



The Love Letter

Volume 41

November 2013

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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

Giving thanks is brought to the forefront of our minds in November. As we celebrate Thanksgiving this year, consider how Lord of Love has been a blessing to you and how you can be a blessing to Lord of Love. You are invited to take advantage of opportunities for worship, education, fellowship, and service as we head into the holiday season of Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas!

The Youth Group has two events planned for November (see page 8, LOL Youth). The **Youth Group Fall Lock-in** for grades 7-12 will be held on November 9-10. Then the senior high youth are taking a road trip to the **Lutheran Youth of Nebraska (LYON) Assembly** in Kearney on November 22-24.

On Saturday, November 23, the Women of Love will hold its **general meeting and program planning for women's ministry** in 2014 (see page 16, Women of Love). All women are encouraged to attend!

Our annual **Thanksgiving Worship Service and Pie Fest** will be held on Sunday, November 24. Sign up now to bring your favorite pie to share during fellowship following this special evening worship service (see page 4, Worship, and page 6, Nurture).

On Sunday, December 1, all are invited to a new event, a **Congregational Advent Gathering!** This fun-filled afternoon is for both adults and children, and volunteers are needed (see page 6, Nurture).

Other events in early to mid-December include a **blanket-making event for Project Linus** on Saturday, December 7 (see page 7, Nurture), and the dress rehearsal for and presentation of the **Sunday School Christmas Program** on Saturday, December 14, and Sunday, December 15, respectively (see page 6, Nurture).

In This Issue

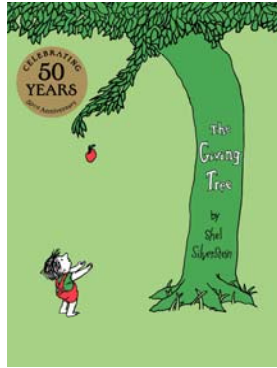
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Happy Thanksgiving! by Pastor Brad

Thanksgiving isn't a designated "church" celebration listed on the liturgical calendar, nor did Jesus celebrate a traditional Thanksgiving meal with his disciples. But there is something about Thanksgiving that calls us to be mindful and "thankful" to God for what God has given us.

Thanksgiving can help us put life in perspective as we take time to appreciate how we have been blessed and what is truly important to us in life.

One of my favorite books is *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein. The story is about a boy who starts life wanting everything possible, yet ends with the "boy," in his later years, realizing that "stuff" really doesn't matter. As the boy gets older and the tree has given about all it can, even its trunk, the story concludes with these words:



"I don't need very much now," said the boy, "just a quiet place to sit and rest. I am very tired."

"Well," said the tree, straightening herself up as much as she could, "well, an old stump is good for sitting and resting. Come, Boy, sit down. Sit down and rest."

And the boy did.

And the tree was happy.

The tree gave the boy all it had, and the boy began to be thankful for all that the tree offered. The tree offered its love, life, and support.

The older I get, the more I know that life isn't about the stuff we can acquire, but rather about the support and love for one another through **relationship**. It's about our relationship with God, valued family friends, parents, siblings, and a multitude of other connections that we make with people at church, work, school,... everywhere. I am more thankful for, and mindful of, the positive impact and support that many people have had on my life and encourage you to do the same.

Paul gives us the example as he wrote to the Philippians, "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you..."

Thanksgiving is set aside for us to be grateful and to celebrate. As a part of our thankfulness, I encourage you to list the people and relationships that you are grateful for and spend time giving thanks to God for the wonderful gift of **relationship**.

Peace,
Pastor Brad



MONTHLY CALENDAR

November 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 7:30pm AA Meeting	2 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry
3 Daylight Savings Time ends 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 6:00pm Bell Rehearsal	4 6:00pm "Gather" Bible Study @ Old Country Buffet 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	5 9:00am Quilters 7:00pm Vision & Coordination Mtg.	6 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm High School Bible Study 6:00pm "Gather" Bible Study 6:50pm Jr. Choir 7:15pm Sr. Choir	7 9:30am Text Study at Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	8 8:00am Crane Coffee Fellowship 7:30pm AA Meeting	9 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry 7:00pm Youth Lock-in
10 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 11:30am Annual Mtg. 6:00pm Bell Rehearsal	11 6:30pm Cub Scout Leaders 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	12	13 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm High School Bible Study 6:00pm Ministry Team Mtg. 6:50pm Jr. Choir 7:15pm Sr. Choir	14 9:30am Text Study at Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	15 4:00pm Muldoon Wedding 7:30pm AA Meeting	16 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry 9:00am Boy Scout Lock-in
17 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:00am Boy Scout Pancake Breakfast 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 6:00pm Bell Rehearsal	18 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	19 9:00am Quilters	20 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm High School Bible Study 6:00pm Brass 6:50pm Jr. Choir 7:15pm Sr. Choir	21 9:30am Text Study at Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	22 8:00am Crane Coffee Fellowship 7:30pm AA Meeting	23 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry
24 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 1:00pm District 18 AA Mtg. 6:00pm Bell Rehearsal 7:00pm Thanksgiving Worship & Pie-fest	25 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	26	27	28 Thanksgiving Day	29 Church Office Closed 7:30pm AA Meeting	30 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry

WORSHIP

Thanksgiving Worship and Pie Fest

Please join us for our annual Thanksgiving worship service on Sunday, November 24 at 7:00 p.m. Worship will be followed by our annual Pie Fest (see page 6, Nurture, for details).



Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

In 25 years of ministry together, we have:

- Theologically trained nearly 8,000 leaders.
- Sent more than 2,000 missionaries to serve around the world.
- Started over 400 new ELCA congregations.
- Awarded millions of dollars in grants to congregations, focusing on renewal.
- Supported projects and ministry in over 90 countries throughout the world.

Lord of Love's Worship Servants

	November 3	November 10	November 17	November 24
Greeters				
8:00 a.m.	Paul and Peg Murphy	Anne Yarger; Linda McGraw	Kenn and Shari Garder	Dale and Karen Finck
10:30 a.m.	Dan and Ruth Manning	Jane Hawkins; E.J. Shaner	Bill and Nicole Quackenbush	Paul and Traci Cadwallader
Liturgist				
8:00 a.m.	David Hild	Jesse Brewer	Kenn Garder	Paul Christenson
10:30 a.m.	Heather Christensen	Karen Mullen	Ruth Manning	Claudia Rowen
Communion Servers				
8:00 a.m.	Tessin family	Anne Yarger; Brandon and Heather Hansen	Garder family	Walther family
10:30 a.m.	Quackenbush family	Paul and Ann Kroll; Jane Hawkins	Dan Manning; Karen Mullen	Rowen family
Altar Care				
8:00 a.m.	Janet Guthrie; Nancy Shinrock	Wayne and Joan Witt	Deb Christenson	Doug and Rose Roberts; Caroline Tessin
10:30 a.m.	Paul and Ann Kroll	Deb Quadhamer; Judy Messerschmidt	Diana Hays; Marcia Roads	Debra Gillespie; Karen Armitage
Ushers				
8:00 a.m.	David Hild, Paul Murphy, Claude Hall, Mike Klos, Bob Christensen			
10:30 a.m.	John Edwards, Dan Manning, Rex Quadhamer, Gary Ramsay, John Ramsay			
Nursery Attendant				
10:30 a.m.	Anne Yarger	Sarah Horan	Lisa Rieff	Ashley Meier
CD Recorder				
8:00 or 10:30	Pat Brewer	Paul Christenson	Dave Lueders	Paul Murphy

May a Little Child Lead Us by Carol Novak

"Let the little children come to me and forbid them not, for such is the kingdom of heaven."
"Ask, and you shall receive...."
"a little child will lead them...."

All of these scripture passages came to my mind as I watched my 2-year-old granddaughter, Lorelei, enthusiastically extend her small hands to receive communion at Lord of Love. She had figured it out. She had watched her family, her big brother, the people of her church, and learned by their example. Lorelei knew how to ask and receive.

If only as adults, we still felt the awe, the mystery, the wonder of receiving God's abundant gifts—bread and wine, forgiveness, grace, even life itself. May a little child lead us.



The Communion of Saints by Brad VenHuizen

The entire process was over in less than 30 seconds. There was no fanfare, no public statement, just a curiously private yet very public act that has stayed in my mind and replayed countless times.

Randi and I had the privilege of visiting the Arizona Memorial in Pearl Harbor. We had taken the tour boat with dozens of other people and were standing near the far end of the memorial next to a wall listing each of the sailors who had been killed that December 7th morning on the Arizona. There is an open floor of the Memorial that looks down on the water-covered hulk of the Arizona below. While we looked on, two young men walked over to the railing surrounding the opening. One of them reached in his pocket and removed a small bottle of ashes, which he held for a moment and then emptied into the water above the Arizona. Each watched very somberly for a few moments as the ashes disappeared into the water and then left to join the line of visitors leaving the memorial.

While there is no way of knowing for certain what occurred, I suspect the ashes were those of one of the survivors of the attack that morning. All those years later, he had finally rejoined his comrades in arms who had not been as fortunate as he. What strikes me is the longing over all these years to be finally reunited with those who had gone before. His family members probably went to great lengths and substantial cost to honor his last wishes.

What has kept me thinking about this is the power of the longing I think we all have for those who have gone before. Perhaps as we get older, this longing becomes more intense and penetrates our conscious thought more often.

In one small example, for the last ten years of his life, my father and I communicated primarily by phone. We lived 1,500 miles apart, so the visits in person were far too short and far too infrequent. I really took those calls for granted, and even they were spaced too far apart as I look back. For several years after my father's death, the stray thought would float through my mind that I hadn't talked to Dad for quite a while. Even now it stops me short that I can't make that call. And yet....

Each Sunday morning that we confess our faith in the words of the Apostles Creed, we make the bold statement that we believe in the Communion of Saints. What does this mean? One of the dangers of having a liturgical approach to worship is that we go through the motions and repeat the phrases without any concerted thought. What exactly is the Communion of Saints? After talking with a former Pastor of mine, I think I have quite a different understanding than I have had in the past. Because we are all Saints, and all who have believed who have gone before us are Saints, we are not just communing with those who physically stand at the altar rail with us each Sunday, as I had previously thought. We are also in Communion with all Christians throughout the world. That rail becomes a very crowded place with all of our loved ones and the very real presence of Christ through the Holy Spirit.

Thanksgiving Pie Fest

Our annual Thanksgiving worship service and Pie Fest will be held on Sunday evening, November 24. Please sign up and bring a pie to share during fellowship after the evening service. See the sign-up sheet in the Narthex or talk to Deb Lund.



Junior Choir

Junior Choir practices will be held from 6:50 to 7:20 p.m. on Wednesdays, November 6, 13, and 20. See you there! Praise the Lord in song!

New Event for Advent!

Save the date—Sunday, December 1, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. It's a new event for Advent!

Join us for our first Congregational Advent Gathering! This will be an afternoon of goodies, gifts, music, crafts, stories, and more, geared towards both adults and children, as we enter into the season of Advent and prepare for the birth of our Savior. Stop by for a bit or stay all afternoon.



Many volunteers are needed to make this event a success. If interested in helping, contact Heather Christensen.

Sunday School Christmas Program



Christmas Program

Christmas is just around the corner! Please note the following dates:

- Sunday School Christmas Program 2013: Sunday, December 15 at 10:30 a.m.
- Dress Rehearsal: Saturday, December 14 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

All children are invited to participate, even if not regularly attending Sunday School. Just let us know you are interested and if you want a larger or small speaking part or non-speaking part. If interested, contact Heather Christensen at 402-415-4571 or heather@lord-of-love.org.

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

2nd Annual "Blanketeer" Event for Project Linus

On December 7, starting right after the making of the Goodie baskets by the WELCA ladies, a blanket-making event for Project Linus will be held in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring enough fleece fabric to make one blanket. Each blanket can be made from two pieces of fleece, 1 ½ or 2 yards each. One piece should be patterned, and the second should be solid to coordinate with the pattern.

Since 1995, the Project Linus organization has brought comfort and security to children who are seriously ill, traumatized, or otherwise in need by donating quilts and blankets crafted with care by hand. Project Linus is named after the Peanuts character that always carried his security blanket. A recent update from Project Linus states that blankets for boys 9 years and older are especially needed, but many area hospitals and organizations are in need of blankets.

Last year, over 20 blankets were made. If you would like to participate, please bring enough fleece to make one blanket. Also, if you have scissors, please bring those, too. You can come long enough to make one blanket or stay for the entire time. If you would like to do this as a family, that is great, too.

Watch for a bulletin announcement and a sign-up sheet as the time draws closer. Please contact Jackie Combes at 402-301-5664 if you have questions.



First Bible 101 Class was a Success!

On a fall Sunday afternoon, four elementary students and their parents joined us for a Bible 101 class. We took time to learn about what the Bible is, what components make up the Bible, how to use the Bible, and how to look up verses. The children were encouraged to personalize their Bibles, and to mark favorite verses and sections they've read or studied. We finished the afternoon with a group crossword puzzle and a certificate of participation. This was a fun addition to our traditional gift of Bibles for our third graders.



Tanzania Vision Trip

Congratulations to Jackie Combes, who won the scholarship to go on the vision trip to Tanzania with the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization in June 2014. Way to go, Jackie!

Congratulations!

Fall Festival

Thanks to all who assisted with making our Fall Festival a success! The committee consisted of Ruth Manning, E.J. Shaner, Connie Walther, Jackie Combes, Joan Witt, Debra Gillespie, Lynda McGraw, and Amy Kragnes. Thanks to the Men's Ministry Breakfast group who set up the tables and chairs in the sanctuary (and put them back), Lisa and Dave Rieff who provided the delicious meal, and our "talent" who performed before dinner. And last, but not least, to our fabulous youth group under the direction of Heather and Rollie Christensen for serving and cleaning up. You all are very much appreciated!

Watch for the details of how much we provided for Table Grace Café, the Women on a Mission trip, and the operating budget of LOL Women.



Fall Lock-in: Hunger Awareness and “Chopped” Competition

The Youth Group’s Fall Lock-in will be held on Saturday, November 9, through Sunday, November 10! The theme for the event is Hunger Awareness, and we will be having a “Chopped” competition.

As a congregation, we have focused on providing time, funds, and nourishment to sustain programs that are helping to combat food insecurity in our communities. The Youth lock-in will continue these efforts through education and awareness. In a fun way, we will explore the needs of our community and consider how we can make an impact. Then we will break into teams, receive a “pantry basket” similar to those received when using a food pantry, and compete for the best creation from our basket. This is a play on the Food Network show “Chopped”. We will come away with an awareness of hunger, not only in our stomachs but also in our Christian lives.



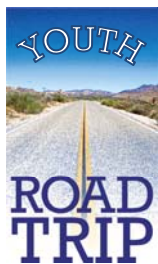
All youth in 7th through 12th grades are welcome to attend. Friends are encouraged. You must register on the Youth board so that we can plan for the “Chopped” competition teams.

Any adults interested in participating or judging the food competition are highly encouraged to contact Heather Christensen!

The lock-in will then continue with fellowship, minimal sleep, breakfast, and church at 8:00 a.m. Join us!



Attend the LYON Assembly in Kearney!



Road trip to the Lutheran Youth of Nebraska (LYON) Assembly in Kearney on Friday, November 22, through Sunday, November 24! This weekend is geared specifically for senior high youth and encompasses service, seminars, and song with youth from all across Nebraska. Our very own Adam Lueders has attended in the past and encourages the youth to take advantage of this faith-building opportunity and great event. The \$180 cost includes hotel and meals. Financial support may be available if needed. If interested in attending or learning more, contact Heather Christensen or Adam Lueders. Registration forms and an informational flyer are available in the Youth Corner of the Narthex.

The theme of the 2013 assembly is Catching Fire for God. Have you read the Hunger Games trilogy or seen the movie? If so, you’ll notice that, from chariots to district competitions to workshops on topics like not judging a person by how he/she looks, you will be surprised at all the ways we tie the story of Catching Fire into our story as the Church. (The LYON Assembly won’t be as violent as the story though. We promise.) The theme verse is Romans 5:3-5a, “... we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us...”



October Youth Event Recap by Miss Heather

October brought a few activities for our youth to participate in. On the afternoon of October 13, we gathered for fellowship, football, and fun. While there were many grass stains from our backyard football game, thankfully no one was injured! Our devotion looked at how the Bible is filled with different sporting events and the lessons we can garner from such activities through discipline, competition, good sportsmanship, belief, and participation. The question to ponder was in regard to our relationship with God: are we sitting on the sidelines or actively in the game?



On Sunday evening October 20, the youth had the opportunity to gather and support the Fall Festival event. Fourteen youth gathered to babysit, serve, do dishes, clean, and even have a little fun in between. I think my favorite activity was playing musical chairs with the little ones in the nursery, especially when we loudly sang along to the music. ☺

The youth did a great job supporting this churchwide event. I was very pleased and proud of each of them and received many comments about their kindness and helpfulness during the evening. We are most appreciative of the generosity of the Women of the ELCA and the donation they made to the youth fund as well as all those who tipped in the tip jar! Your contributions will significantly impact the youth fund and supporting our mission trip this summer. Thank you!

Middle School Gathering – Save the Date!

Every year, the Nebraska Synod holds a Middle School Gathering (MSG). The 2014 MSG will be held January 18-19 at Bethany Lutheran Church in Elkhorn. The MSG is a highly interactive experience for youth in 6th through 8th grades and their adult leaders, and confirmation students are strongly encouraged to attend. Each year, the MSG lasts only about 24 hours, but the memories last a lifetime!

The Details

Dates: January 18-19, 2014

Place: Bethany Lutheran Church in Elkhorn (4200 N. 204th Street)

Time: 10:00 a.m. Saturday through 2:00 p.m. Sunday

Participants: Youth in grades 6-8 and their adult leaders

Theme: Do. Love. Walk.

Theme Verse: Micah 6:8

“He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”



Registration Fees

Early Bird Registration (submitted on or before November 15): \$45

Regular Registration (submitted between November 16 and December 15): \$55

Late Registration (Submitted between December 16 and January 6): \$65

We will be taking part in service learning projects throughout the Omaha area on Saturday afternoon and worshipping with area congregations on Sunday morning. “Work clothes” and closed-toe shoes are recommended for several service learning projects, so please plan accordingly. Project assignments will be handed out at the Middle School Gathering.

Look for more information and registration forms to come. Contact Heather Christensen with questions.

Nebraska Synod Mission Field Trip: Lakota Lutheran Center, Scottsbluff by Rex Quadhamer



I wanted to share my experience at the Nebraska Synod mission field trip at the Lakota Lutheran Center in Scottsbluff. My brother-in-law Randy and I registered for it, and it started on Friday morning, September 27. There were approximately 10 to 15 people who signed up, and the group was made up of Nebraska Synod workers, retired and active pastors, and lay people.

We shared in doing devotions each morning and evening. The main project for the field trip was preparing an area for a cement basketball court and then pouring the cement. We dug out the area on Friday (most of it in a light rain!), and on Saturday, the cement was poured. There were many other jobs going on, such as landscaping, putting up new curtain rods for new curtains, shelving, and many other little odds and ends.

We also had time for fellowship during lunch and a few breaks. The evening meal was a special time for this: Chinese buffet on Friday and a grill-out in the Wildcat Hills at a picnic shelter on Saturday (beautiful area and Pastor Terry played guitar and Indian flute while we talked and ate). I'd forgotten how beautiful the stars are at night!

If you ever get a chance to participate in something like this, I'd highly recommend it. It builds special bonds with people and helps focus your life in faith. By the way, Pastor Will Voss serves the Lakota Lutheran Center, and he made sure we were kept busy with a lot of projects!

Nebraska Synod Disaster Fund and Lutheran Disaster Response

Tornadoes in Wayne, Nebraska

In early October, the community of Wayne and the surrounding area, as well as parts of southeast Nebraska, were severely impacted by tornadoes. The Nebraska Synod Disaster Fund is accepting donations that will be used to aid local congregations in meeting the needs of those affected by the storm. See the "Donate" link on the home page of the Nebraska Synod website: <http://www.nebraskasynod.org/>.



Flooding in Colorado

The Situation:

After record-breaking September rains, flood waters raged in Colorado's front range. These floods consumed parts of Colorado, damaging or destroying over 18,000 homes and businesses. Three ELCA church buildings were also affected. Some areas continued to experience mudslides, damaged roads, and downed power lines. Your help is needed to make a difference in the affected area.

Our Response:

We are a church that rolls up our sleeves and gets to work. Through congregations, pastors and Lutheran-affiliated social ministries, we are working together to help serve those most affected. Lutheran Disaster Response is at work, assessing the immediate and long-term needs of those affected by the floods.

Continued on the next page

Nebraska Synod Disaster Fund and Lutheran Disaster Response, continued

Throughout the United States, we are working hand-in-hand with ELCA synods and other ministry organizations that are experts at outreach in their communities. We know it will be a long road to recovery, and your gifts are needed to begin coordinating relief efforts.

What You Can Do:

Pray – As the communities work to recover, please keep them and those who work on their behalf in prayer. You can use these prayers and resources in your worship services.

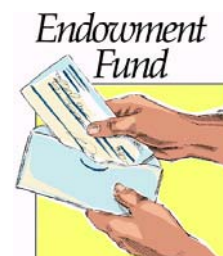


Give – Your donation to Lutheran Disaster Response, designated for “U.S. Flooding,” will be used entirely (100 percent) to help families whose lives and livelihoods have been impacted by this disaster. Donations from people like you allow the ELCA to respond to those in need.



Endowment Committee is Looking at Needs Again by Paul Kroll, Endowment Committee Chair

The Endowment Committee is again looking for special needs and missions that need funding. Applications will be taken until the stroke of midnight on December 1. The Endowment Committee helps fund special missions and projects, and gives one-time awards for good causes. It does not help with the general operating budget items of the church. To receive support for a special need or mission, apply for funds by completing an application obtained from the church office or in the narthex, and return it to the Endowment Committee via the church office.



In the past year, the Endowment Committee has awarded \$1,500 for Martha Mkombo's education at a teacher's college in Tanzania, \$500 for Camp Carol Joy Holling, \$675 for A Place at the Table Food Backpack Program, \$675 for the Lutheran Family Services Boutique Store, \$675 for the NLOM Western Town, and \$455 to the ELCA Malaria Campaign.

Furthermore, the Endowment Committee needs additional funding so that more can be done. Remembering the Lord of Love Endowment Fund in your estate plan is an easy way to supplement the fund and assure that your fruits on earth are extended beyond your life time. Lord of Love will take contributions to the Endowment Fund at any time. Simply put a check in the offering plate stipulating that the amount goes to the Endowment Fund; please make it a check solely for the Endowment Fund.

RESOURCES

Stewardship Update

Thanks to all who have returned their commitment cards for 2014. Though financial pledges are not used in the budgeting process, the numbers are useful for estimating revenue. Anyone who would still like to return his or her estimate of giving card may put it in an offering plate or place it in Mary Lou's mailbox.

The initial count in early October resulted in 79 giving units pledging \$200,600 to the general budget. Since then, more pledges have come in. Remember that there are a number of families who do not return commitment cards but give to the general fund. As of the end of September, the amount of actual giving in 2013 by those not pledging was over \$50,000.



Thanks to everyone who serves so faithfully to encourage us to be good stewards in all aspects of our lives! Thanks to Rex and all who participate in the skits throughout the year; the messages provided are great reminders of living out our faith as we should. Thanks to those involved with the Celebration of Faith lunch, including setup, decorations, serving, and cleanup. Together we can continue to use our time, talents, and treasures to do *God's Work with Our Hands*.

The Widow's Offering

Jesus looked up and saw rich people putting gifts into the treasury; he also saw a poor widow put in 2 small copper coins. He said, "Truly I tell you, she has put in more than all of them; for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all that she had to live on."

What do I know about stewardship? It is about generosity of heart and how filled you are in your relationship with God. It isn't a comparison thing—wondering if you are doing as much as someone else or more than someone else. It is about responding gratefully to the sense of awareness of the Holy Spirit at work in the world around us. That means being generous.

"...she...put in everything - all she had..."
Mark 12:44



The poor widow could not match the gifts that the wealthy people gave. But she more than matched them in the generosity of her heart by giving all that she could.

"Dear God, may we also live our lives with generous hearts." Amen

CHURCH COUNCIL

From the Council President – November 2013 by Brian Lund, Council President

Psalm 107:1 (NRSV) *O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever.*

November has come again. It gives me another opportunity to reflect the blessings I have received this past year and throughout my life.

I have so many things for which to be thankful: a loving wife, independent and successful children, an extended family that helps us celebrate our successes and supports us in times of need. And I have a church family that is so much a blessing and part of my life: a church council that faithfully serves the congregation, a pastor who preaches the good news and asks us to show it to others, fellow musicians who raise instruments and voices in praise of our God and Savior. That just barely scratches the surface of the things for which I give thanks.

Certainly there are times of struggle. Life is not always pretty or fair. Sometimes we need the help of others to get through tough times. At Lord of Love, it is good to know that we have fellow members who are willing to help through prayer and action.

At this time of year, I would ask each of us to take some time to think about life's many blessings. Take the time to say "Thank You" to the people who help to fill your life with blessing. And take time to share your blessings with those you encounter on life's journey.

*Blessings
in
Abundance*

1 Thessalonians 5:15-18 (NRSV) *See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

Blessings come to us in many ways. Respond to them by giving thanks and being a blessing to others.

The faithful stewardship of our members allows us to be a blessing to our members, community, and beyond. Thank you for sharing God's gifts with Lord of Love.

Please continue to pray for the ELCA, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, our Nebraska Synod, Bishop Brian Maas, Pastor Brad, our staff, our members, our ministry together, and all of those who are in need.

Blessings in faith and service,
Brian Lund

2013 Lord of Love Church Council

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

Nurture: Paula Foster, Lori Vandeventer

Outreach: Mike Klos, Karen Anderson

Resources: Rex Quadhamer, Paul Concannon

Worship: Randi VenHuizen, Pat Brewer



2014–2015 Church Council Candidates

The Nominating Committee would like to present the following slate of candidates to be voted on at the Congregational meeting to serve 2-year positions on the church council (2014 and 2015). In addition, one candidate is presented as a 1-year replacement for Randi VenHuizen on the Worship committee.

President – Brian Walther. I have been married to Connie for 31 years, and we have two daughters, Kelley and Stephanie. We joined Lord of Love in 1991. I have served on the church council multiple times as treasurer and secretary. I sing in the choir and usher. I have served on a Call Committee. I enjoy working on home projects and doing yard work. I have worked for Hy-Vee for 40 years (this November).

Secretary – Judy Messerschmidt. I grew up 40 miles west of Chicago in a small town named Batavia. I am one of six children. My parents were great role models and demonstrated a great deal of faith, patience, and love raising us. I attended a Lutheran high school and then attended Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa. I graduated with a degree in Biology in 1987. In 1989, I met Rett at our best friends' wedding. We married in 1991, and I moved to Omaha. We joined Lord of Love about 17 years ago. I have worked as a Biology teacher at Burke High School for the past 19 years. We have two children, Katie, a 10th grader, and Ellie, an 8th grader. We also have a golden retriever named Grace.

Nurture – Lisa Willard. My husband Matt and I have been married for a year and a half. I am originally from Colorado, where I grew up before going to college at Midland University. I currently work as the Toddler Teacher at The Children's Respite Care Center here in town. Matt and I are fairly new members to Lord of Love and are very happy to be a part of this community.

Outreach – Mardi Fiske. I work full-time for an insurance company and am married with three grown sons. Woody and I became acquainted with Lord of Love and the members through regular Boy Scout meetings. In 2007, we were looking for a church to be married in, and Lord of Love opened its arms and doors to us. We became members that same year and have been here ever since.

Resources – Rex Quadhamer. I'm a Letter Carrier out of the Millard Post Office. I've been a member of Lord of Love for 25 years. I'm married and have three grown children. I've played with the LOL Brass for 25 years

Worship, 2-year – Joan Witt. My husband Wayne and I live in Gretna. I am a manager and nurse at Medial Oncology and Hematology. I have been a member of Lord of Love since the 70s except for a few years when we moved to Gretna and attended Resurrection Lutheran Church in Gretna. Lord of Love is such a special place with great worship, music, people, and ministry, and I am so happy to be back "home" with "family." I enjoy singing with the wonderful choir, assisting with altar care, and participating with the women's ministry team. By serving on the council, hopefully I would be able to give back a little for all that Lord of Love has given me.

Worship, 1-year – Kathy Christiansen. I joined Lord of Love in 1990 after my parents relocated to Omaha from our family home in Sidney, Montana. This will be the third time that I have served on the church council ("third time's the charm?"), and although it is a time commitment, it is always fun to get to know and work with other members of Lord of Love. I have worked as a nurse for many years, with the majority of my career spent in a variety of settings in the oncology field, most recently the hereditary cancer area. My hobbies include quilting, reading, and spending time with my family and friends. One of my favorite things about being a member of an ELCA church is that we are encouraged to live out our faith in a variety of social issues and given many opportunities to "serve others."

Men's Ministry Breakfast

Men's Ministry continues its weekly gathering every Saturday morning at 7:00 a.m. in Lord of Love's fellowship hall and kitchen. We are always looking for and inviting any man to come and consume food that is shared, for both the body and the spirit. There is plenty of room at this table. Having concluded discussing *Not a Fan* by Kyle Idleman, we are currently discussing and learning more about *Grace* through a book written by Max Lucado. Whether you are able to come weekly or once in a while or just once, you will find support and fellowship offered by this group of Christian men.



The men of Lord of Love volunteer (and are volunteered) to assist in many things in, around, and through our community at Lord of Love. We rejoice in physical action of the spirit at work. Whether it be making the coffee for Sunday mornings, helping in the garden, helping on cleanup days, or setting up and taking down tables for events at our church, we have many hands helping do God's work. Our next opportunity for such a project is our upcoming Baptismal Box Build (see article below).



In consecutive months, the Men's Ministry breakfast group has lost two long-term members to out-of-state relocations. One moved to Wyoming (Brian), and one is taking up residence in Arizona. We give a fond farewell salute to Brad (and Randi) VenHuizen and pray that they may prosper. May they nourish their next congregation through the Spirit as they have helped nourish us at Lord of Love. (undt I am sure dat Ole vill be a little sun burnt da next time we see em, doncha know.)

Baptism Box Build

Lord of Love is blessed by having many baptisms in our midst. Some time ago, the men of Lord of Love built and started giving away custom-made, wooden baptismal boxes to every child baptized at Lord of Love. We are now in need of building more boxes.

Although the date has yet to be set, men of Lord of Love will soon gather to prepare and assemble these baptismal boxes and donate them to the church. This is a great fellowship opportunity. It does not matter what skill level you deem yourself to have or not to have, there is a place for you to plug into this project. Remember that "many hands make light work...." Watch for information sheets, and consider saying "yes" when you are asked or "volunteered" to assist in this worthwhile project.



LMM Triennial Gathering Reminder

As we are called, may we serve with a happy heart. Each month moves us closer to the 2014 summer gathering of Lutheran men in Nashville, TN. May you prayerfully consider attending this spiritual fellowship event. Talk to other men at Lord of Love who have attended other national gatherings and find out who plans to attend this one. It's not too early to be planning on "sharing a ride."

MARK YOUR CALENDARS / SAVE THE DATE



www.lutheranmeninmission.org - (800) 638-3522 ext. 2566

WOMEN OF LOVE

Lutheran Women of Omaha – Volunteers Needed!

Lutheran Women of Omaha will meet on Tuesday, November 12, at noon at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 2724 North 60th Avenue. The program and project are Mosaic. Please call Ruth Manning at 402-451-0221 with your reservation by Friday, November 8.



Lord of Love will be hosting Lutheran Women of Omaha at noon on Tuesday, December 10. If you can help with serving and cleanup, please contact Ruth Manning at 402-451-0221 or cranecoffeekick@gmail.com. Thanks in advance!

Women of ELCA 2014

Would you like to learn more about women's ministry at Lord of Love, the Nebraska Synodical Women Organization (NSWO), and the Churchwide Women's Organization (CWO)? We need women to serve on our Women's Ministry Team in 2014, which is an ideal place to learn about the total organization. Serving as a member-at-large is an opportunity to ease into LOL women's ministry. We also have specific positions: coordinator of women's ministry, assistant coordinator of women's ministry, communications coordinator, finance coordinator, and publicity coordinator.

Election of the women's ministry team will be held on Saturday, November 23 at 9:00 a.m. as part of the general meeting for all women of LOL. Following that, we all will take part in the planning of the program/activities for 2014. Food will be served, so come hungry!



For Your Calendar

Two important dates have been announced by the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization. The annual Winter Retreat is scheduled for Saturday, January 18, 2014, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Grand Island. Details and registration form will be in the December issue of *The Love Letter*. Metro East will kick off the Spring Gathering schedule on March 1, 2014, at St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Omaha.

Ladies Coffee Fellowship

Ladies, you're invited to join the coffee fellowship at Crane Coffee, 77th and Cass Streets, on Fridays, November 8 and 22 at 8:00 a.m.



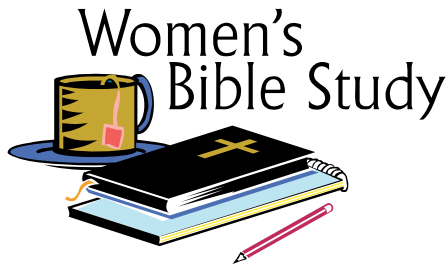
Women's Ministry Team

The women's ministry team will meet on Wednesday, November 13, at 6:00 p.m. in the Mary Room. All women are invited to participate in this work session.



Gather Bible Study

In November, we'll look at the life of the widow of Zarephath, a trusting follower. "But she said, 'As the Lord your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die.'" 1 Kings 17:12



All women are invited to attend one of two groups. The Monday evening group will meet on November 4 at 6:00 p.m. at the Old Country Buffet at 145th and West Center Road. The Wednesday evening group will meet on November 6 at 6:00 p.m. in the Mary Room. If you have any questions, contact Gwen Edwards for the Monday group and Ruth Manning for the Wednesday group.

Triennial Gathering

Learning opportunities take multiple forms at **of many generations**, the Ninth Triennial Gathering, July 24-27, 2014 in Charlotte, NC. Whether you attend a workshop, view a film, or engage in a servant project, these learning opportunities allow you to grow your faith, explore new possibilities, and connect with other women while bringing ideas home to your unit.

Ten workshops will be offered to the attendees. They include:

- 1,000 Days: The Foundation for Life
- Streets to Live In: a WELCA Model
- Creating Intergenerational Space with *Café* Groups
- Bullying: Teaching Our Children the New Rules of Engagement
- Experience the Joy of Giving
- Better Understand Mental Illness
- Make Global Connections
- Building an Inclusive Church
- Generations: The Quilt of Our Lives
- Moving Forward on Your Own: For Widows, Wives, and Friends



Three films will be screened:

- "I BELIEVE YOU: Faiths' Response to Intimate Partner Violence"
- "Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in the United States"
- "Miss Representation," which deals with the underrepresentation of women in positions of power and influence

Several servant events are planned, including sewing quilts, knitting caps, and assembling school and health kits.

To date, Gwen Edwards and Ruth Manning are planning to attend, and they would enjoy your company! Please visit www.welcatg.org regularly for updated information.

WOMEN OF LOVE

NSWO 2013 Convention Summary by Debra Gillespie

Four women from Lord of Love participated in the Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization (NSWO) convention in Kearney, NE, the weekend of September 20. Debra Gillespie served as the voting delegate from our congregation. Randi VenHuizen, NSWO board secretary; Gwen Edwards, who serves on the national ELCA women's board; and Ruth Manning also attended.

In addition to the business meetings conducted and the election of new NSWO officers, highlights of the convention included: Bishop Brian Mass speaking to the group on Friday evening; exceptional music throughout the weekend by Simone Weber and her band (you may associate Simone and her husband Matt with Table Grace Café, a community outreach café in downtown Omaha); presentation by National Women of the ELCA President Jenny Michael; and keynote speaker and actress Anita Gutschick, who entertained us and captivated our attention numerous times throughout the weekend by vividly acting the parts of notable women of the Bible. Everyone loved her performances!



The fellowship and food we enjoyed were great. And if anyone came to shop, there was ample opportunity to do so as an array of items were for sale, including many items from Tanzania. The profits were allocated to worthy causes. A silent auction was held, with dozens of themed baskets and other lovely items that were awarded to the highest bidders. Also, time was allotted for educational workshops, which most attendees took advantage of and proved very worthwhile.

It was obvious that much careful planning went into this convention. Those of us attending appreciated the efforts of NSWO President Kandy Plaster, her capable board members, and everyone who served on the convention team for making this weekend so very enjoyable and rewarding.

Dates to Remember

November

4	6:00 p.m.	<i>Gather</i> Bible Study, Old Country Buffet, 145 th and West Center Road
5	9:00 a.m.	Quilters, Fellowship Hall
6	6:00 p.m.	<i>Gather</i> Bible Study, Mary Room
8	8:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 77 th and Cass
13	6:00 p.m.	Ministry Team Meeting, Mary Room
19	9:00 a.m.	Quilters, Fellowship Hall
22	8:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 77 th and Cass
23	9:00 a.m.	Planning for 2014 Women's Ministry



Women of the ELCA 

Looking Ahead

January 18, 2014	NSWO Winter Retreat, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Grand Island, NE
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

IN OUR PRAYERS & LOVE NOTES

In Our Prayers

Antoinette Anania (cousin of Deb Lund)
Diana Baker (friend of the Thoms)
Chris Beckman (friend of Jane Gehringer)
Dick Bell
Jan Davis-Hughes (aunt of Paula Foster)
Florence Egr mother-in-law of Judy Egr)
Beth Feldhaus (sister-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)
Wyatt Nathaniel Hansen (infant grandson of Delina Wiater)
Barb Haskins
Cheryl Jones (friend of Nancy Shinrock)
Jude Konvalina
Matt Kreikimeier (friend of Brenda Mac)
Glenna Lee
Lisa Lueders (sister-in-law of Dave Lueders)
Jim Mahler (mother of Jane Hawkins)
Marj Mahler (mother of Jane Hawkins)
Debbie Michalak (co-worker of Jackie Combes)
Dawn Neumann
Brenda Nobles (friend of Gwen Edwards)
Karen Pickens
David Pippin (nephew of Lynda McGraw)
Judy Quest (friend of Jane Gehringer)

Isaac Schroeder
Shirley Schuchard
Charles Schultz (father of Pat Brewer)
Jill Sheridan (sister-in-law of Rebecca Lund Sheridan)
Don St. Ours (brother-in-law of Lynda McGraw)
Ron and Brenda Thom
Roslynn Thom (sister of Ron Thom)
Alice VanHoosen (friend of Judy Egr)
Bill Wallway (uncle of Kenn Garder)
Ted Whitfield (former co-worker of Brian Shinrock)
Jeff Wise (friend of the Thoms)

Those deployed around the world:
Kelvin
Veronica Barnes and her fiancé Jake Harmon
Jeffrey London
Jeff Teton

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

To our Lord of Love family,

You were a true blessing to us over the years as we shared worship and fellowship. We will continue to keep you in our prayers and thoughts. If you are in the Lenexa, Kansas, area, please give us a buzz.

Our deepest gratitude for your generous wishes,
John and Valerie Florea

Our new address:
8326 Richards Rd
Lenexa, KS 66215
Phone: 913 608 5416

we are very
blessed

CHANGE OF ADDRESS





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

November 9-10	Youth Group Fall Lock-in
November 22-24	Youth LYON Assembly
November 23	Women of Love general meeting and program planning
November 24	Thanksgiving Worship Service and Pie Fest



Upcoming Events

December 1	Congregational Advent Gathering Endowment Fund application deadline
December 7	Project Linus "Blanketeer" event
December 10	Lutheran Women of Omaha meet at Lord of Love
December 14	Dress Rehearsal for Sunday School Christmas Program
December 15	Sunday School Christmas Program at 10:30 a.m.

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.