



The Love Letter

Volume 39

February 2011

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Worship Schedule

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

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

A Look Ahead

The theme for Lord of Love for 2011 is "**Growing in Our Ministry Together**," as established by the church council at its January retreat (see pages 12 and 13, Council Report). There are several opportunities during the month of February to do just that—grow in our ministry together—as described below.

Everyone is encouraged to attend the **semi-annual congregational meeting** and to participate in visioning for our congregation on Sunday, February 13 (see pages 12 and 13, Council Report). This is a great opportunity to help shape the future of Lord of Love!

There are also specific opportunities for children and adults. Our children in grades 1 through 6 are invited to attend **Luther Kids** on Wednesday evenings, and our 3- to 5-year-olds are invited to attend **Lord of Love Preschool** on weekday mornings (see pages 7 and 8, Nurture). Adults are invited to take part in our Adult Christian Fellowship (ACF) **progressive dinner** on Saturday, February 26 (see page 7, Nurture)!

Finally, there are many opportunities to pray for one another and to serve one another. Lord of Love has an **e-mail prayer chain** as well as a **prayer list** that is printed in *The Love Letter* and our weekly Sunday bulletins (see page 7, Nurture, and page 19, In Our Prayers). This month in particular, we can **pray for our members who are travelling to Tanzania** (see page 9, Outreach). We can also serve one another by practicing **stewardship** all year long (see page 11, Resources) or by filling a role that does not involve a long-term commitment (see page 12, Council Report).

In This Issue

Pastor's Page	2	Men's News Corner	14
Monthly Calendar	3	Women of Love	15
Worship	4	Just for Kids	17
Nurture	7	In Our Prayers	19
Outreach	9	Love Notes	19
Resources	11	Mark Your Calendar	20
Council Report	12		

Be Still by Pastor Brad

With the commotion of national and world events, the juggling of personal lives, and daily routines pulling us in multiple directions, we often do not experience periods of stillness or silence. When we finally give ourselves permission to do nothing or just to be still, we—strangely enough—seek forgiveness to not feel guilty for doing it.

Yet God gives us an opportunity (and permission) to bring moments of stillness and quiet into our day through prayer. Prayer allows us to simply have conversation with God by lifting our concerns, to feel God's presence surround us, or to just be still in contemplation.



Prayer gives us moments in our day to share with God our praise, our frustrations, and our concerns. Frequent prayer helps us to keep connected with God as the focus of our lives. Think about the ways in which you pray now. Many of us pray more than we realize. We may offer a short word of thanks to God for the beauty of the day or at another time a longer prayer asking for comfort in a difficult situation. We may rely on a memorized prayer that brings assurance. No matter when or how we pray, it is to seek God's presence in our lives, to seek reassurance that God is present.

I encourage you to take time to intentionally “Be Still.” The prayer practice that follows can be used as a calming resource when things are out of control around you and you seek to bring peace to the chaos.

Slowly repeat each phrase to yourself in prayer from Psalm 46:10A:

Be still, and know that I am God.

Be still, and know that I am.

Be still, and know.

Be still.

Be.

My prayer is that we seek some stillness in our days. I pray that we all experience some silence and peace with God and time to BE STILL.

Peace,
Pastor Brad

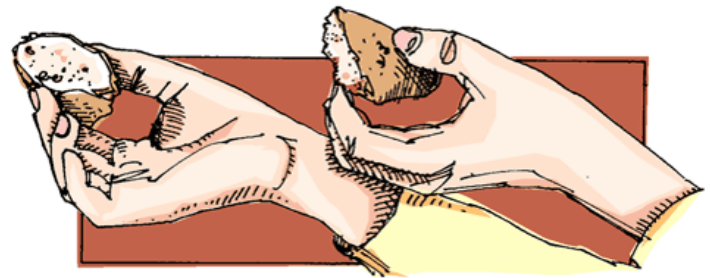


MONTHLY CALENDAR

February 2011						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 9:00am Quilters 7:00pm Vision & Coordination	2 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm LWT Bible Study 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Brass 7:30pm Chancel Choir	3 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	4 8:00am LoL Laughing Ladies @ Crane Coffee 7:30pm AA	5 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study
6 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion	7 6:00pm LWT Bible Study 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	8 7:00pm Sunnyslope Neighborhood Assoc.	9 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm Luther Kids 7:30pm Chancel Choir	10 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	11 7:30pm AA	12 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 2:00pm Girl Scout Event
13 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 11:30am Congregational Mtg.	14 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	15 9:00am Quilters 6:00pm Strategic Planning 7:30pm Church Council	16 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Brass 7:30pm Chancel Choir	17 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	18 8:00am LoL Laughing Ladies @ Crane Coffee 7:00pm Youth Lock-in 7:30pm AA	19 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 1:00pm Music Club
20 Love Letter Deadline 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 1:00pm Fellowship Hall reserved	21 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	22 7:00pm Roanoke Neighborhood Assoc.	23 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm Luther Kids 7:30pm Chancel Choir	24 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	25 7:30pm AA	26 Blue & Gold Banquet Progressive Dinner 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study
27 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 1:00pm District 18 AA Mtg. 4:45pm Novak-Haar Recital	28 8:00pm AA & Al Anon					

Communion Bread

For the past year for communion, we have used white bread, pita bread, and most recently, whole wheat bread from Great Harvest Bakeries. We've also had homemade bread on special occasions thanks to Deb Lund. There has been some conversation that using homemade bread is the best way to go, but we cannot count on one person to bake two loaves of bread every week. Therefore, we would like to get an indication of interest to see how many of you would be willing to bake bread for communion and, if so, how often. If there is sufficient interest, we may go forward with this change. Please let Randi VenHuizen know (402-932-3435). Thank you!



BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER

Lord of Love's Worship Servants

	February 6	February 13	February 20	February 27
Greeter(s)				
8:00 a.m.				
10:30 a.m.				
Liturgist				
8:00 a.m.	Judy Egr	John Florea	Shawn Lorenzen	Paul Murphy
10:30 a.m.	Gary Krause	Karen Armitage	Ashley Vandeventer	Ruth Manning
Communion Servers				
8:00 a.m.	Egr family	Florea family		Paul and Peg Murphy
10:30 a.m.	Paula Foster, Lynda McGraw	Armitage family	Vandeventer family	Dan and Ruth Manning
Nursery Attendant(s)				
8:00 a.m.				
10:30 a.m.				
Altar Care				
8:00 a.m.	Cathy Aden, Sue Dieter	Connie Walther, Lisa Meyer	Janet Guthrie, Nancy Shinrock	Mike and Christie Klos
10:30 a.m.	Brewer family	Rob and Karen Anderson	Paul and Ann Kroll	Pauline Shaffer, Randi VenHuizen
Ushers				
8:00 a.m.	Joe Combes, Josh Combes, Ed Guthrie, Brian Shinrock			
10:30 a.m.	Lueders family			

Tape Ministry: The Testimony of Ann Kroll by Karen Pickens and Rachel Novak

Recently, in Harry Naasz's Sunday School class, there was some discussion about where we find God in our lives and also about the times we fail to feel God's presence. I thought it might be interesting to hear the spiritual aspect of some of our church family's lives. I had one person in mind, and when I told her what I was thinking, she offered to write her story. This is Ann Kroll's story, and I thank her for sharing it with us.

When I entered Baylor University in Waco, Texas, as a freshman in the fall of 1978, I didn't exactly fit in: I was not a Texan, I was a child of divorced parents, and I was an atheist. Of course I didn't put "atheist" on my application. Since I had gone to Lutheran churches (Missouri Synod) with my grandparents once or twice a year, Lutheran sounded like a good enough option. Besides, I needed to get away from home. My dad's third wife was the stepmother used as the role model for all of those wicked stepmothers in all those children's stories (manipulative, game-playing, dishonest, sneaky—you get the picture).

I applied to Baylor because a doctor had recommended it as a good school with a warm and friendly atmosphere, and the people at the Baylor booth at the Albuquerque college fair had been friendlier than the people at the other college booths. After I was accepted at Baylor, my best friend, an Episcopal, pointed out skeptically, "There are a lot of Baptists at Baylor." I replied, naively, "Baptists are nice, friendly people." I had become an atheist based on the view that "If God is so good and loves everyone, why is the world such a mess? Why is there so much needless suffering?"

The people at Baylor were pretty friendly, and as I got acquainted with them, it took me a couple months to learn how to explain why I had not found or looked for a home church in the Waco area. I could stretch out the conversation if I dodged the question, but one evening at dinner with a friendly looking student, I took the direct and honest approach and explained that I didn't go to church because I was an atheist. After she picked her face up out of her dinner, this otherwise friendly student picked up her tray and moved to another table. I also experienced the overly friendly Baptists, the ones who greeted me on early morning band trips with, "Good morning! Do you know Jesus?" More than once, I was tempted to ask if He was even up this early. As time passed, I also learned that these people were not the ones to ask deep spiritual questions of: their faith tended to be pretty shallow.

During my sophomore year, I experienced problems with the "theology" I had learned from my atheist dad. His view was that most people are basically good and you can count on them. I had run into some problems with one of my band friends, and I was finding out I couldn't rely on my best friend. She didn't want to bother with my whining and complaining—I had become dependent and "high-maintenance." I thought I could count on the people around me, but I was finding out that they were just as human, unreliable, and needy as I was. I wanted to find something or someone who was reliable and unchangeable. My friends weren't that, and neither was I.

I began asking my roommates and other friends questions about this, and they shared with me about what it meant to be a Christian and how their lives and perspectives differed from what I was going through. One of my roommates gave me a Josh McDowell book to read, titled *More Than a Carpenter*. When she gave it to me, Amy said, "I bet this book will change your life." I bet it wouldn't, but I'm glad we didn't bet on dirty dishes or laundry.

Continued on the next page

Tape Ministry: The Testimony of Ann Kroll, continued

The book is written to get at the arguments that atheists and agnostics use by discussing the Bible alongside other historical records, and making an argument about Jesus in terms of “lord, liar, or lunatic.” As I read each chapter, I prayed the atheist’s prayer, “God, if you’re there, I have a question about this” The next day, I would seek out one of my twelve most open and knowledgeable Christian friends and ask them, “I’ve been reading about ____, and I want to know ____.” I made a point of seeking out three friends for each question—similar to the Lutheran concept of “three verses in context.” Some of these friends knew each other and others didn’t, and during any given day, they probably didn’t run into each other very often. Their answers were consistent on each question. Sometimes I would be standing in line at the cafeteria talking to one of these friends, and before I would ask one of my questions, they would say, “I don’t know why I’m saying this, but” They would spit out the answer to the question I was going to ask. As an atheist, this was a little bit unsettling.

Over the months that I read the book and asked my questions, time kept opening up to read and talk with people. During that time, I came to understand on an intellectual level that the Bible is really the Word of God, God exists, Jesus is indeed His son, the account of Jesus in the Bible is accurate, He did die and was resurrected—2000 years and 3 days before CPR, and that He was the unchanging, something that I was looking for. After a conversation at this point with my roommate, Amy suggested I read the last chapter in the book where McDowell gives his testimony. Prior to becoming a Christian, he had set out to disprove the existence of Christ, but the more study and research he did, the more evidence he found for the existence of Christ.

After I read that chapter, in June of 1980, I prayed the prayer to thank Christ for dying for my sins and asked Him to come into my life. Afterwards, I told Amy I had prayed the prayer, and she asked, “Do you feel different.” I said, “No,” and she shrugged and suggested I go downstairs and get the mail. As I approached the mailbox, the band friend that I had feuded with during the past year was also approaching her mailbox. Prior to that day, every time I saw her, I felt a knot of anger in my stomach. That day, I felt nothing. All the anger had washed away. I felt forgiveness toward her: What a new and fresh feeling! And to know also that I was forgiven for my sins! I did feel different.

Over the years, my growth as a Christian has been sporadic. I tend to grow most when I participate in Bible studies with other believers and when I do regular quiet times with Bible readings. Sometimes, though, I feel like I’ve read it all and heard it all before, but then I talk or e-mail with one of my friends in Albuquerque. Bev is in her early 80s, and her husband is in his late 80s. In her recent e-mail, she told me about the three different Bible study classes they are attending and said, “We are learning so much!” There is always more to learn, and given that the Bible is the Living Word of God, it always has new things to teach us.



Progressive Dinner

The February Adult Christian Fellowship (ACF) event will be a progressive dinner on Saturday, February 26 at 5:00 p.m. Please sign up in the narthex by February 5!



Pastoral Visits

Please contact the church office or Pastor Brad if you are in the hospital and desire a pastoral visit. Remember, hospitals do not notify the church office that you are there.

Hospital  *Visitation*

Prayer Chain

The prayer chain at Lord of Love is a service to all of our members. Please contact Mary Lou (493-2946) with your prayer requests, and she will contact the e-prayer members.



Also, you are invited to be one of the pray-ers. Mary Lou will add you to the list at your request.

Luther Kids

In Luther Kids, we have been studying creation, and we had Don Rowen (the scientist) explain some of the other theories on creation (The Big Bang). He also explained why humans are smarter than animals.

Claudia Rowen comes every other week to teach us some new songs.

The crafts we have been doing go along with God's creations: human (paper dolls), different animals, fish, etc.

All children 1st through 6th grade are invited to attend Luther Kids on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. in the preschool room.

Luther Kids Teachers,
Paul and Ann Kroll
Nancy Shinrock
Claudia Rowen



Weekly Education Opportunities at Lord of Love

Sunday

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

Monday

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

Wednesday

4:45 p.m. Confirmation (7th & 8th grades) @ LOL Abraham Room
6:00 p.m. Luther Kids (1st – 6th grades) @ LOL Preschool
6:00 p.m. *Lutheran Woman Today* Bible Study @ LOL Joseph Room (first Wednesday of month)

Thursday

9:30 a.m. Text Study @ Guthries

Saturday

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

Lord of Love Preschool News by Michelle Petersen

A New Year has begun, and the learning continues at Lord of Love Preschool! In January, we learned about winter weather, snow, and ice (complete with some practical learning via two snow days!). We made "N"s with noodles and orange "O"s with paper tube prints. Letter P will bring us a pancake party and a pajama day! Our January field trip was to Hy-Vee where we explored nutritious foods with our five senses, took a tour of the store, and enjoyed a healthy snack.

February is a busy month with Dental Health month, Groundhog Day, President's Day, Chinese New Year, parent-teacher conferences, and of course, Valentine's Day. Our February field trip will be a visit from Songbirds for some singing, dancing, and musical instruction.

Enrollment for the 2011-2012 school year is beginning! I am currently accepting 3- to 5-year-olds for the fall class!

Mark your calendars...the spring preschool garage sale will be April 8.



Fall Festival Report



LOL's Women of Love are happy to announce that we were able to provide \$1,016.32 to New Hope Center for Women, our designated charity for 2010. Thanks to all of you who supported the Christmas Market (in spite of the nasty weather) on December 12, purchased wreathes and greenery, and supported the Fall Festival Dinner.

We're returning to November for our Fall Festival dinner this year, as we ran into so many conflicts last year. Mark your calendars for Saturday, November 12. A past favorite, the silent auctions, will be returning!

Also, planning for the event will begin in March this year, so we're anxious to get our planning team formed. Because we are an inclusive organization, we're not limiting this to women. We have a core of men who have been strong supporters of this event, and we encourage them to join us. We're also looking for suggestions for a local charity to support this year. We will make our selection at the March Ministry Team meeting.

Contact Brenda Thom, Val Florea, or Ruth Manning for further information.

Tanzania Trip

Four Lord of Love members—Craig and Peg Pennell, Paul Christenson, and Doug Roberts—along with former interim Pastor Bob Oleson are traveling with the Nebraska Synod to Tanzania. Our host in Africa will be the Northern Diocese of the ELCA in Tanzania.

While there, we will share in worship and visit churches, hospitals, schools, health centers, and ministry sites at local villages. We will have the opportunity to visit with our Lord of Love missionary, Bob Kasworm, and visit some of the houses that Bob and his organization “Houses for Health” have built. We will possibly see one of the two homes that was built with Lord of Love funds and maybe even have a chance talk with the families! A visit with Mrs. Maimu, widow of the late Pr. Elisante Maimu (exchange pastor at Lord of Love a few years ago) has been arranged by Bob Kasworm, and a Lord of Love prayer shawl will be presented to her.



Some of our schedule will be put together while in Tanzania. We are trying to arrange a visit with two students that Lord of Love is currently supporting for upper high school education, which is not affordable for many school eligible children. Sightseeing and shopping are also on the agenda.

Please pray for us as we travel. We are very excited about our trip and the opportunity to visit with our brother and sisters in Tanzania, and we are humbled about having the opportunity to be ambassadors representing Lord of Love Lutheran Church.

ELCA/Nebraska Synod Mission Interpreter Update by Deb Lund

One of the organizations supported via our synod share dollars to the ELCA is Lutheran World Relief, whose mission states, “Affirming God’s love for all people, we work with Lutherans and partners around the world to end poverty, injustice, and human suffering.”

After reading “A Tale of Two Women” in the January/February issue of *Lutheran Woman Today*, I wanted to share this story that demonstrates the meaningful programs that take place through Lutheran World Relief (LWR).

The article talks about two Ugandan women and their involvement in the Gumutindo coffee cooperative, which is now a part of the LWR Coffee Project. Through funds and training from LWR, the Gumutindo cooperative is greatly improved; the production and handling of coffee products is far superior; and the coffee farmers in the cooperative now grow high-quality beans that are in demand.

There is some explanation of the culture of Uganda in this story. Women do most of the work on coffee farms, but the men control the finances and most often own the land. Husbands often demand or take money from their wives at any time, and the wives must cope by doing whatever they can find to support their families. LWR and Gumutindo founded organizations that work much like American credit unions to help the women coffee workers protect and save their money as well as provide loans when needed.

When you enjoy a cup of coffee from the Gumutindo cooperative of Uganda, you are helping women and their children have a better life. Buying fair trade coffees through the LWR Coffee Project helps provide the coffee farmers a steady income to enable them to have food, clean water, and education for their children. Through gifts to LWR, whether they be direct contributions or monies given via congregational mission shares, we show God’s love to people in many, many ways. Thanks be to God!

Hope in Haiti: Moving Forward – A Message from Bishop Mark Hanson



Office of the Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

January 13, 2011

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the
mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult. Psalm 46:1-3*

One year ago yesterday, a catastrophic earthquake struck the nation of Haiti, killing nearly 250,000 people and leaving more than one million homeless.

Many of us remember hearing the news and seeing images of the devastation for the first time. We lifted up the people of Haiti in our prayers. We gave generously.

More than 40,000 ELCA members and leaders like you contributed \$12.6 million to support the work of ELCA Disaster Response in Haiti. Because of our long-standing relationships with the Lutheran Church in Haiti and many partners there, the ELCA was and continues to be uniquely positioned to respond quickly and effectively.

Your gifts have:

- Provided **food and shelter** to approximately **57,700** people living in camps coordinated by The Lutheran World Federation and more than **6,000** people who gathered on the grounds of the Lutheran Church in Haiti.
- Delivered more than **14,000 quilts** and **13,000 health kits**.
- Distributed **3,200 gallons** of safe, clean drinking water to approximately 2,000 families.
- Shipped **four convoys** of **medical supplies, hygiene and baby kits, tents, food packages** and other necessities.
- Funded **housing placement** and **crisis counseling** to Haitian refugees and medical evacuees seeking asylum in Florida and Georgia.

And yet our work is far from over. Our long-term goal in Haiti is to help renew hope and rebuild lives and livelihoods, seeking to end the cycle of poverty and injustice.

Thank you for your continued generosity and your prayers for the people of Haiti. Together we will continue to do God's life-giving work with our hands for as long as it takes.

In God's grace,

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

STORIES OF HOPE

Meet Jauvalda Francique.



Photo: ACT/Maria Havalala

Jauvalda is 3 years old and one of the first students to attend the newly rebuilt school in Léogâne, Haiti, made possible by your gifts to ELCA Disaster Response. Find her story and more at www.LivingLutheran.com.

Meet Mytch and Louis Dorvilier.



Louis is a churchwide colleague who returned to Haiti on behalf of The Lutheran World Federation. He helps to rebuild his homeland while Mytch continues to care for their children in Chicago. View their video story at www.LivingLutheran.com.

RESOURCES

Stewardship All Year Long: Serving by Shawn Lorenzen

Recently our *Lutheran Woman Today* Bible study had a session on Stewardship and the often negative connotations that the word has. We discussed that Stewardship is not something that only happens once a year and that it does not only apply to our monetary offerings. We came up with several ways that Stewardship can be shown and discussed throughout the year: encourage, caring for creation, faithful, nurturing, using our gifts, volunteering, sharing, privilege, servant, giving, serving, helping, taking care of, trustworthy, ability. Can you think of others?



Many of you have already heard this story, but I will tell it again. Years ago, I was asked to serve on the church council on (what was then called) the Worship and Witness committee. Oh, how excited I was at first! My mom is the organist at my church in Minnesota, and throughout growing up, I found it fascinating to look through hymnals and liturgies and figure out how worship “worked.” I wanted to be just like my Mom one day and be very involved in the church. So I thought, here I go!

After some inquiry, I found out that Tom Olson was going to be president of the council. Tom drove me absolutely nuts (and still does occasionally)! If you’ve never been in a meeting with him, his favorite term is “The other side of the coin is....” Many times, nobody ever asked about the coin or the other side of it, but Tom always wanted to throw it out there! It made me crazy!

I said to myself that the Lord was testing me....either A) Should I be smart enough to say NO because there was no way in the world I could be productive with Tom irritating me every meeting, or B) Was this an opportunity to “rise above” and put my personal opinion aside and serve the church anyway?

Well, I’m sure you know what happened. I said YES! I served on the council for 5 years at a critical point in our congregation. Having the purpose of the CHURCH in mind, Tom, the council, and I served together to handle the business of Lord of Love. After much laughter and many tears, Tom and I have become great friends, and I continue to serve on the Worship Planning committee.

Stewardship is about serving—serving our God, our church, and each other. There might be something that the Lord is “testing” you to do, too! Get involved; try something new! Serve the Lord! Thanks Be to God!



COUNCIL REPORT

January 2011 Council Report by Brian Walther, Council Secretary

Our January church council meeting was a two-day retreat that was held at the church on January 7 and 8. We started out doing an ice breaker. Pastor Brad fed us Skittles as we asked and answered questions of each other in order to get to know one another.

We settled on our theme for 2011, "Growing in Our Ministry Together." The intent is to grow our faith, grow as servants and stewards, grow as we reach out to our surrounding community, and grow in our existing relationships within our church family. It doesn't mean we need to do more things; it can be building on what we already cherish or do and maybe tweaking it to improve on it.



On Saturday morning, we were met by some of the men from the Saturday morning Bible study, who fed us a wonderful breakfast. We went through the orientation for the new council members and then moved into a time for committee planning. We determined that a few things we want to accomplish are the following:

1. Revisit the findings of the Worship Enrichment Team.
2. Take a closer look at Lord of Love's assets and prioritize some projects that need to be addressed.
3. Work at communicating with each other through a Master Calendar to better serve everyone's needs for meeting time and space.
4. Focus on our members to help identify and develop our future leaders.



CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING

Next month, we will have our semi-annual congregational meeting on Sunday, February 13. We will be nominating two members to represent us at the Nebraska Synod meeting as well as individuals to serve on the Nominating Committee and the Endowment Committee. Please prayerfully consider serving in some way in 2011 at your church. There are many opportunities that don't take a long-term commitment.

2011 Lord of Love Church Council

Executive Committee: Brian Lund, President; Kenn Garder, Vice-President; Brian Walther, Secretary; Barb Haskins, Treasurer
Nurture: Lori Vandeventer, Paula Foster
Outreach: Paul Christenson, Jeri Morgan
Resources: Doug Armitage, Josh Combes
Worship: Karen Mullen, Randi VenHuizen



COUNCIL REPORT

From the Council President – February 2011 by Brian Lund, Council President

Be Thou My Vision

*Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart, naught be all else to me, save that thou art;
Thou my best thought by day or by night, waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
Be thou my wisdom, thou my true word, I ever with thee and thou with me Lord;
Thou my soul's shelter and thou my high tower, raise thou me heavenward, O Power of my power.
Light of my soul, after victory won, may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, still be my vision, O Ruler of all.*

Have you had your eyes checked lately? Taken a vision test recently? Been to see Dr. Karen A.? I have an annual eye check to ensure that I can see everything clearly and that my eyes are healthy. I went a number of years with no prescription change. But the last several years have seen some changes, and I expect those to continue.



February is when we get to do a little vision check of our own at Lord of Love. Our semi-annual congregational meeting has a visioning segment that brings our members together for discussions that help shape our future. This process can be just like those trips to the eye doctor. Some years, the findings may show that everything is fine; no change is needed. Other years may find that adjustments are needed, maybe small ones and maybe even larger ones.

The important thing is to take time to “see the doctor.” In our case, this means attending the semi-annual meeting on Sunday, February 13, following the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Participation by a good representation of the congregation can help us get a feel for the overall vision of our congregation. A light lunch and child care will be provided to help eliminate some obstacles to attending the meeting.

The council adopted “Growing in Our Ministry Together” as our theme for the year. The council's strategic planning focus areas for 2011 are: Youth Ministry, Member Involvement/New Member Integration, Community Outreach, Worship, Property, and Ministry Team Formation. Congregation visioning time will include group discussion and responses on these topic areas through questions similar to these: What opportunities do exist for ministry? What are the positive and negative aspects of our current ministry? Where do we need to improve our planning and action? What approaches can be taken to involve more members of our congregation in these ministries? How should these focus areas be prioritized? The resulting information will be shared with the church council and used to help drive some initiatives in the future.

Psalm 103:1 (NRSV) *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.*

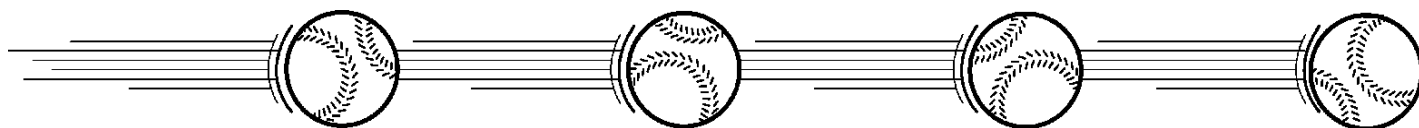
This year's council again has some great people on it whom I look forward to working with in the coming year. We had some lively discussion at our January council retreat to help set goals, calendar items, and expectations for 2011. Please continue to support our council members and the ministries of our congregation with your prayers, time, talents, and financial gifts. We all are blessed in many ways, and it is good and right to praise God who has given us these many blessings.

Please continue to pray for our congregation, Pastor Brad, and for all those in need.

Blessings in faith and service,
Brian Lund

Men's Softball

We are looking for men and boys (16 and older) to play on a men's softball team. If you are interested in playing or know of anyone that might be interested in playing (a neighbor, coworker, etc), please contact Don Rowen at 965-8977 or drowen@unomaha.edu. We would play in the Metro Omaha D league from late April to early August, probably on Monday nights.



Lutheran Men in Mission Events

All men are invited to attend the Nebraska and National Lutheran Men in Mission Gatherings this year. These are great events for increasing your faith and for gathering in fellowship with other men to seek ways to live out our faith. A few members have already committed to attend both events.

Nebraska Lutheran Men in Mission Annual Gathering – 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 12, 2011, at Bethany Lutheran Church in Elkhorn. Speakers include former UNL football player Todd Brown and Nebraska Synod Bishop David deFreese. Lunch is provided. Advance registration is not required, and the cost is free except a donation is suggested for lunch.

National Lutheran Men in Mission Gathering – July 22 – 24 in Denver, Colorado. A group of men has committed to attending and is organizing a road trip. There is a discount for registering as a group, so we are currently taking names and deposits for the event. Group registration is \$85 and the hotel rooms will be \$100 a night. For more information, see www.lutheranmeninmission.org or talk with Ron Thom or Paul Christenson.



Argentinean Guests

On Wednesday, February 23, you are invited to join us at the regularly scheduled dinner at 5:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall and welcome some special visitors. In attendance will be two women from Argentina who will travel with the Nebraska Synod trip to Tanzania this month. They will be accompanied by their interpreter and Pearl Anderson, our Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization (NSWO) synod companion coordinator. Please come and share some good old Nebraska hospitality!

Lutheran Woman Today Bible Study

Session 6: The People of God: Race and Culture

Theme verse: ³⁴ Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism ³⁵ but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. Acts 10:34-35



All women are invited to attend one of the two groups that meet for these studies, both starting at 6:00 p.m.:

- Wednesday, February 2 in the Mary Room at Lord of Love
- Monday, February 7 at Old Country Buffet at 145th and West Center Road

Any questions? Please contact Ruth Manning at 455-7221 or cranecoffeekick@gmail.com.

Women's Ministry Team

Our team is short a couple of women to help administer the programs and planning for women at Lord of Love. Please contact Brenda Thom (398-1750) if you are interested in helping us out. Also, a ministry team member may approach you, and we'd love it if you would say "yes."



Women's Ministry Team will meet at 6:00 p.m. in the Mary Room at Lord of Love on Wednesday, February 9. Come and see what we do as well as offer your suggestions.

Coffee Fellowship

All women are invited to join the Lord's Laughing Ladies! We meet at 8:00 a.m. for fellowship at Crane Coffee, 77th and Cass, on February 11 and 25.

Project Hope

Thank you for your continued generosity to Project Hope. **The needs for February are beans products/ dried beans and cookies.** The following personal care items are always needed: bar soap, bathroom tissue, can openers, conditioner, deodorant, dish soap, feminine hygiene products, hair products (combs and brushes), Kleenex, laundry soap, mouthwash (without alcohol), razors, shaving cream, toothbrushes, and toothpaste. Please place items in the containers under the Information Center in the narthex.

WOMEN OF LOVE

Stewardship and Giving

- Stewardship helps us exercise our faith and trust in God.
- We give what God has first given us: our time, our talents, and our possessions.
- We give because it is part of God's plan.
- We give because it is essential to our partnership with God in accomplishing God's mission.

One of the ways women of the church can give is through Thankofferings. Thankofferings show gratitude for God's blessings and give us an important and tangible way to express that gratitude. It is a tradition grounded in our celebration of community, of meeting together to joyfully give thanks for what God has given us. Thankofferings have always been, and still are, our opportunity to say thank you to God in both significant and ordinary moments. Today, Women of the ELCA collects more than \$1 million in Thankofferings annually for the ministries and mission of our women's organization.



Thank
Offering

October 16 will be the ingathering of the Thankofferings. We invite you to pick up a Thankoffering box at the Information Center and be a part of this giving ministry.

Thanks for your generosity!

Women of the ELCA Triennial Convention and Gathering



The theme of the Women of the ELCA Triennial Convention and Gathering is "Renew, Respond, Rejoice." Plan ahead and save your money to attend the Triennial Convention and Gathering in Spokane, Washington, from July 12 to 17, 2011. Registration is now open. Go to www.womenoftheelca.org to register online.

Calendar of Events

February

2	6:00 p.m.	LWT Bible Study, Mary Room
7	9:00 a.m.	Quilting for Lutheran World Relief, Fellowship Hall
7	6:00 p.m.	LWT Bible Study, Old Country Buffet, 145th and West Center Road
9	6:00 p.m.	Women's Ministry Team, Mary Room
11	8:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 77th and Cass
21	9:00 a.m.	Quilting for Lutheran World Relief, Fellowship Hall
25	8:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 77th and Cass



Coming Soon

March 26, 2011	Day retreat at the home of Randi VenHuizen
April 9, 2011	Metro East Spring Gathering, Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church, Omaha
July 12-14, 2011	W/ELCA Triennial Convention, Spokane, WA
July 14-17, 2011	W/ELCA Triennial Gathering, Spokane, WA





GALATIANS 5:13, NIV



A Love Letter

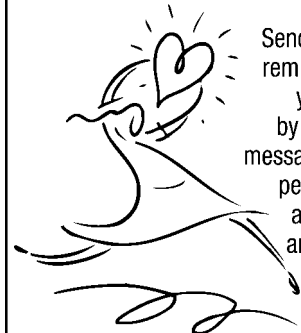
In the New Testament, John writes a letter about God's love and the love we should show to other people.

DIRECTIONS: Working from left to right, write down all the 1's in the word blanks. Continue with the 2's and finally the 3's. Then read about love, from 1 John 4:11-12, NIV.

lives 3	in 3	us 3	Since 1	and 3	God 1	so 1	loved 1	his 3
us 1	love 3	we 1	If 2	also 1	is 3	made 3	we 2	ought 1
to 1	love 2	love 1	one 1	complete 3	one 2	another 1	in 3	us 3
another 2	God 2							

1 John 4:11-12, NIV

PIECES OF LOVE



Send special reminders of your love by creating messages that people can assemble and enjoy.

What you need:

- Large wooden craft sticks
- Tape
- Permanent markers
- Scissors
- Zippered sandwich baggies

What you do:

1. Make a rectangle out of seven craft sticks by placing them next to one another, long side against long side.
2. Tape the sticks together.
3. Turn the sticks over and draw a special picture or message. You can include this Bible verse: "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19, NIV).
4. Cut through the tape to separate each craft stick.
5. Put all the sticks in a baggie.
6. Give your special messages to family members, friends or teachers — along with directions for viewing them.

IN OUR PRAYERS & LOVE NOTES

In Our Prayers

Bill (uncle of David Hawkins)
Linda and Brad (neighbors of Karen Pickens)
Dick Bell
Jim Gunter
Jim Mahler (brother of Jane Hawkins)
Marj Mahler (mother of Jane Hawkins)
Eunice Neve
Connie O'Neil (friend of Marilyn Thomsen)
Berniece Reitan
Luana Salerno (friend of Sandy Hall)
Marilyn Thomsen
Esther Welliver
Agnes Wilson

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



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





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

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

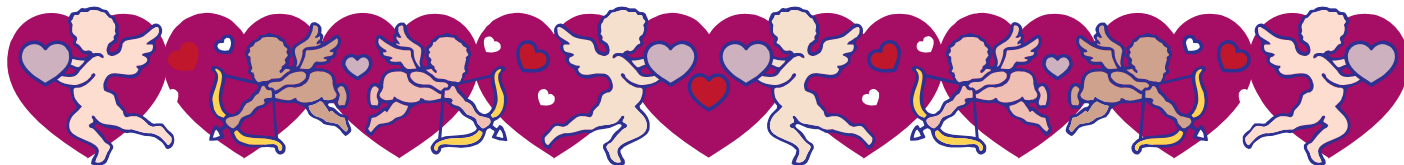
MARK YOUR CALENDAR

This Month

February 12	Nebraska Lutheran Men in Mission Annual Gathering
February 13	Semi-annual Congregational Meeting
February 26	ACF Progressive Dinner

Upcoming Events

March 9	Ash Wednesday
April 8	Spring Preschool Garage Sale
April 24	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.