

The Love Letter

Volume 46

January 2016

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Sun.: 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

9:15 a.m. Sunday School

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

A Look Ahead

Happy New Year! I hope your holidays have been filled with joy and love. If you want to relive some Christmas fun, see page 7 for some photos of the Sunday School kids' Christmas program.

And for the older kids, please pray for a successful trip for the confirmation students headed to the Middle School Gathering in Lincoln on January 16 and 17.

Perhaps your resolutions for the new year include traveling more. If so, see page 6 for an announcement about a special trip in advance of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

And welcome back, Pastor Glenn! This month, he offers a timely reflection for us on page 2.

Welcome
2016!

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FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR

New Year's Greetings,

As I write this I am still in the process of “getting my bearings” -- sleeping and eating at times to which I have been accustomed most of my life.

Returning from Thailand in the midst of the holidays prolongs this process as I cook breakfast for the grandkids at nine or later. Then we eat a big meal mid-afternoon and “graze” the rest of the day. I nap in the afternoon, go to bed later than usual, and sleep in as late as the grandkids will let me.

Now as our daughters and their families head home to eastern Iowa and I prepare for two funerals, it is important that my life return to the routine of the clock. In Thailand it was amazing how little of our time was measured by the clock. The only occasions where we would pay any attention to the clock was when we had a flight to catch. Otherwise, we ate when we were hungry, slept when we were tired, and arrived when we got there.

In Greek (the language of the New Testament), there are two words for time. *Chronos* is the word used for measured time -- “clock time” or “calendar” time.

The other Greek word for time is *kairos*, which refers to the timeliness of someone's actions or presence. In the Bible, *kairos* is often used to denote the timeliness of the Spirit's action in the lives of God's people.

Living in a culture so focused on “measured” time, it is difficult to open ourselves to the *kairos* of the Spirit's activity in our lives. Yet, in the midst of the process of calling a new pastor, that is what we are called to do -- to trust that Spirit will act in a timely manner to call the pastor who God intends to lead Lord of Love in the mission and ministry of God's people in this time and place.

God's Peace Be with You,
Pastor Glenn



The Meaning of Epiphany (from newsletternewsletter.com)

Epiphany, which comes from the Greek word *epiphaneia*, means “an appearance” or “a revealing.” Centuries ago, the church set aside January 6, the 12th day after Christmas, to mark the revealing of Jesus as Christ to the wise men, who were Gentiles. Jesus' first followers were Jewish, so the revelation of the divine Christ to the non-Jewish magi reminds us that Jesus came to earth to save the whole world.

Symbols of Epiphany include light, a star, a crown (or three crowns) and a globe or stylized portrayal of the world. The color of Epiphany is green to symbolize life, growth, hope and eternity.

On the church calendar, the Epiphany season lasts until Ash Wednesday [Feb. 10 in 2016], which is determined by the date of Easter.



MONTHLY CALENDAR

January 2016						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 7:30pm AA Meeting	2 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry
3 8:00am & 10:30 a.m. Worship/Comm 9:15am Sunday School 9:15am Adult Forum 5:00pm Bell Choir	4 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	5 9:00am Quilters 7:00pm Vision & Coordination Mtg.	6 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Confirmation 6:00pm Brass 7:00pm Sr. High Bible Study 7:15pm Sr. Choir Rehearsal	7 7:00pm Boy Scouts	8 7:30pm AA Meeting	9 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry
10 Church Council Installation 8:00am & 10:30 a.m. Worship/Comm 9:15am Sunday School 9:15am Adult Forum 11:30am Secret Angel Reveal Lunch 5:00pm Bell Choir	11 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	12 7:00pm Sunnyslope Neighborhood Assoc.	13 6:00pm Mission Possible Mtg. 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Confirmation 6:00pm Brass 7:00pm Sr. High Bible Study 7:15pm Sr. Choir Rehearsal	14 7:00pm Boy Scouts	15 7:30pm AA Meeting	16 Middle School Youth Gathering 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry
17 Middle School Youth Gathering 8:00am & 10:30 a.m. Worship/Comm 9:15am Adult Forum - Ministry Workshop 9:15am Sunday School 5:00pm Bell Choir	18 Annual Reports Due 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	19 9:00am Quilters 6:00pm Stewardship Mtg. 7:00pm Church Council Mtg.	20 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm Confirmation 7:00pm Sr. High Bible Study 7:15pm Sr. Choir Rehearsal	21 12:00pm Aged to Perfection Lunch 7:00pm Boy Scouts	22 7:30pm AA Meeting	23 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry
24 8:00am & 10:30 a.m. Worship/Comm 9:15am Adult Forum 9:15am Sunday School 5:00pm Bell Choir	25 8:00pm AA & Al Anon	26	27 6:00pm Confirmation 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm Luther Kids 7:00pm Sr. High Bible Study 7:15pm Sr. Choir Rehearsal	28 7:00pm Boy Scouts	29 7:30pm AA Meeting	30 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry
31 8:00am & 10:30 a.m. Worship/Comm 9:15am Sunday School 9:15am Adult Forum 1:00pm Bowling for Jesus 5:00pm Bell Choir						

SUNDAY SERVANTS

Lord of Love's Worship Servants

	Jan. 3	Jan. 10	Jan. 17	Jan. 24	Jan. 31
Greeter(s)					
8:00 a.m.	Kenn & Shari Garder	Ed & Marjorie Keiser	Jim & Jeri Morgan	Woody & Mardi Fiske	Paul & Sue Dieter
10:30 a.m.	Tom & Beth Olson	Charise Adams & Kathy Christiansen	Gary Ramsay & Art Behnkie	Mike & Christie Klos	Paula Foster & Kathy Christiansen
Liturgist					
8:00 a.m.	Paul Murphy	Karen Armitage	Dave Hild	Heather Christensen	Heather Hansen
10:30 a.m.	Paul Christenson	Susan Lueders	Claudia Rowen	Dave Reiff	Tom Olson
Communion Servers					
8:00 a.m.	Peg Murphy, Mike & Leah Klos	Doug Armitage & Bill Baker	Joe & Jackie Combes, Jim & Jeri Morgan	Christensen family	Hansen family
10:30 a.m.	Rex & Deb Quadhamer, Karen Mullen	Dave Lueders, Charise Adams, Paul & Ann Kroll	Don Rowen, Joan Witt, Edwards family	Rieff family	Beth Olson, Amy Kragnes, Rosie & Miguel Avalos
Altar Care					
8:00 a.m.	Angie Meyer	Karen & Dale Finck	Brewer family	Ed & Marjorie Keiser	Cathy Aden & Sue Dieter
10:30 a.m.	Diana Haye & Marcia Roads	Karen Armitage & Gwen Edwards	Rosie Avalos	Rowen family	Nicole Quackenbush & Karen Anderson
Ushers					
8:00 a.m.	Paul Dieter, Matt Willard, Dennis Hindemith, Jesse Brewer				
10:30 a.m.	Brian & Dab Lund, volunteers				
Nursery Care					
10:30 a.m.			Lisa Rieff	Ashley Meier	Pat Brewer
CD Recording					
10:30 a.m.	Pat Brewer	Paul Christenson	Dave Lueders	Paul Murphy	Jesse Brewer

PEACE LOVE HOPE JESUS PEACE LOVE HOPE JESUS

WORSHIP

Workshop for Worship Servants



The Worship Committee will offer a workshop for those new to or interested in serving as worship servants, **Sunday, Jan. 17** during adult forum (between services). They'll share helpful information about serving as an usher, greeter, liturgist, communion server, worship planner, altar care servant and/or tape ministry servant.

Contact Doug Aden, Heather Hansen or Joan Witt with any questions.

MISSION

ELCA Presiding Bishop Issues Letter to Muslim American Community

CHICAGO (ELCA) – In a Dec. 11 letter to the Muslim-American community, the Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), said, “I am writing on behalf of many Christians in this country who wish to share a word of solidarity, love and hope with you in these difficult days.”

“In our love for you, our Muslim neighbors, we are distressed by the ways in which you are being forced to bear the fears held by many in our nation,” Eaton wrote. “Therefore, we renew our commitment to find even more effective ways to protect and defend you from words and actions that assault your safety and well-being. We believe God calls us to resist what is divisive, discriminatory, xenophobic, racist or violent, and we want you to look to us as allies and friends.”

The full text of the letter follows:

“Grace and peace to you. I am writing on behalf of many Christians in this country who wish to share a word of solidarity, love and hope with you in these difficult days.

“In this season of Advent, we, your Christian neighbors, are preparing to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who commanded that “you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart ... [and] you shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:30-31, NRSV).

“In our love for you, our Muslim neighbors, we are distressed by the ways in which you are being forced to bear the fears held by many in our nation. Therefore, we renew our commitment to find even more effective ways to protect and defend you from words and actions that assault your safety and well-being. We believe God calls us to resist what is divisive, discriminatory, xenophobic, racist or violent, and we want you to look to us as allies and friends.

“The global refugee and migrant crisis and the acts of terror committed in this country and around the world are challenges that demand our collective efforts and our common prayers. (*cont., next page*)



MISSION

Bishop Eaton's Letter to the Muslim American Community, continued



Therefore, we will seek to stand shoulder to shoulder with you as agents of peace, justice, understanding, welcome and reconciliation for the sake of the world that God so loves.

"In this holy season, when we anticipate the light that the darkness cannot overcome (John 1:5, NRSV), we are reminded of God's gift of life abundant for all. Together with you, we are committed to building a stronger society based on the dignity of each human being, the value of diversity, the holiness of creation and the common good. We pledge our partnership and invite our local communities into continued dialogue and engagement to this end."

The letter is available at http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Open_Letter_to_Muslim_American_Community.pdf

Mission Possible Update

Thanks so much to everyone who gave generously in the special Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas offerings. Funds will go to the ELCA Lutheran Disaster Response for those affected by wildfires in the western U.S. We will let you know the total amount for those offerings soon.

The Mission Possible Team will meet in January to determine where special Lenten, Easter, and summer breakfast monies will go. All input is welcome. Currently serving on the Mission Possible Team are Scott Reinhardt and Mardi Fiske, council members; Charise Adams, Paul Christenson, Jackie Combes, Paula Foster, Deb Lund, Brenda Mac and Jeri Morgan.

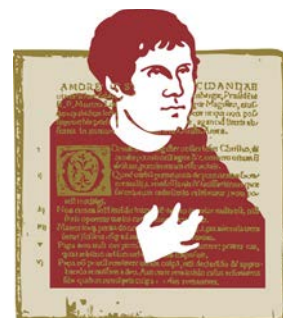
Special Offerings



OTHER NEWS

Luther's Germany: July 17–30, 2016

2017 is the 500th Anniversary of the nailing of the 95 Theses on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany. See where this historic event took place. Walk in Martin Luther's footsteps. This tour will also take you to historic Berlin, Bach's Leipzig, Dresden, the medieval town of Rothenburg, and on a cruise on the famous Rhine River. No tour of Germany is complete without visits to castles, historic churches, museums, wine-tasting and a medieval dinner.



Karen Mullen and her colleague, Diane Wulf, will coordinate this 14-day tour, hosted by Pastor Brad and his wife, Heidi. We are traveling one year ahead of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, so we can share our experiences for a 2017 celebration in our churches. Reserve your place and join us for this memorable trip. An informational meeting to give costs and more details will take place **Thursday, Jan. 28, 7 p.m.** at Lord of Love. Direct any initial questions to Karen: pkmullen@cox.net.

NURTURE

Children's Christmas Program



"Twas Night Before Christmas" Children's Program on December 13 was a smashing success. Our Sunday School children did a wonderful job sharing the Good News of Christ's birth. Many thanks to all our adult volunteers who helped with scripts, costumes, music, and more. It takes many to make a great program and we appreciate you all!



*Top: the entire talented cast. Lower left: Mary, Joseph, and "Baby Jesus."
Lower right: An angel lights the Advent candles with Pastor Joyce Miller on "Gaudete" Sunday.*

CHURCH COUNCIL AND RESOURCES

2016 Lord of Love Church Council

Vision and Coordination: Brian Walther, President; Dave Hild, Vice-President; Kathy Christiansen, Secretary; Jackie Combes, Treasurer

Nurture: Laurie Heavey and Susan Lueders

Outreach: Paula Foster and Scott Reinhardt

Resources: Craig Pennell and Bill Quackenbush

Worship: Doug Aden and Heather Hansen



New Council Members

Congratulations and thanks to the newly elected (Kathy Christiansen, Laurie Heavey, Paula Foster and Doug Aden) and re-elected (Craig Pennell and Brian Walther) council members. They will be installed on **Sunday, Jan. 17.**



Giving Status



General Fund financial information for November 2015:

Actual Income - \$34,741.02

Actual Expense - \$25,064.06

Financial Information Year-To-Date as of the end of November:

Actual Income - \$284,322.83

Actual Expense - \$284,544.91

As of the end of November, the available cash deficit has decreased. It is (7,778.26). Weekly offerings of \$6,799 are needed to meet budgeted expenses. The weekly offering average through the end of November was 5,821. The monthly offering average was \$24,509.70 at the end of October and \$25,402.27 at the end of November. Thank you for your support and for keeping your pledges current.

Stewardship for a New Year, By Heather Hansen

The beginning of the year is a popular time for personal reassessment. The days are shorter, and an evening of introspection seems more inviting. Somehow, when we take down the old calendar and hang up the new, we sense an opportunity to make a fresh start.

To make the best of this opportunity it is useful to make firm commitments. It's even more useful to write them down. These resolutions, kept in a desk drawer or on the refrigerator door, are a "hard copy" of our best intentions for self-improvement. They're signposts that redirect our lives towards good and towards God.
(cont., next page)



RESOURCES

Stewardship, continued

New Year's resolutions are often focused on personal health – losing weight, relaxing more, or getting rid of bad habits. It is certainly important to take good care of our bodies. But Christianity offers us a fuller concept of self-improvement. In fact, every aspect of ourselves – physical, mental, spiritual, emotional - can benefit from an annual self-audit. Some people have taken to heart this multi-faceted concept and each year make one resolution for each area. For instance, one could resolve to join a prayer group to work on spirituality, or take a continuing education course to build mental skills. Still others use the virtues of faith, hope and love to guide their resolution-making process.

By now, you may have discerned a similarity between New Year's resolutions and stewardship commitments. First, we use a similar method to think about stewardship, by breaking it down into more specific concepts of time, talent and treasure. Second, to become better stewards, we write down our commitments. We record our good intentions to clarify exactly what they are and to remind us of our commitment.

Let us pray that this new year is a time of grace and wisdom for those of us who seek to recommit our lives to our family, our church and our God.



MEN'S CORNER

Men's Bible Study

Lord of Love's men's group and Bible study meets on **Saturday mornings** in our Fellowship Hall. The 7 a.m. breakfast is followed by Christian study and fellowship. We close the meeting at 8 a.m.

Plenty of food and seating is always available. Come join us for the food and stay for the fellowship. All men are welcome.



WOMEN OF LOVE

Secret Angels Ministry

Deb Christenson and Ruth Manning are hosting a Secret Angel Ministry brunch at 9:15 on **Sunday, Jan. 10**. This year's participants are invited as well as anyone who is interested in finding out more about this ministry! Please bring a signed card for your secret angel.

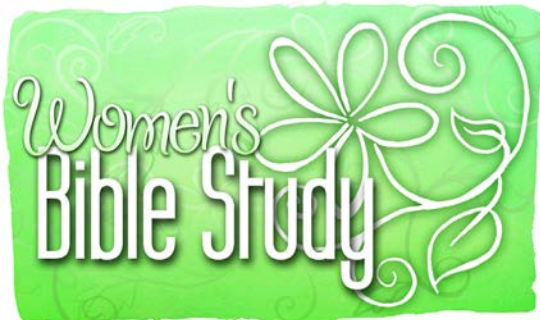
We will have registration forms available for 2016.



WOMEN OF LOVE

"Gather" Bible Study

For the winter of 2015-2016, our four-session Bible study is an exploration of the book of Philippians. The study is from E. Louise Williams and the Rev. Phyllis N. Kersten, two regular contributors to *Gather*.



"Philippians is a wonderful book," the authors write. "Paul had founded the Christian church in Philippi a number of years before and now writes to encourage them. Even though he is imprisoned, Paul does not seem downcast or discouraged. On the contrary, he thinks his suffering might have positive results for the gospel's continued extension in the world."

The Monday group will meet at **6 p.m. on Jan. 4** at the Oak View Village Inn, and the Wednesday evening group will meet at **6 p.m. on Jan. 6** in the Mary Room at church. For the first session, the theme is "Confidence in God's beginnings and endings", based on Philippians 1:1-26. All women are invited to attend.



January at a Glance

Jan. 4	6 p.m. <i>Gather Bible Study, Village Inn, 3304 S. 143rd Plaza</i>
Jan. 5	9 a.m. <i>Quilting at church</i>
Jan. 6	6 p.m. <i>Gather Bible Study, Mary Room</i>
Jan. 8	8 a.m. <i>Crane Coffee Fellowship</i>
Jan. 10	9:15 a.m. <i>"Secret Angels" brunch</i>
Jan. 19	9 a.m. <i>Quilting at church</i>
Jan. 22	8 a.m. <i>Crane Coffee Fellowship</i>
Jan. 23	9 a.m. <i>Nebraska Synodical Women's Winter Retreat</i>

Coffee Fellowship

A new year and a new schedule! Our first get-together will be at 8 a.m. at the Crane Coffee at 77th and Cass on **Jan. 8** and the next one will be **Jan. 22**. All women are invited!



Lutheran Women of Omaha

Lutheran Women of Omaha will meet at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church, 2650 Farnam St. at **noon on Jan. 12**. The program will include a representative from the Attorney General's Office in Lincoln. The free will offering will be the Neb. Lutheran Outdoor Ministry scholarships.

Please call Ruth Manning (402.451.0221) with your reservation by Sunday, Jan. 10.

NSWO Winter Retreat

The annual Nebraska Synodical Women's Organization winter retreat will be held from **9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Jan. 23** at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Grand Island. Registration is \$18 (including coffee break and lunch) and is due by Friday, Jan. 15. Detailed information appeared in the December *Love Letter*.

Ministry Team

Women's ministry team will not meet in January.



IN OUR PRAYERS

Antoinette Anania (cousin of Deb Lund)
Dick Bell
Chris Beckman (friend of Jane Gehringer)
Connie Bennett (cousin of Karen Armitage)
Syd Brinkman
Carl (friend of Saylor Boylan)
Patricia Connolly (friend of the Thoms)
Elizabeth (student of Carol Novak)
Sgt. Dean & Erin Hansen (Delina Wiater's son & his wife)
Janet Jensen (mother of Dawn Burton)
Keith Joyce (friend of the Edwards family)
Van Kistler (father of Lynette Lueders)
Izzy Lightle (relative of Kim Gust)
Lisa Lueders (sister-in-law of Dave Lueders)
Charles Meyer (father of Pr. Brad)
Vi Neu (stepmother of Carol Novak)
Don St. Ours (brother-in-law of Lynda McGraw)
Cynthia Palmer (friend of Dave & Lisa Rieff)

Dave Piehl and Dan Piehl (brothers of Deb Lund)
Pauline Shaffer
Nancy Shinrock
Georgene Sones (mother of Dayla Miller)
Brenda Thom
Nancy Thoman (stepmother of Ann Kroll)
Steve Wiitala, (friend of Karen Mullen)
Ted Whitfield (former co-worker of Brian Shinrock)
Caregivers and those who suffer with depression
Those seeking employment

Those Who Mourn

The family and friends of Marjorie Holbrook,
mother of Judy Messerschmidt
The family and friends of Glenna Lee

Those Who Are Deployed

Steve Slone

If you would like to add a name to the In Our Prayers section, 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

Heartland Hope Mission Christmas Gift Donation

Thank you to all who contributed gifts to the drive for Heartland Hope Mission. The gifts were delivered on Dec. 11. Terri Armstrong, their outreach coordinator, expressed her heartfelt thanks to the congregation for supporting their ministries, and she provided a tour of the facility. The gifts from Lord of Love were among those going toward the Mission's "Christmas in South Omaha" event on Dec. 19, in which parents "shopped" for gifts for their families that they otherwise could not afford.





10405 Fort Street
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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

Jan. 17 Worship Servant Workshop
Jan. 21 Aged to Perfection Lunch

Save the Date

Feb. 10 Ash Wednesday
June 13-16 Sr. High Youth Mission Service Event

Articles for The Love Letter can be submitted to the editor in the Love Letter mailbox at church or by email at loveletter@lord-of-love.org. Articles (including recipes or favorite poems, etc.) must be received by the 20th of the month.

