

The Love Letter

Volume 46

March 2016

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Worship Schedule

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

In the spirit of spring cleaning, you'll now typically see dates to save for the coming months or which aren't on the monthly calendar here on the first page to keep things simple. Please feel free to email any feedback to the editor.

April 9: Women's Retreat

May 9: Mother's Day Brunch

April 10: Celebration of Ministry with College Students in the Metro

June 9, 10 and 11: Vacation Bible School



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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.

FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR'S DESK

Springtime Greetings,

This year's Lenten journey to the cross and empty tomb for me has been deeply influenced by a walk Ronni and I took a few days before Christmas. We were walking through Mae La, the largest refugee camp in Thailand. We were accompanied by Rosie, the young woman who serves as Ronni's interpreter for the in-home preschool program that Omaha Public Schools provides for refugee families.

Rosie had lived in Mae La for three months attending a leadership training school, before her family came to Omaha. Rosie had told us of her experiences growing up in a refugee camp. However, as heart- and gut-wrenching as those stories were, they did little to prepare Ronni and me for the walk we were taking that day. I do not have space here to tell all that we encountered, but I will do my best to shed some light upon the impact that walk has had on this Lent.

"How do we best walk with persons who are living with the consequences of sin?"

The question that has accompanied me since taking that walk and that has become the focus of my journey to the cross and empty tomb this Lenten season has actually been with me throughout 41 years of ordained ministry. It is, *"How do we/I best walk with persons who are living with the consequences of sin, whether their own or those of others?"*

The eighty thousand refugees in Mae La were crammed into a mountainous valley that typically would have been home to one or more villages with at most a few hundred residents. This is

the consequence of the sin of a war begun nearly forty years ago for reasons I have yet to understand. Crowded living conditions are only one consequence they face every day.

Then I think about the millions of immigrants and refugees who live in similar or worse conditions because of the sin of violence and war, the sin of poverty and greed, the sin of hatred and pride. Our walk through Mae La helped me understand once more that there are no quick and easy answers to resolving the consequences of sin.

As part of my Lenten discipline this year, I take time to remember in prayer the immigrants and refugees I have come to know and the millions I don't. My prayer is that I can open my heart to them in the way Jesus opened his heart and arms on the cross to all the world, in order that we may know God's heart, a heart large enough to engulf us all in love.

God's Peace and Easter Joy Be with You,

Pastor Glenn

HOPE Love JOY FAITH Peace



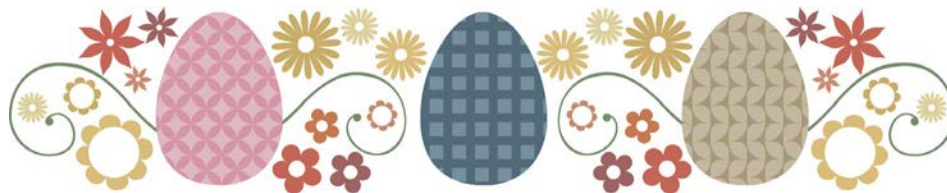
MONTHLY CALENDAR

March 2016						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Quilters 9:30am Synod Chrism Mass @ LoL 7:00pm Vision & Coordination Mtg.	2 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Brass 7:00pm Lenten Worship 7:45pm Sr. Choir Rehearsal	3 7:00pm Boy Scouts	4 8:00am Crane Coffee Fellowship 7:30pm AA Meeting	5 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry
6 8:00am & 10:30 a.m. Worship/Comm 9:15am Adult Forum 9:15am Sunday School 5:00pm Bell Choir	7 6:00pm Prayer Team 8:00pm AA & Ala Non	8	9 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Sr. High Bible Study 6:00pm Brass 7:00pm Lenten Worship 7:15pm Sr. Choir Rehearsal	10 7:00pm Boy Scouts	11 7:30pm AA Meeting	12 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry
13 Daylight Saving Time begins 8:00am & 10:30 a.m. Worship/Comm 9:15am Adult Forum 9:15am Sunday School 5:00pm Bell Choir	14 8:00pm AA & Ala Non	15 6:00pm Stewardship Mtg. 7:00pm Church Council Mtg.	16 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm Sr. High Bible Study 6:00pm Confirmation 6:00pm Luther Kids 7:00pm Lenten Worship 7:45pm Sr. Choir Rehearsal	17 12:00pm Aged to Perfection Lunch 7:00pm Boy Scouts	18 7:30pm AA Meeting	19 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry 9:00am W/ELCA General Mtg. 6:00pm Girls Lock-in
20 8:00am & 10:30 a.m. Worship/Comm 9:15am Sunday School 9:15am Adult Forum 5:00pm Bell Choir	21 8:00pm AA & Ala Non	22	23 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Brass 6:00pm Confirmation 6:00pm Sr. High Bible Study 7:45pm Sr. Choir Rehearsal	24 7:00pm Maundy Thursday Worship	25 7:00pm Good Friday Service 7:30pm AA Meeting	26 7:00am Men's Breakfast Ministry
27 Easter Sunday 8:00am & 10:30 a.m. Worship/Comm 8:30am Easter Breakfast	28 8:00pm AA & Ala Non	29	30 6:00pm Confirmation 6:00pm Luther Kids 6:00pm Sr. High Bible Study	31 7:00pm Boy Scouts		

WORSHIP SERVANTS

Lord of Love's Worship Servants

	March 6	March 13	March 20	March 27
Greeter(s)				
8:00 a.m.	Roger & Angie Meyer	Jesse & Pat Brewer	Joe & Jackie Combes	Mike & Christie Klos
10:30 a.m.	Dan & Ruth Manning	Dave & Susan Lueders	Ron & Nadine Salak	Paul & Ann Kroll
Liturgist				
8:00 a.m.	Brian Lund	Doug Aden	Kenn Garder	Ron Thom
10:30 a.m.	Lori Vandeventer	Susan Lueders	Karen Mullen	Dave Rieff
Communion Servers				
8:00 a.m.	Deb Lund, Brian & Connie Walther, Mike Klos	Cathy Aden, Dave & Judy Egr, Lisa Willard	Shari Garder, Matt Garder, Sarah Eagen	Hansen family
10:30 a.m.	Charise Adams, Joan Witt, Don & Claudia Rowen	Dave Lueders, Paul & Ann Kroll, Kathy Christiansen	Avalos family, & Messerschmidt family	Rieff family
Altar Care				
8:00 a.m.	Karen & Dale Finck	Brewer family	Ed & Marjorie Keiser	Cathy Aden & Sue Dieter
10:30 a.m.	Karen Armitage & Gwen Edwards	Rosie Avalos	Rowen family	Nicole Quackenbush & Karen Anderson
Ushers				
8:00 a.m.	Paul Murphy, David Hild, Bob Christensen, Mike Klos			
10:30 a.m.	Rex Quadhamer, Dan Manning, Gary Ramsay, John Ramsay			
Nursery				
10:30 a.m.			Lisa Rieff	Ashley Meier
CD Recording				
10:30 a.m.	Pat Brewer	Paul Christenson	Dave Lueders	Paul Murphy



WORSHIP

Worship Schedule

Make a note of special dates and times for worship leading up to Easter:



- **March 16** is the last midweek Lent service and soup supper.
- During Holy Week, the week between Palm Sunday and Easter, there will be no Wednesday service or soup supper. There will be a Maundy Thursday service with Holy Communion **March 24, 7 p.m.**
- On **Good Friday, March 25, at 7 p.m.** there will be a Tenebrae service, in which we meditate on the Passion Story with readings and music.
- A prayer vigil will be held in the sanctuary from **8 p.m. on Good Friday** until **noon on Holy Saturday**. You can sign up for a half hour slot on the sheet in the narthex.
- He is Risen! Celebrate Easter with music and praise at the 8 and 10:30 services on **Easter Sunday, March 27**. Breakfast will be served by the youth group for a freewill offering between services.

Prayer Petitions

Once each month, the Worship Committee will add a petition to the prayers of the church for all that were baptized that month, but not yet confirmed. We will name each child in the petition. This includes all children baptized at Lord of Love and children of families that have joined.



When a child is baptized, as a congregation we promise to pray for them. This is a fulfillment of that promise.

If you find that we have missed someone let us know. In the future we plan to add petitions for specific prayer concerns for Lord of Love. Let us know if you have a particular concern. Contact Doug Aden, Heather Hansen or Joan

Liturgist Training



The Worship Committee is in the process of preparing instructions for the liturgist and are planning for another training session.

The goal is to improve the quality of the presentation of the liturgist.

CALL PROCESS UPDATES

The committee has begun the process of interviewing candidates and hopes to finish the first round of interviews by Holy Week. Thank you for your continued prayers for the call process.



NURTURE

Vacation Bible School: Save the Date!

The VBS theme will be “Superheros of the Bible,” on **Thursday and Friday June 9 & 10, 6 to 8 p.m.** with dinner at 5:30, and **Saturday, June 11, 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.** Heather will be looking for volunteers soon—more details to come :



Containers Needed for Kitchen

The kitchen is running very low on “to go” containers. Donations of empty, clean plastic containers with matching lids would be most appreciated. All sizes are welcome but the “Cool Whip” size seems to be the most useful for all kinds of leftovers.



You can give these to Julie or Paul Concannon any time or just leave them on the kitchen counter by the coffee maker and we will get them put away. Thank you! *(Submitted by Julie and Paul)*

OUTREACH

Blood Drive

Thank you to all of the people who participated in the Lord of Love blood drive. Twenty six pints of blood were donated. Those 26 pints of blood have the potential to provide blood products for 78 people.



Diaper Derby

Lord of Love is a sponsor of the Lutheran Family Services FCenter for Healthy Families Diaper Drive. From **April 3—May 8**, you can donate diapers or money to purchase diapers for families in need.

More information will appear in the April Love Letter.



Ministries from the Endowment Fund

Meet Majidi Mshana. Majidi fell from a tree in early December and suffered an open fracture of his arm near the elbow with his bones sticking through skin and a fracture of the wrist (below).



OUTREACH

Ministries from Endowment Funds, cont.

In December and January, his wounds were treated so they would heal sufficiently for surgery to be performed. At the end of January, he was put under anesthesia so a closed reduction could be performed. This procedure would align his bones at the fracture site and then put on a plaster cast (see right).

Majidi does not seem to have a family. Other patient's families have been sharing their food with him.

This is an example of the various missions supported by the Endowment Fund. In December 2015, the Endowment Fund gave a grant of \$1,000 to the Machame Hospital, an orthopedic hospital in Tanzania. The grant provides help for patients with serious orthopedic problems and depleted resources. In this instance, the grant helped pay for Majidi's care and surgery and will be used for additional patients as the needs arise.

The Endowment fund is supported by gifts from individual estates. We encourage you to include the Endowment Fund in your estate plans. *(Submitted by Doug Aden, Endowment Committee)*



MISSION

Mission Possible Update

Thanks to all of who completed the mission possible survey. Hunger continues to be a top focus for our special mission offerings. We have targeted funds from Wednesday Lenten service offerings and soup supper proceeds to the Heartland Food Bank and ELCA's "40 Days of Giving" campaign. Thanks for your generosity in being the hands of Christ with your gifts.

Plans will soon be made for 2016 Lord of

Love Garden. As soon as the ground dries, the garden will be tilled, then potatoes are usually the first crop we plant. Contact any of the regular gardeners if you would enjoy participating: Doug Aden, Dawn Burton, Joe Combes, Dale Finck, Deb Lund, Jeri Morgan, Gary Ramsay and Doug Roberts.



MISSION

Reflection: 40 Days of Giving

From ELCA.org: Posted by Jenny Sharrick on February 8, 2016 in Reflections, World Hunger



Each January, I begin thinking about the Lenten practices I will adopt or the things I will give up. I've done the no chocolate thing (incidentally, that was the year I went to a bat mitzvah with a six-foot tall chocolate fountain) and I gave up my cell phone for all but four hours of the day one year. While those were sacrifices appropriate to what I was going through at the time, I've found myself in the past few years wanting for something more; a new spiritual discipline.

This year, I plan to use the [ELCA World Hunger's 40 Days of Giving devotional](#). I'll be honest with you, my own devotional is in the midst of those pages (Feb. 23), but that's not why I want to use it as my spiritual practice this year. I'm excited to use it because the words on those pages are a call to action, they are a reminder to feed the hungry, and they are the encouragement I need to hear to "be the church" together. Lately, I've felt complacent in doing action in the world. This is just the jolt back to reality that I need.

The authors of the other devotionals are all incredible men and women across the ELCA and the world; many of whom I look up to as role models. There's a little something in there for everyone. Won't you join me?

Jenny Sharrick is a member of the Nebraska Synod World Hunger Network and a graduate student in public health at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. She is a member of First Lutheran Church in Omaha, Nebraska.

Devotion: "Road Signs"

From ELCA.org: Posted by Sunni Richardson on February 8, 2016 in Leadership Development, Leadership Devotions, Reflections

The season of Lent is always a call to repent. We hear John the Baptist proclaiming repent and Isaiah calling us to prepare the way, make straight the roads and prepare for the Lord. We know Lent is about preparing, repenting and getting ready for Holy Week and Easter.

But truth be known, I pretty much fail at Lent. I think of Lent like New Year's resolutions – which by the way, I usually fail at them, too. I know repent means to express regret, be conscience-stricken, feel self-reproach or turn around. But when it comes to giving up things or actually turning around, I get stuck. As a church leader, you would think I would have the "give up chocolate or Diet Coke" routine down to a science. But I'm a problem solver and an adapter and I'm not good at giving up (heavy sigh and silence...).

I am, however, pretty good at taking photos. I love driving down the road and suddenly right in front of me I see a sign from God. And, sometimes that "sign" is literally a sign – a road sign! Such was the case a few weeks back when driving the country roads looking for a good photo opportunity.



Right there in front of me was God telling me to take Lent seriously. It wasn't a dead end sign (*cont. on next page*).

MISSION

Devotion: "Road Signs," continued

Instead it said—"Choose? Choose which way will you go. There's more than one way to go, but you have to choose. Are you going to take Lent seriously or just brush it off?" Right there at that stop sign, I found myself repeating the words of Isaiah 30:20-21: *"Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them. Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.'"* (NIV).

Bingo! A sign from God and from that a new look at Lent. I now see Lent as a time to regroup. There are things I can give up and need to. There are also things I need to add to my daily routine. There will be challenges and adversity but God will be there. The key is taking time during the season of Lent for listening, praying, reflecting and regrouping. I now use Lent as a time of discernment. It is a time to regroup, identify places where I need to make a change and a time to focus on my life as a growing disciple.

Oh my, I needed that sign. Perhaps you are in the same spot. Perhaps you need a sign to help you discern the meaning of Lent and find a new way to live it, without feeling like a failure. My prayer is to each day find a project, place or a person that needs my attention

and deliberately choose to regroup. That will take a lot of prayer, listening and patience but with God's help and God's grace, I just might learn how to do this thing called Lent.

Prayers as you journey through the Lenten season.

Sunni Richardson is a member of the Nebraska Synod Leadership Development Table and an Associate in Ministry. She is serving as Director of Discipleship at First Lutheran Church in Lincoln, Nebraska.



YOUTH

Youth News



Youth group will be serving Easter breakfast between services (9-10:30 a.m.) on **Sunday, March 27**. Please consider a freewill offering to help us fund-raise for the senior high Mission Service Week (June 13-16).

Delicious gluten free options will be available!

Lock-Ins Coming Up



GIRLS ONLY LOCK-IN
Saturday, March 19 at 7 p.m. through Sunday, March 20 at 9 a.m.

GUYS ONLY LOCK-IN
Friday, April 15 at 7 p.m. – Saturday, April 16 at 8:30 a.m. Join us for an action-packed event Friday night, a lock-in, and then the Men's Breakfast in the morning!



OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Support Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministry at “Evensong”

What: “Evensong: Celebration of Ministry with College Students in the Omaha Metro Area.” A Reception with Silent Auction and Holden Evening Prayer with special music by students and a combined community choir

Who: Omaha area ELCA congregations and friends of Omaha College Ministry

Where: St. Michael Lutheran Church,
132nd & Blondo

When: Sunday, April 10, 3—5:30 p.m.
Celebration worship at 4 p.m.



Why: Introduce Omaha College Ministry to Metro Congregations and raise funds to support this important ministry. (All donations will be matched by a generous grant from the Immanuel Vision Foundation.)

How can you and your congregation support this ministry and event: Help us get the word out, encourage members of your choir to participate in the combined choir (the choir will practice from 3:15 to 3:45 the day of the event), donate a gift basket for the Silent Auction, and come be a part of the celebration!

For more information, contact Pastor Mike Ostrom at 402.350.5414 or M.Ostrom@NeLCM.com or see the February Love Letter for more on Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministries.

Several members of Love of Love participate or have participated in these ministries; below, a few of them and friends enjoy fellowship at Young Adult Game Night hosted by Matt Garder. Thanks to Matt for the photo.



CHURCH COUNCIL

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



February Church Council Meeting Update

The Lord of Love Church Council met on February 16, 2016. Some of the highlights were:

- Review of the Treasurer's Report which showed good attendance and giving in January, but the budget deficit has increased slightly.
- Approval of the 2016 Major Improvement Budget to be presented to the congregation at the Annual meeting on February 21, 2016.
- Agreement of the proposal from Lutheran Family Services, Center for Healthy Families for a Diaper Derby to be held from April 3 to May 8, 2016. Members will be able to donate diapers or moneys for diapers for this promotion.
- Review of information from the Communication Team about future website development.
- Reminder of the open positions for Endowment and Nominating committees that the congregation and council will appoint at the annual meeting and next council meeting, respectively.
- Next Church Council meeting will be held on March 15, 2016.
(Submitted by Kathy Christiansen)



Giving Status



General Fund financial information for January 2016:

Actual Income - \$30,792.67

Actual Expense - \$32,954.51

As of the end of January, the available cash deficit has increased. It is (12,616.64). Weekly offerings of \$7,217 are needed to meet budgeted expenses. The weekly offering average through the end of January was 6,030. Please remember that we will have additional expenses this year associated with calling a new pastor. Thank you for your continued prayers and contributions as we move forward in 2016.

RESOURCES

Stewardship: Faith, Working Through Love (Galatians 5:6)

³⁷ He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”³⁸ This is the greatest and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

Matthew 22: 37-39

The above statements should guide all areas of our life, including our money. Some might interpret that to mean we should give all of our money to the church or care of the hungry and homeless. But it's not that simple in practice. Loving God means living as he would want us to live. God expects us to pay our bills, buy food, get a haircut, and take a vacation. Loving God does not mean that we can't live a normal life. But it should mean that we approach life differently.

It means we can enjoy a meal out with friends and thank God for his gift and express our love to him. We can give money to folks in need and thank God that we are able to do so. We can give generously to our church so that it can continue God's work in his kingdom and thank him for being a part of his work in the world.

Notice that this doesn't answer the question of whether we should buy that extra mocha latte this week or consider a new car. But it does give us an overall perspective: the money we have is money which God has given to us to live our lives, loving him and other people.



In the end, money is wrapped up with our hearts. So we pray that God will continue to renew our hearts and give us insight into the intentions of our hearts. And we pray that, more and more, we will use our money to love our God and continue his work in his kingdom, loving and caring for others.

MEN'S NEWS

Men In Mission

Lord of Love Men's Ministry is energized, active and motivated. Ten of our members (at right) attended the Nebraska Lutheran Men in Mission Annual gathering at Rejoice! Lutheran Church.

We learned various ways to build and sustain ministries, Bible studies and small groups within our church. It was an informative and fun-filled event with plenty of opportunity to meet and greet with like ministry groups and individuals from other churches. Our own Tom Olson was elected as president and Nick Olson was elected for a second term as treasure.



MEN'S NEWS

Upcoming Events

We would like to encourage all men to join us for several upcoming events:

- Serve a Lenten Soup Supper on **March 2**.
- Support, encourage and send men (we're offering scholarships for members) to attend a "One Year to Live" Event at Camp Carol Joy Holling on **March 4—6**.
- Serve Mother's Day breakfast **May 8**.
- Our annual secret Good Friday event.
- Serve breakfast for youth lock in **April 16**.
- The "Big Event": We have reserved a picnic shelter at Mahoney State park for an All Congregation "Day at the Park" on **July 30**—this is a just-for-fun event; bring your extended family and friends.

Men's Bible Study

As always, we serve breakfast every Saturday morning at 7 a.m. Join us for great food, conversation and Bible study.



If you have an event that you would like us to consider and/or support, please contact Mary Lou at the church office or any of the usual suspects. If you are not sure who that is, just ask around: it includes almost every male member of Lord of Love Lutheran Church. *(Submitted by Paul Christenson)*



WOMEN OF LOVE

"Gather" Bible Studies

Bibles studies will continue to focus on Phillipians. The theme is "Being of One Mind", based on Phillipians 2:19-4.3. The Wednesday group meets at **6 p.m. on March 2** in the Mary Room at church. Monday's group meets at **6 p.m. on March 7** at the Oak View Village Inn.

All women, you're invited to attend whichever study fits your schedule.



Lutheran Women of Omaha

Lutheran Women of Omaha will meet at Holy Cross Lutheran Church at **noon on Tuesday, March 8**. Allison Corson from Youth Emergency Services (YES) will speak and the freewill offering will go to YES. Lunch cost is \$6. Call Ruth Manning (402.451.0221) by Sunday, March 6 to make your reservation.

Women's Retreat

All women of Lord of Love are invited to the women's retreat on **Saturday, April 9** from 9 a.m.—3 p.m. at Chalco Hills Recreation Area. The topic for the day will be "Joy", with more details to come soon.

IN OUR PRAYERS AND LOVE NOTES

Antoinette Anania (cousin of Deb Lund)
Dick Bell
Connie Bennett (cousin of Karen Armitage)
Patricia Connolly (friend of the Thoms)
Syd Brinkman
Elizabeth (student of Carol Novak)
Sgt. Dean & Erin Hansen (Delina Wiater's son & his wife)
Jan Hughes (aunt of Paula Foster)
Kristen Kuhn (friend of Todd & Lisa Meyer)
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 & Dan Piehl (brothers of Deb Lund)

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

Those Who Mourn

The family and friends of Merlin Weber

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

From Bob Kasworm in Tanzania to Doug Aden:

"Salaam. About last year at this time, **Joe and Jackie Combes** visited and they brought some funds from **the LOL Men's Group**, which we set aside for a special use. This Christmas, we had a HIV-AIDS kids club get-together with 60 kids present; it is good for them to be together and for each to see that he or she is not the only one living with HIV. Discussion, lunch, and a lot of fun events were held, and then every child was able to take a food package when they went home (rice, sugar, cooking oil, soap, etc. - see photo). Those LOL funds went to cover the cost of the event.

The staff asked me to pass along their thanks for making this possible."

