



# The Love Letter

## Lord of Love Office

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## Lord of Love Staff

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Carol Novak

### Associate Organist

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### Chancel Choir Director

Jon Novak

### Kid's Choir Director

Claudia Rowen

### LOL Brass Director

Brian Lund

## Worship Schedule

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

V o l u m e    3 8

D e c e m b e r    2 0 1 0

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

There is so much to look forward to this December! Not only are we beginning our journey with Pastor Brad, but also we have many events scheduled as we look forward to Christmas and our celebration of Jesus' birth.

The complete list of events for December can be found in the Mark Your Calendar section (see page 20). Here are a few of the highlights!

**Midweek Advent worship services** will be held each Wednesday evening leading up to Christmas, and then here will be three **Christmas worship services**, two on Christmas Eve and one on Christmas Day (see page 4, Worship).

Our annual **church decorating** party will take place on Sunday, December 5, and the **Sunday School Christmas program, a Christmas Market, our potluck chili lunch, and caroling**, will occur on Sunday, December 12 (see page 7, Nurture).

If you are looking for ways to share your good fortune with others this holiday season, consider donating items for the Youth Group's **Mitten Tree**, giving to **Books for Tanzania**, or participating in **programs through the ELCA and Nebraska Synod** (see page 7, Nurture, and page 10, Outreach).

Finally, the Women of Love have several events scheduled in December, including **Advent by Candlelight, Cookie Tin preparation**, and a **Ladies Soup Lunch** (see page 15, Women of Love).

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### Anticipation by Pastor Brad

Isaiah 40:3 *A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."*

The past months have been filled with excitement as I anticipated becoming your pastor at Lord of Love. The prayers of support and encouragement have been overwhelming as I begin this new journey in ministry with you. For all this, I am grateful. I thank the Call Committee and Church Council for their time and commitment throughout the call process. Their dedication to the people and mission of Lord of Love was seen through their prayerful walk and thorough reflection on where God is leading Lord of Love. My prayers of thanks are lifted up for Lord of Love and the ministry we will do together.



As we begin this journey together, we also start the season of Advent, the beginning of our church year. My favorite word associated with Advent is "Anticipation." We live in anticipation of what is to come at Christmas. We prepare our hearts and lives for the coming of the Savior.

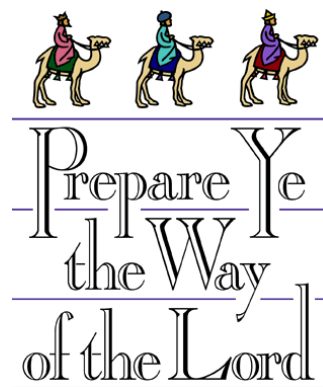
The anticipation of Advent is filled with excitement, mystery, and preparation. As children, we know that something wonderful is coming because things around us start to look different.

Growing up in Southern California meant not experiencing the change in seasons to indicate that something was coming. Winter for me was 50 degrees at night. COLD! Weeks before Christmas, our family would decorate both

inside and outside our house. It was something my parents, my sister, and I looked forward to doing every year. We would string lights on the house and bushes and then arrange wooden Christmas characters throughout the front yard: Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus, snowmen, gingerbread boys and girls, lollipops, and elves all surrounded by wooden candy canes. It was our Southern California "Winter" Wonderland.

No matter the temperature, we knew that we were getting ready for something special. We were looking forward to the birth of the Christ child at Christmas. Decorating our house and yard was a way in which we prepared our home and hearts during Advent, leading us to the celebration of Christmas.

This preparation helped us to look ahead for what was to come. Advent doesn't call us to spend time looking back. Rather, it hurries us to look ahead. The Lord is coming! We spend a lot of time on the outward decorations, but Advent requires of us to reflect inwardly, preparing our hearts to welcome Jesus into our lives at Christmas...not looking back, but rather looking ahead to how our lives will be changed as we welcome our Lord.



As we look forward with anticipation, let us prepare our hearts and lives to celebrate the birth of the Savior!

Peace,  
Pastor Brad

# MONTHLY CALENDAR

December 2010						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b> 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm LWT Bible Study 6:00pm Brass 7:00pm Advent Worship 7:45pm Chancel Choir	<b>2</b> 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts 7:00pm Sunnyslope Neighborhood Assoc.	<b>3</b> 7:30pm AA	<b>4</b> 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study
<b>5</b> Advent by Candlelight 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion 11:30am Decorate Church	<b>6</b> 8:00pm AA & AI Anon	<b>7</b> 7:00pm Vision & Coordination	<b>8</b> 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm Luther Kids 7:00pm Advent Worship 7:45pm Chancel Choir	<b>9</b> 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 5:30pm Escalante Hills Assoc. 7:00pm Boy Scouts	<b>10</b> 8:00am LoL Laughing Ladies @ Crane Coffee 7:30pm AA	<b>11</b> 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 9:00am Goodie tin Prep
<b>12</b> 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Sunday School Program Worship/Communion 11:30am Chili Feed & Caroling	<b>13</b> 8:00pm AA & AI Anon	<b>14</b> 6:00pm Strategic Planning Mtg. 7:00pm Church Council	<b>15</b> 5:00pm Confirmation 5:30pm Supper 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm Luther Kids 7:00pm Advent Worship 7:45pm Chancel Choir	<b>16</b> 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	<b>17</b> 7:30pm AA	<b>18</b> 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study
<b>19</b> 8:00am Worship & Communion 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship & Communion	<b>20</b> Love Letter Deadline 8:00pm AA & AI Anon	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 6:00pm Brass 7:00pm Advent Worship 7:45pm Chancel Choir	<b>23</b> 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's	<b>24</b> 4:30pm Family Worship 7:30pm AA 10:30pm Prelude Music begins 11:00pm Candlelight Worship	<b>25</b> 7:00am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 10:30am Christmas Day Worship
<b>26</b> 8:00am Worship & Communion 10:30am Worship & Communion 1:00pm District 18 AA Mtg.	<b>27</b> 8:00pm AA & AI Anon	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 9:30am Text Study @ Guthrie's 7:00pm Boy Scouts	<b>31</b> 7:30pm AA	

# WORSHIP

## Advent and Christmas Services

Please join us for midweek Advent services on the Wednesdays of Advent season—December 1, 8, 15, and 22—at 7:00 p.m. This quiet time in the midst of the Christmas preparation craziness is a cherished part of the Lord of Love Advent season. This year, we will focus on the meaning of each of the four candles of the Advent wreath. We will again be using Holden Evening Prayer service, and if you haven't joined us in previous years, please come and discover this beautiful service.

We will have three Christmas services at Lord of Love. Our first service is at 4:30 p.m. on December 24. Our traditional Christmas Eve candlelight service is at 11:00 p.m.; you are welcome at 10:30 p.m. to listen to Christmas music before the service. We will also have one service on Christmas Day at 10:30 a.m.



### Lord of Love's Worship Servants

	December 5	December 12	December 19	December 26
<b>Greeter(s)</b>				
8:00 a.m.	Brian and Nancy Shinrock	Woody and Mardi Fiske	Paul and Deb Christenson	Jesse and Pat Brewer
10:30 a.m.	Paul and Ann Kroll	Lynda McGraw, Barb Haskins	Claude and Sandy Hall	Keith and Debra Gillespie
<b>Liturgist</b>				
8:00 a.m.	Judy Egr	Paul Murphy	Brad VenHuizen	Shawn Lorenzen
10:30 a.m.	Karen Mullen	Sunday School program	Susan Lueders	Paul Christenson
<b>Communion Servers</b>				
8:00 a.m.	Egr family	Paul and Peg Murphy	Brad and Randi VenHuizen	Shawn Lorenzen and family
10:30 a.m.	Lynnette Nore and Christopher Boarts	Messerschmidt family	Lueders family	Paul and Deb Christenson
<b>Nursery Attendant(s)</b>				
10:30 a.m.	Ann Yarger	Sarah Horan	Lisa Rieff	Pat Brewer
<b>Altar Care</b>				
8:00 a.m.	Ed and Marjorie Keiser	Cathy Aden Sue Dieter	Connie Walther, Lisa Meyer	Janet Guthrie, Evelyn Sacridier
10:30 a.m.	Rowen family	Brewer family	Rob and Karen Anderson	Paul and Ann Kroll
<b>Ushers</b>				
8:00 a.m.	Kenn Garder, Craig and Peg Pennell			
10:30 a.m.	Rett Messerschmidt, Rob Anderson, Paul Barnett			



### **Tape Ministry: Update on Our Mostly Homebound Members** by Karen Pickens and Rachel Novak

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It is Thanksgiving, and as we think about all that we are most thankful for, let us remember those people who have been the church, supporting it financially, physically, and emotionally. Most of them are no longer able to worship with us on Sunday mornings, but they still support us with their prayers and their love. It is because of them and others like them, who have served our Lord faithfully, that we have a church to call our own.

**Esther Welliver** is one of our sisters who we will not see as often because she is spending the winter at Autumn Pointe in Fort Calhoun. Her address is 501 N. 13th, Apt 324, Fort Calhoun, NE 68023. She has already received mail from our congregation, and that makes her so happy. Whenever possible, she will be attending worship and special occasions at Lord of Love.

Esther was in church a few weeks ago, and on the way home, we all stopped to see **Agnes Wilson**. We were delighted, especially Esther, to see Agnes feeling so much better. Esther and Agnes are very good, long time friends, and they had a nice visit together. Seeing Agnes was like good medicine for Esther. Agnes's address is Good Samaritan Home, 12856 Deauville Drive, Omaha, NE 68137.

**Bernice Reitan** brightens up whenever she sees familiar faces such as Paul and Deb Christenson, who regularly visit her and give her communion. The smile we all remember is still present, and she is a joy to visit with, especially when it comes to talking about the "Huskers". Her address is Alegent Health Immanuel Fontenelle Home, 6809 No. 68th Plaza, Rm 245, Omaha, NE 68152.

**Pearl Garnaas** is another Husker fan...never missing a game...and always ready to talk about it when Bill and I take the worship tape to her on Sunday. She is usually at dinner, after which her daughter Linda picks her up and takes her home for the day. She enjoys her life at Heritage Point, and we enjoy our wonderful visits with her. A while back, she enjoyed a visit from **Ellen Nore**, who lives in a nearby building at Heritage Pointe. They spent the afternoon together and also ate dinner together. Their address is Heritage Pointe, 16811 Burdette St., Omaha, NE 68115.

Rachel and I visited **Anna Jensen** two days before her 103rd birthday, which was on November 17, and she was doing fine. Anna was in the hospital a while back with pneumonia but is back at Crowell Home in Blair. Her address is Crowell Nursing Home, 245 So. 22nd, Blair, NE 68008. We see her navigating around in her wheel chair when we visited her. However, they had to make some adjustments to slow her down a bit. In the past, she has been known as "Speedy."

In October, **Jim Gunter** sat by her wife **Norma's** bedside holding her hand as she peacefully slipped off into heaven. She told us her story for last month's newsletter and related how she had seen Jesus at one time when she was seriously ill. She was close to death but came back to her family as her work here was not quite done. She still had children to care for. Norma had not been well the past few weeks, and she made the decision that it was finally time to go home. Tom Olson, who has been visiting and giving communion to Jim and Norma, was there for them in Norma's final hours offering love and support. Her funeral was at Lord of Love, with her family and friends in attendance. Jim has moved into an apartment close to his son's home and plans to attend Lord of Love for services soon.

**Marian Lindeen** (Pauline Shafer's sister) has been living at Brookstone for nine years. Recently, she was put into hospice, but she remains pretty stable, and Pauline keeps her company as often as she can get a ride to Brookstone. Her address is 4330 S. 144th, Omaha, NE 68137.

We give thanks for each one of these church members, and we are glad that, at this time, they can look forward to meeting our new pastor whom they can call "their own."

### Nebraska Synod ELCA Commissions Brad Meyer and Judy Nanfito as Spiritual Directors

The Rev. Brad Meyer of Lord of Love Lutheran Church and Judy Nanfito of Trinity Lutheran Church were certified as spiritual directors by Nebraska Synod ELCA Bishop David deFreese in a November 10 ceremony held at the Carol Joy Holling Retreat Center near Ashland.

Meyer and Nanfito joined 11 others in this year's class of new spiritual directors. The class is the first to complete the program through Seeking the Spirit Within, the Nebraska Synod's Institute for Spiritual Direction.

Spiritual direction is an ancient form of strengthening and encouraging one another in our personal relationship with Christ. The institute was created in 2008 in response to an increasing request for spiritual direction and spiritual retreats throughout the synod.

Vera Hummel, the institute's director, called the journey with this class of spiritual directors a privilege.

"It was clear that much personal transformation occurred over the past two years, preparing them to listen well to others and to God," Hummel said.

Meyer said the experience of becoming a spiritual director has challenged him to see where God's presence is.

"I hope to direct others on this wonderful journey to develop a deeper relationship with God," he said.

Nanfito said the experience of becoming a spiritual director has taught her to listen more deeply to God and others.

"I hope to help others explore their own experiences of God as I accompany them along the sacred path of their spiritual journeys," she said.

For more information regarding Seeking the Spirit Within, go to [seekingthespiritwithin.org](http://seekingthespiritwithin.org) or contact Vera Hummel at (402) 375-1714.



Bishop Dave deFreese, Pastor Brad Meyer, Vera Hummel

## Decorate the Church for Christmas

On Sunday, December 5, everyone is invited to decorate the church for Christmas with the Youth Group at 11:30 a.m., followed by a light lunch.



## Cookie Exchange



Join us for a Cookie Exchange on Wednesday, December 8 from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. Please bring 3 dozen cookies to exchange!

## Mitten Tree

The Youth Group is having a mitten tree. Please bring mittens, hats, gloves, and scarves to help decorate the Youth Mitten Tree. All items will be donated to a local charity.



## Chili Lunch and Caroling on Dec. 12

All are invited to a potluck chili lunch and caroling on Sunday, December 12.

For lunch, please bring a pot of chili to share, or sign up to bring other needed food items including crackers, cheese, or dessert.

Then, singers of all ages are invited to carol to various Lord of Love folks who are unable to come to worship often. We'll get organized towards the end of the lunch and plan to leave around 12:45 p.m. So, if you want to join the carolers but cannot attend the lunch, please be in the Fellowship Hall no later than 12:45 p.m. We're typically back at the church easily by 4:00 p.m.

See Susan Lueders or Deb Lund for more information.



## Christmas Market

You're invited to help support the Christmas Market on Sunday, December 12 for the final fundraiser of the "Fall Festival." You're encouraged to donate baked goods and craft items. The market will be open in between worship services and following the 10:30 a.m. service.

The market will feature:

- Lutheran World Relief fair trade coffee, tea, and chocolate as well as coffee tasting
- Bake sale
- Craft items from LOL crafters

Thanks for donating...and for shopping!



## Lord of Love Preschool Update

The Lord of Love Preschoolers have been very busy so far this year! October took us to Wenninghoff Farm for a fun-filled fall field trip. We also had a costume party and a visit from a firefighter! In November, we discussed thankfulness, generosity, truthfulness, and helping others. December will bring Christmas parties, a secret gift exchange, and lots of learning about the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ. Feel free to stop in anytime and see our art projects that decorate the walls and windows!

Do you have any kids meal toys that are cluttering your rooms or small trinkets you would like to donate to the preschool? If so, please talk to me or leave them in the preschool room. I use a traffic light behavioral system, and the kids earn prizes. They LOVE to see new, exciting prizes in the treasure chest!



## Bowling for Jesus

Hold that date! "Bowling for Jesus" will be held from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 23 at Maplewood Lanes. Bowlers of all ages are invited. Last year bowlers ranged from Nathaniel Gust as the youngest to Pauline Shaffer was the oldest.

This is a fundraiser for "Women on a Mission" as we're planning to send two LOL women on a Nebraska Synod trip to Tanzania in the future. Watch for details regarding the cost.



# BOWLING for Jesus

### 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 (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades) @ LOL Abraham Room  
6:00 p.m. Luther Kids (1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> 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



## NURTURE

### December Seminary Update by Rebecca Sheridan

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Dear Lord of Love,

The fall semester of my last year in seminary is coming to a close, and my first-call paperwork is in. The first week in December, I will be meeting with my candidacy committee here in Nebraska to be approved for ordination, and if all goes well, I will receive my first-call region assignment at the end of February. It has been a long road, but when I look back on it all, I am extremely grateful for the experiences and the learning I have received on the journey.

This semester, I took some just-for-fun courses on the theology of Martin Luther and a religion and science seminar on creation. I also took an interfaith class called "Religions in Dialogue," which was co-taught by a Christian, Buddhist, and Muslim professor. As you can imagine, we had lively and sometimes tense conversations. My favorite class was a senior seminar called "Narratives of Hope." We got to read poems, novels, and memoirs, and watch movies and plays as we explored the themes of hope and despair in our calling as pastoral caregivers.

My husband Rich is enjoying his internship year at United in Faith on the northwestern side of Chicago, although he does not enjoy the forty-five minute to an hour commute one way each day. I am enjoying my brief role as the pastor's wife! It is wonderful to have a caring worship community from week to week, and even more wonderful for me to simply sit back and worship!

Coming up, I will be taking a class on early childhood faith development and education over January term. I am looking forward to some time spent relaxing at home and with friends, even while I continue my work at the after-school program where I worked my first two years of seminary. I have come a long way since I came to LSTC four years ago, but some things have not changed. God's presence as a rock of strength and love in Jesus Christ has remained with me. God's promise of grace and forgiveness has been there since my baptism. And I know that when I come home to Lord of Love, a lot has changed for you, too. We have a new pastor, and some of the faces are unfamiliar to me. At the same time, I know that your love and support for me in your prayers and in your giving continue faithfully. For that I am deeply grateful.

God's love, peace, joy, and hope to you all in this Advent season!  
Rebecca Sheridan

## OUTREACH

### Pennies for Peace

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Thanks so much to everyone who contributed coins to Pennies for Peace. Your gifts help bring a well-rounded education to children in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Look for a report of the amount collected in those big jars next month!



### Bibles for Iglesia Cristo Rey

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According to Pastor Liz Conner, Iglesia Cristo Rey Luterana in South Omaha, "We are using the Bibles for Sunday school, and we love them. We had had 16 children last Sunday. The youth Bibles are being used for confirmation. We have 12 students in confirmation. Thank you so much! I will send some pictures of the youth using the Bibles soon!"

## OUTREACH

### Advent and Christmas Offering

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The Mission Possible committee determined that the offering from the mid-week Advent worship and the Christmas Eve/Day worship envelope will be given to the family of Pastor Elisante Maimu in Tanzania. Lord of Love sent an immediate-needs check of \$250 to Mrs. Maimu following the death of her husband. Pastor Maimu served Lord of Love for several weeks a few years ago while Pastor Don Wright served Pastor Maimu's congregation in Tanzania.



### Laughing Ladies and Books for Tanzania

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As most of you aware, several women of our congregation (and some who aren't) meet every other Friday at Crane's for coffee and fellowship. Last year, rather than giving each other Christmas presents, we decided to collect money for Books for Tanzania, and we collected over \$150.00. We are doing that again this year, and we thought we would let others in on this great way to be in a giving spirit and also help our mission friends in Tanzania. Randi VenHuizen is collecting the funds, so if you want to help, please talk to her. Thanks very much!

### Mission Update by Deb Lund

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With this time of year comes the plethora of appeals and pamphlets asking for donations. There are some great choices for special gifts right here in the Nebraska Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

Feed the Roots Campaign helps provides leadership training and support, among many other things.

ELCA Global Barnyard supplies pairs of animals and support to people throughout the world so that they can begin their own livelihood.

Lutheran Disaster Response is a collaborative ministry of the ELCA and The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS). They seek to demonstrate Christ's compassion for people by promoting hope, healing, and wholeness for disaster survivors. It is a first responder throughout the world in times of emergency all around the world.

Lutheran World Relief seeks lasting solutions to poverty and injustice and, in doing so, compels Lutherans to put their faith into action.



## RESOURCES

### Capital Campaign Update

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As of November 14, 2010, \$23,515.80 have been contributed to the Capital Campaign for the new lights in the sanctuary, the repairs to the organ, and the repairs to the driveway to the parking lot. If you would like to contribute to this campaign, please do so by December 31, 2010, as the Campaign will be completed on that date.

### Property Committee Report

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We had a lot of good help for our Cleanup Day on October 30. Our biggest effort was some major trimming of trees, carrying branches to the shredder, shredding trim limbs and brush, and mulching areas. We also trimmed bushes, cut back flowers, blew off the sidewalks and parking lots, and repaired some roof shingles on the Fellowship Hall. Thanks to Pastor Bob, Paul Christenson, Brian Lund, Deb Lund, Doug Roberts, Gary Ramsey, Matt Garder, Amy Kragnes, Jeri Morgan, and Craig Pennell. We could not have done the large amount of work that we did without Boy Scout Troop 565 members Cory Jansen, Liam Groves, Jacob Morrow, Jason Gegory, Tim Daigle, Ethan Jendro, Garret Graves, Kyle Baumer, Collin Lefeber, Chantz Hodges, Tyler Price, Eric Klos, Luke Armitage, Brian Erixson, and Kyle Stemplau. Also, six dads were there to help and/or provide guidance to the scouts.



## COUNCIL REPORT

### November 2010 Council Report by Don Rowen, Council Vice-President

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The Lord of Love council held two meetings in November: the semi-annual congregational meeting and its regular November council meeting. These meetings are discussed below.

#### Semi-annual Congregational Meeting

A Congregational Meeting was held on Sunday, November 14, 2010. Brian Lund began the meeting by reviewing significant events that have occurred in the past year and the goals of the council for the year.

Next, the congregation approved the budget proposed by the council without change. The budget had projected expenses of \$288,265. The projected income based on previous giving was \$266,000, leaving a projected deficient of \$22,265. The council was concerned about the deficient but was hopeful that the deficient would be reduced or eliminated through a combination of the ministries continuing to spend less than their budget and increased giving and growth of the congregation in the coming year. Significant changes to the budget from last year include: (1) increasing giving to the congregational mission to 3.5% and then using 1% of that fund to give to the Nebraska Synod Feed the Roots campaign that supports synod activities that develop current and future church leaders; (2) a \$7,482 increase in pastoral compensation for Pastor Brad; (3) a \$3,000 increase in compensation for the office administrator; and (4) a 3% increase in salary for worship staff.

*Continued on the next page*

# COUNCIL REPORT

## November 2010 Council Report by Don Rowen, Council Vice-President

The congregation elected the following new council members:

Vice President:	Kenn Garder
Treasurer:	Barb Haskins
Worship:	Randi VenHuizen
Nurture (1 yr):	Lori Vandeventer
Nurture (2 yr):	Paula Foster
Outreach:	Jeri Morgan
Resources:	Josh Combes

## Annual Church ELECTION



Brian Lund also thanked members of the council, the call committee, and ministry teams for their service to the church in the past year.

### November Council Meeting

The council held a meeting on November 16, 2010. This was their first meeting with Pastor Brad. The council committees reviewed their responsibilities and then their activities, successes, and problems from the past year, which are summarized as follows:

- Resources reported that the stewardship campaign went pretty well but could have used more extensive visitor training. The campaign received pledges of \$220,674 (an increase of \$12,099).
- Property is working to get the driveway fixed and develop priorities for the Major Improvement Fund for the coming year.
- Nurture reported difficulties in getting volunteers to help with education and fellowship events and in avoiding having to ask the same members again.
- Outreach reported that the Mission Possible team is working well and that it now has an active Communication team discussing ways to improve our various forms of communication (website, Facebook, and The Love Letter). Another challenge was getting newer members involved in the life of the church.

The council also discussed the challenge they have faced in trying to plan and offer worship services that are inspiring to all and in considering changes to the worship service.

The council reviewed its current financial situation. The church is now a little over \$2,000 in the hole for the year, and the bank balance is low enough that we need to be careful about paying big bills. The church also owes Pastor Bob for several weeks of vacation time, continuing education, etc. We will pay him back over the next few months.

### 2010 Lord of Love Church Council

Executive Committee: Brian Lund, President; Don Rowen, Vice-President; Brian Walther, Secretary; Lisa Meyer, Treasurer  
Nurture: Heather Christensen, Angie Meyer  
Outreach: Harry Naasz, Paul Christenson  
Resources: Craig Pennell, Doug Armitage  
Worship: Karen Mullen, Debra Gillespie





# COUNCIL REPORT

## Financial Report by Lisa Meyer, Council Treasurer

As you review the Available Cash statement below, you will notice that there is a deficit in the General Fund's available cash as of October 31, 2010, in the amount of \$936.07. This deficit is due to money that is owed from the general fund to other accounts. The church council committees will continue to carefully monitor the amount of money available before paying out larger bills or making transfers to other accounts.

Bank Balance 10/31/10		\$15,589.22
Plus Receivables:		
Habitat For Humanity	0.00	
Preschool	0.00	
Special Funds	0.00	
Total Receivables		\$0.00
Less Payables:		
Special Funds	1,559.87	
Preschool Fund	161.98	
Habitat for Humanity	0.00	
Withholding Taxes	2,110.25	
Endowment Fund	292.42	
Mission Funds	11,489.49	
Major Improvement	911.28	
Total Payables		16,525.29
AVAILABLE CASH AS OF 10/31/10		(\$936.07)



With regards to the financial information below, you will note that year to date, we have operated at a net loss position. The actual offerings are about \$3,000 lower than projected year to date. Actual expenses are significantly less than budgeted mostly due to not having pastoral transition expenses as budgeted.

	Monthly Budget	Monthly Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Actual
Total Income	21,833.67	22,958.49	218,340.00	215,693.42
Total Expenses	24,908.00	18,042.59	249,080.00	217,946.21
<b>Income less Expenses</b>	<b>(\$3,074.33)</b>	<b>\$4,915.90</b>	<b>(\$30,740.00)</b>	<b>(\$2,252.79)</b>

Thank you to everyone for continuing to be faithful with your pledges this year. Thanks also to the committee leaders for keeping expenses as low as possible. If you have an interest in the **Simply Giving** program, enrollment forms are available in the Information Center in the narthex or through the church office. Completed forms should be taken to the office or placed in the Financial Secretary mailbox.

If you receive offering envelopes, it is greatly appreciated by the counters if you use them whenever possible.

## COUNCIL REPORT

From the Council President – December 2010 by Brian Lund, Council President

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From Luther's Explanation to the Second Article of the Apostles Creed (paraphrased)

*I believe that Jesus Christ—true God, Son of the Father from eternity, and true man, born of the Virgin Mary—is my Lord.*

As I write this, it is not quite the end of November, a month of thanksgiving for Lord of Love. We have just said goodbye to Pastor Bob Oleson. Rev. Brad Meyer officially started at Lord of Love this week and will be installed as Pastor of Lord of Love on Sunday. We have much to be thankful for, yet we still have some sense of waiting for the start of our new ministry together.

And how appropriate it is that we begin our shared ministry with Pastor Brad at Advent, the time after Pentecost and the beginning of the church year. I see some parallels here. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to the disciples and helped them expand their ministry to all people; throughout the Call Process, we experienced the working of the Holy Spirit. During Advent, we prepare for the coming of the Christ child; Pastor Brad will be with us in our preparation for Christmas and the new year of opportunities and challenges ahead.



*Preparing for the  
Christmas Season*

Isaiah 11:2 (NRSV) *The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.*

In this month of preparation, take time to reflect on the wonders of God's love for us and the grace that we so often experience. During the hustle and bustle of this month, slow down, listen, tell, share, give, receive, and enjoy the blessings of the season. May the Holy Spirit continue to be with you, and may you find many opportunities to be Christ to others.

I continue to be thankful for the members of our Congregation Council, the dedicated group of people you have entrusted with leadership of our congregation. Please take time to thank them for their time and faithful service this past year.

Please continue to thank and praise God and to pray for our congregation, congregation council, Pastor Bob, Pastor Brad, and for all those with special needs.

Blessings in faith and service,  
Brian Lund

*Thank  
You*

MERRY  
CHRISTMAS

## WOMEN OF LOVE

### Advent by Candlelight

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All women and girls (and their friends) are invited to participate in “Advent by Candlelight” on Sunday, December 5 at 5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Come and enjoy the beautifully decorated tables, an inspirational program, delicious dessert, and wonderful fellowship. Admission is \$5 at the door. Profits have been designated for LOL’s “Women on a Mission” project to send two of our women on a synod trip to Tanzania.



### Lutheran Woman Today Fall 2010 Bible Study

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**Session 4:** The People of God: Gifts of the Spirit

**Theme verse:** For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

You may have gifts on your mind as the holidays approach. Soon, we will celebrate the greatest gift of all—Baby Jesus. We are also gifted by the Spirit. Please join us to learn more about these gifts—another reason to celebrate.

The following two groups meet for these studies, both starting at 6:00 p.m.:

- Monday, December 6 at Old Country Buffet at 145th and West Center Road
- Wednesday, December 8 in the Mary Room at Lord of Love

### Cookie Tin Preparation

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Help prepare Christmas containers for the elderly, shut-ins, and those with special needs on Saturday, December 11. You are invited to bring 2 dozen cookies to the Fellowship Hall, and we'll serve coffee and goodies at 9:30 a.m. before preparing the containers. Thanks for helping make someone else's Christmas more merry!

### Ladies Soup Lunch

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Wait until you see the recipes I've been collecting this year! Please come to my house (309 S. 155th Ave) at noon on Thursday, December 16 for a soup lunch. There will be a sign-up sheet in the information center so I'll know how many bowls to set out. Amy Kragnes



### Planning for Women's Ministry 2011

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Planning for women's ministry 2011 will be held on Saturday, January 8 at 4:00 p.m. (We'll keep the meeting short so you can be home in time for supper.) All women of the church are invited to come and help us evaluate our ministry, select projects, and develop programs. This is just a “heads up” to begin thinking about how we can serve you and how we can serve together.

### Coffee Fellowship

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All women are invited to join the Lord's Laughing Ladies! We meet at 8:00 a.m. for fellowship at Crane Coffee, 77<sup>th</sup> and Cass, on December 10.

### Project Hope

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Thank you for your continued generosity to Project Hope. The needs for December are hats, mittens, and scarves as well as coffee, tea, and cocoa. Please place items in the containers under the Information Center in the Narthex.

### Health Kit Update

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Twenty more health kits were assembled, with some items remaining to be used for assembling more kits in the future. Thank you to all who donated for this worthy cause. They provide basic hygiene items to those who have to flee their homes when disaster strikes.

# WOMEN OF LOVE

## Save the Date: Metro East Conference by Randi VenHuizen

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To all women of our congregation: we have an amazing opportunity for you to join with us in serving our Lord with ZEAL.

On April 9, 2011, the Women of the Metro East Conference will gather at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church in Omaha for our Spring Gathering. Our theme for the day is "Serve With Zeal," and we have been planning "zealously" for a day of service and friendship.

During that day, we will be making kits for the Healthy Family Centers of Lutheran Family Services and learning about the services of this Nebraska Synod agency. Each kit will begin with tying a fleece blanket, and everyone has the skills to do this. The blanket will then be wrapped around a collection of items needed for a child under the age of five. All of these kits will then be used in the Healthy Family Centers, where families come for help in learning the skills to properly raise and nourish their children.

We will open with registration and coffee at 8:30 a.m., and our programming starts at 9:00 a.m. The day will close at 3:00 p.m. with devotions and a dedication of the kits. Registration is \$15.00, which includes lunch. This is a great opportunity to help provide needed items for the children served by LFS, a day for you to Serve with Zeal. The benefit for you is spending a day with friends, making new friends, visiting, laughing, hugging, enjoying the bonds of Christian togetherness, and taking the opportunity to serve our Lord.

Metro East Conference  
Saturday, April 9, 2011  
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church, Omaha

Registration materials will be mailed in January. Plan now to attend—bring friends, sisters, aunts, neighbors, cousins—bring a whole van full. We'll be there to welcome you!

## Calendar of Events

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### December

5	5:00 p.m.	Advent by Candlelight
6	6:00 p.m.	LWT Bible Study, Old Country Buffet, 145th and West Center Road
7	9:00 a.m.	Quilters, Fellowship Hall
8	6:00 p.m.	LWT Bible Study, Mary Room
10	8:00 a.m.	Coffee Fellowship, Crane Coffee, 77th and Cass
11	9:30 a.m.	Cookie Tin Preparation, Fellowship Hall
21	9:00 a.m.	Quilters, Fellowship Hall



### Coming Soon

January 8, 2011	Planning for Women's Ministry in 2011
January 23, 2011	Bowling for Jesus fundraiser, Maplewood Lanes
April 9, 2011	Metro East Conference, Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church
July 12-14, 2011	W/ELCA Triennial Convention, Spokane, WA
July 14-17, 2011	W/ELCA Triennial Gathering, Spokane, WA

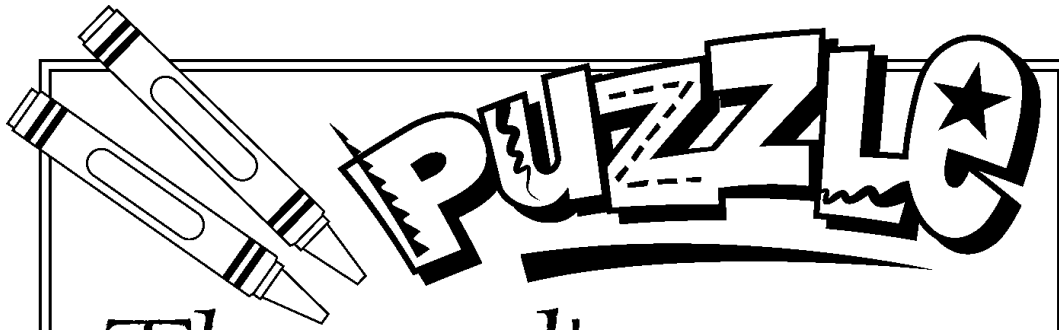




## The Angels Heard of Jesus' Birth



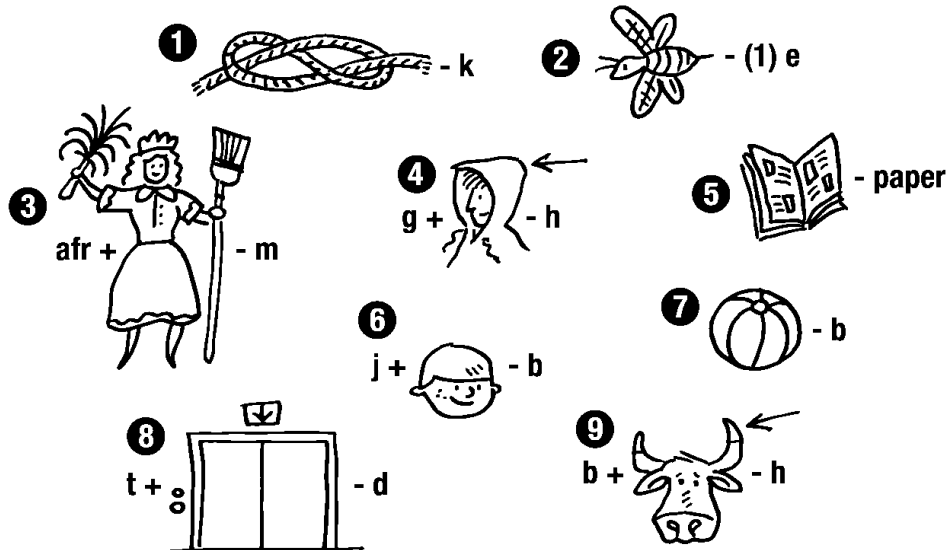
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# The angel's message

On the first Christmas Eve, shepherds were watching over their flocks when an angel suddenly appeared.

Use the picture clues below to find out what the angels said to the terrified shepherds.



"Do \_\_\_\_\_ I bring you \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ of great \_\_\_\_\_ that will be for \_\_\_\_\_ the people.

Today in the \_\_\_\_\_ of David a Savior has been \_\_\_\_\_

to you; **he is Christ the Lord.**" Luke 2:10-11, NIV

## IN OUR PRAYERS & LOVE NOTES

### In Our Prayers

Avery Akeman (friend of Kim Gust)  
Dick Bell  
Ryan Bolen (nephew of Sandy Hall)  
Barb Breazier (friend of the Egrs)  
Katie Brink (friend of the VenHuizens)  
Miranda Brown (friend of the Shinrocks)  
Connie Czaplá (wife of Larry Czaplá)  
Jan Davis (aunt of Paula Foster)  
Laura and Jeremy DeWitt  
Colin Farbotka (nephew of Tom and Beth Olson)  
Emma Finken (student of Deb Lund)  
Patty George (friend of the Rieffs)  
Machelle Gross (niece of Lynda McGraw)  
Jim Gunter  
Gary Hall (brother of Claude Hall)  
Elaine Hansen (aunt of Deb Lund)  
Amber Hartin (granddaughter of the Shinrocks)  
Matthew Hayek (nephew of Sandy Hall)  
Ralph Hild  
Cathy Johnson (friend of Marilyn Thomsen)  
Bob Kasworm and his ministry in Tanzania  
Ken Kellogg (father of Karen Armitage)  
Brenda Kukouly (friend of the Garders)  
Paula Lawhead (in her first call)  
Gerry Loscher (friend of Rex Quadhamer)  
Carl Lueders (uncle of Dave Lueders)  
Irene Lund (aunt of Brian Lund)  
Rebecca Lund (at seminary)  
Brenda Mac  
Jim Mahler (brother of Jane Hawkins)  
Marj Mahler (mother of Jane Hawkins)

Dan Manning  
Bob McKnight (grandfather of Ann Kroll)  
Merlin Meyer (father of Todd Meyer)  
Pastor Elibariki Mtui and all the saints of TPC Lutheran  
Parish, Tanzania  
Clarence (Swede) Nelson (brother of Pauline Shaffer)  
Johanna Olson (niece of Tom and Beth Olson)  
Joe Policky (grandfather of Tamra Johnston)  
Bill and Bev Pugh (former members)  
Berniece Reitan  
Angel Restivo (friend of Marilyn Thomsen)  
Don St. Ours (brother-in-law of Lynda McGraw)  
Evelyn Sacridier  
Pauline Shaffer  
Brenda Thom  
Nancy Thoman (stepmom of Ann Kroll)  
Joey Thompson (friend of the Murphys)  
Marilyn Thomsen  
Brody Vermilyea (grandson of Brian and Nancy  
Shinrock)  
Glenn Wapelhorst (brother of Brenda Mac)  
Rachel Wapelhorst (niece of Brenda Mac)  
Agnes Wilson  
Julie Wolf

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](mailto:marylou@lord-of-love.org), or fill out a prayer request note available in the narthex and place it in the basket. **Please help keep this list current by informing us when a name can be removed.** Thanks!

### Love Notes





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

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## Return Service Requested

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

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### This Month

December 1	Midweek Advent Service
December 5	Decorating for Christmas Advent by Candlelight
December 8	Midweek Advent Service Cookie Exchange
December 11	Cookie Tin Preparation
December 12	Sunday School program during 10:30 a.m. service Christmas Market fundraiser Chili Lunch and Caroling

### This Month, continued

December 15	Midweek Advent Service
December 16	Ladies Soup Lunch
December 22	Midweek Advent Service
December 24	Christmas Eve service at 4:30 p.m. Christmas Eve candlelight service at 11:00 p.m.
December 25	Christmas Day worship 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](mailto:loveletter@lord-of-love.org). Articles must be received by the Love Letter editor by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month.*