
Session II
Closing devotions 2:45 p.m.

Offering will go to Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministry (NeLCM).

Driving Directions: From I-80, take US Highway 281. Turn East onto W. Stolley Park Road. Turn North onto S. Harrison Street to 1515.

REGISTRATION FORM REGISTRATION DEADLINES:

Name _____
Street or PO Box _____
Town _____ ZIP _____
Phone _____ E-mail _____
Church Name _____
Church Town _____
Special Needs (hearing or sight impaired, wheelchair, dietary, etc.) _____

Conference:

___ Midlands
___ Metro East
___ Southeast
___ High Plains
___ Northeast
___ Central
___ Southern Prairie

Please make check payable to NSWO. Registration is transferable, but not refundable

Send registration form and \$18 to: JoAnn Rohrs

402-274-3058 (Home)

1409 10th Street

joannrohrs1409@yahoo.com

Auburn, NE 68305-1414

IN OUR PRAYERS & LOVE NOTES

In Our Prayers

Terry (friend of Jane Hawkins)
Antoinette Anania (cousin of Deb Lund)
Chris Beckman (friend of Jane Gehringer)
Dick Bell
Patricia Connolly (friend of the Thoms)
Jan Davis-Hughes (aunt of Paula Foster)
Florence Egr (mother-in-law of Judy Egr)
Claire Foral (friend of Dave and Lisa Rieff)
Mike Gillotte (neighbor of Bill and Karen Pickens)
Ken Gustafson (husband of Mary Lou Gustafson)
Claude Hall
Wyatt Nathaniel Hansen (infant grandson of Delina Wiater)
Barb Haskins
Marilyn Haworth (friend of Brenda Mac)
Cheryl Jones (friend of Nancy Shinrock)
Bill Jorgensen (husband of Carolyn Jorgensen)
Jude Konvalina
Margret Kragnes (mother of Amy Kragnes)
Matt Kreikimeier (friend of Brenda Mac)
Glenna Lee
Lisa Lueders (sister-in-law of Dave Lueders)
Jim Mahler (brother of Jane Hawkins)
Marj Mahler (mother of Jane Hawkins)
Dan Manning
Debbie Michalak (former co-worker of Jackie Combes)
Dawn Neumann

Brenda Nobles (friend of Gwen Edwards)
Karen Pickens
David Pippin (nephew of Lynda McGraw)
Chuck Santori (friend of the Egrs)
Jo Schafer (friend of Brenda Mac)
Isaac Schroeder
Shirley Schuchard
Jill Sheridan (sister-in-law of Rebecca Lund Sheridan)
Don St. Ours (brother-in-law of Lynda McGraw)
Jeanna Steppuhn (niece of the Shinrocks)
Brenda Thom
Roslynn Thom (sister of Ron Thom)
Jean Trout (mother of Jeri Morgan)
Alice VanHoosen (friend of Judy Egr)
Bill Wallway (uncle of Kenn Garder)
Ted Whitfield (former co-worker of Brian Shinrock)

Those deployed around the world:
Veronica Barnes and her fiancé Jake Harmon

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

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

Love Notes

We extend our thanks to Lord of Love for the many gifts, cards, and your generosity at Christmas. Your kindness is greatly appreciated. May 2014 be filled with God's blessings and grace.

Peace,
Pastor Brad, Heidi,
Catie & Christopher



Please accept my heartfelt thanks for all the kindnesses shown me this Christmas season and throughout the year. I appreciate all the hugs, prayers, cards, gifts, and friendship that I have experienced this year. I could not ask for a more caring working environment. Pastor Brad is a blessing to all of us, and I feel especially grateful for his presence everyday in the church office. I wish everyone the best in the new year!

Sincerely,
Mary Lou Gustafson

Return Service Requested

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

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

This Month

January 5	Women's Epiphany potluck luncheon and birthday party for Jesus
January 12	Youth Group Winter Fun with Cookies & Cocoa event
January 18	Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization Winter Retreat
January 18-19	Nebraska Synod Middle School Gathering



Upcoming Events

February 8-9	Youth Lock-in (Minute to Win It)
February 9	Blood Drive at Lord of Love
February 22	Nebraska Lutheran Men in Mission annual gathering
March 5	Ash Wednesday
April 13	Palm Sunday
April 18-19	Good Friday prayer vigil and Men's Ministry fundraiser
April 20	Easter Sunday

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.