

LIFELINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Prof Insights

As I write this, we are completing our first Prof Insights seminar. Rev. Dr. Rick Marrs, from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, presented on the subject of, "The Care of Souls in a Sexualized Society." Those who were present for worship and Bible class on June 29, got a preview of this class as Dr. Marrs preached and led the Bible study. The class covered a variety of topics related to the 6th Commandment and it was intended for pastors to learn how to care for people struggling with sin and its effects. (About 13 people attended, not all were pastors.) The seminar covered both positive and negative aspects of sexuality, affirming that sex is a good gift from God to be enjoyed within marriage. We discussed the importance of talking about sex in pre-marriage counseling and how to help Christian parents teach their children in age-appropriate ways using helpful resources from several Christian publishers. Sadly, we also spent the majority of our time discussing the negative aspect of sex, dealing with LGBTQ issues, divorce, pornography, cohabitation, sexual abuse and other awfulness. Sadly, sexual sins impact many lives and hurt a lot of people. It is especially necessary in our over-sexualized society for pastors to be able to help and provide care for people struggling with or healing from sexual sin.

While not always an uplifting topic, nevertheless, the class was helpful and appreciated. In addition to being a competent scholar, Dr. Marrs is a kind and sincere man, a true pastor's pastor. His heart for Christ and His Church was evident in his teaching and his preaching. It was a pleasure having him here and learning from him. Additionally, I could easily see this becoming an annual tradition where we host a different seminary professor every summer to teach and preach.

Farewell to Julie

Sadly, this is the last month for our first deaconess intern, Julie Baumann. I think I speak for everyone at Lord of Life when I say that her internship has been a tremendous success and she will be greatly missed. St. Paul said of the deaconess Phoebe, "... she has been a great help to many, including me." (Romans 16:2b) I can certainly say the same thing of Deaconess Baumann. She has been a great help in the church office, and in visiting the suffering and the lonely. She has eagerly taken on whatever work needed to be done including working with children, (teaching Sunday school and doing children's messages) and her voice has been a lovely addition to our choir and to many of our worship services where she has led the Psalm or sang a solo. Julie knows how to interact well with all kinds of people, from very old to very young, from the long-time Lutheran to the first time visitor or stranger at the door or on the phone looking for help. She has served well and we wish her the best in her future endeavors, including her upcoming marriage in August.

Julie's internship formally concludes at the end of this month, but we will host a **farewell reception in her honor on Sunday, July 13 at 9:30 AM.**

Paige Webber installed in August

Our future deaconess intern visited in June and was well-received. Paige (or Deaconess Intern Webber) will be installed on **Sunday, August 3rd at the 10:00 AM service.** [NOTE: there will only be one service that day as we will follow the service with a potluck.]

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

(Ephesians 3:20-21)



A Letter from Our Deaconess Intern

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Considering how long last month's newsletter was, I've decided to make this one short-n-sweet. For those of you who read my January newsletter way back when, you may think it's because I don't like writing them, but really it's because I don't like goodbyes.

This is my last LoL newsletter, and while I'm excited for what's to come - marrying my best friend, starting a new (albeit, temporary) job, and seeing whatever else the Lord has in store for my husband and I - I get sad thinking about having to leave the loved ones I've met and made here at Lord of Life.

Thinking back to April of last year, when I had no clue where I would be serving for the next year, I had similar thoughts and emotions. "I don't know where I'll be living. I won't know the people. I won't know what I'm doing. What if I'm not prepared to handle this?" The anxiety of it all was swirling in my head, and yet, even if I didn't have all the answers, God did. He knew where I would be placed. He knew what experiences I would have here. He knew the people I would soon come to know and love, and who would, in their own ways, love on me too. It shouldn't be any surprise that He's good at carrying us through the different seasons of our lives - He's been doing this for His children everywhere since the beginning of time.

So, while it's time for me to leave, it's not really goodbye. As believers, it's always simply "see you later" - whether in this earthly life, or in the new heavens and earth at the end of time. God has given me the wonderful opportunity to learn and grow in my faith during my year here, and to be able to love on and serve others that, without His leading, I would've never had the blessing to do so otherwise. I'm incredibly thankful to our Lord for the time I've had here in Plano, for the experiences I've had, and even more so for the opportunity to show Christ's love to my brothers and sisters at Lord of Life.

O Christ Who Made Himself the Servant of All,
I would set my heart and my affections upon you - and upon you alone -
for I can only serve others rightly when such service
is undertaken from first to last as an act of devotion offered to you.

I cannot know the end of another person's story.
Our lives so often only briefly intersect.
So let me be content to minister regardless of visible outcomes,
trusting that the small mercies I extend
will be woven into the larger theme of redemption at work in the lives of others
as you woo them to yourself, drawing their hearts by graces offered,
and shaping my own heart too in this process of learning to serve well,
and by learning to serve well,
learning to love well.

Amen.

("A Liturgy Before Serving Others" from Every Moment Holy vol. 1 by Douglass Kaine McKelvey)

In Christ's love,

Julie Baumann
Deaconess Intern

Teen Times

We are ready to go! The plans have been made, the fundraising is finished, the paperwork is completed, and the kids are excited or perhaps a little anxious to attend the Higher Things Youth Conference this month that takes place on the campus of Calvin University in Grand Rapids, Michigan. There we will join 800-900 LCMS youth and adults for 4 days of worship, Bible studies, good fellowship, lots of food, and plenty of fun! The theme for this year's conference is "All Things New" based on Revelation 21:5.

*He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!"
Then he said, "Write this down, for this is trustworthy and true."*

There will be 9 youth and adults from Lord of Life who will attend, 6 of whom will be there for the first time. I look forward to sharing the experience with them and seeing their reactions to the liturgical, inspirational, and distinct Lutheran worship and instruction provided by many LCMS pastors and church leaders from across the country. As is the norm for the last several years, we will travel together with the youth and adults from Immanuel Lutheran Fairview. They also will have a few first-timers to attend Higher Things. We will have a recap of our trip during a Bible class hour next month. Like many times before, I want to thank all members at Lord of Life for your prayers and support of our youth ministry.

Until next time,
Scott Peters



From the Director of Property and Facilities:

Since the retirement of our full-time custodian and all-around handyman in January 2024, the past 1 ½ years have allowed me to define some “wants and needs” that our church facilities require or could benefit from. Many have been small items or issues that can be addressed myself or by volunteers within the congregation, and cost-wise are covered in the annual budget. However, there are a few items that exceed the means of the Property and Facilities budget and necessitate hired help to complete.

First, the “needs.” Our sanctuary is over 30 years old and requires some improvement with minor structural repair, drywall repair, and repainting to its ceiling and walls. Estimates have been gathered and these improvements could cost upwards of \$25,000 due to the height of the sanctuary peaks and ceiling. It would take a commercial contractor with personnel who are qualified with the proper equipment to complete such tasks. Ideally, this would be best accomplished during the summer months while there is little activity in the sanctuary during the week and hopefully completed within a Monday – Friday time frame. This would avoid disruption to our worship services on Sunday morning.

The “wants” are things that would be nice to have but not crucial to the overall ministry of our congregation or day-to-day operations. If you have joined Pastor’s Sunday morning Bible class, or enjoyed one of the many potluck meals on celebratory Sundays (Easter, Reformation, etc.), you may have noticed how well-attended these events are. At times it is necessary to bring out additional chairs and/or tables to accommodate everyone. The brown chairs used at times in the fellowship hall and other classrooms may be 40 years old or older and they show it. Additionally, a few of the tables in the fellowship hall are also showing wear and tear from being moved around, or in and out the room several times per week for various events. Replacing the old brown chairs and adding several new tables could be a pleasant upgrade to our fellowship hall and large group activities. Initial estimates are approximately \$5000 for 60-70 new black chairs similar to the ones we currently use, and 8 new brown conference tables.

If you feel moved to donate and support either the “wants” or “needs,” we have a dedicated building fund which would be used toward the financial cause. The “needs” in the sanctuary are going to be addressed and carried out even if donations do not completely cover the costs. If you have questions or would like more details regarding any of these items, I would be happy to share more information with you.

In His service,
Scott Peters



Seeking gently used furniture: Our next deaconess intern, Paige Rebber, will be joining us at the first of August for her one year long internship. During that time, she will be staying in an apartment not far from the church and is in need of a few furnishings. If you have or are aware of any of the following gently used items that would be available to Paige, please contact Scott Peters. Thanks for your help!

Dining table and (4) chairs
Small sofa or love seat (preferably sleeper)
Living or lounge chair

RUNNING the RACE

SUMMER Reading Plan

Life — and exercise — move at different paces for different people.

Some enjoy leisurely walks, strolls or rolls, while others speed-walk, jog or even sprint. Some people have a 26.2 sticker on their vehicle, indicating they've run a marathon, while others boast of running a half-marathon (13.1) or no marathon (0.0)!

Thankfully, you don't have to be an athlete of any kind to run the Christian "race." The Bible uses running metaphors, however, to encourage followers of Jesus to train, focus, persevere and attain the heavenly prize. Use this Summer Reading Plan to strengthen your faith and your relationship with Jesus. Complete one square each day or every other day, and you'll journey through significant chunks of the New Testament this summer. Feel free to invite a friend or family member to join you as a "running partner"!



Mile 1 Read Philippians 1

Re-read verse 6 and consider how your faith journey is a work in progress.

Mile 3 Read Philippians 3

Look back at verses 13 and 14, and brainstorm a list of ways to keep your eyes on the heavenly "prize."

Mile 5 Read Colossians 1

Re-read verse 11. Name three specific ways God gives you strength and endurance.

Mile 7 Read Colossians 3

Look back at verses 23 and 24. What keeps you running for God, not for other people or for personal accolades?

Mile 9 Read 1 Timothy 1

Doodle about how God's law keeps you from wandering away from him.

Mile 11 Read 1 Timothy 3

What aspects of staying "above reproach" are most challenging for you as a follower of Jesus?

Mile 13 Read 1 Timothy 5

Anonymously perform a kind deed for someone in your family or community.

Mile 15 Read 2 Timothy 1

Describe specific ways your life reveals a spirit of power, a spirit of love and a spirit of self-discipline.

Mile 17 Read 2 Timothy 3

Add a daily Bible-reading time to your spiritual training regimen.

Mile 19 Read James 1

Look back at verse 12. Reflect on how God has kept his promises to you. How does that help you during times of trial?

Mile 21 Read James 3

Re-read verses 17 and 18. Pray for godly wisdom as you continue your faith journey.

Mile 23 Read James 5

After re-reading verse 19, think of ways to reach out to people who have wandered away from God.

Mile 25 Read John 20:1-18

Consider how the good news of Jesus' resurrection gives you reasons to run and share the Gospel message.

➔ Mile 2 Read Philippians 2

Re-read verse 5 and pray to have the same attitude as Jesus.

Mile 4 Read Philippians 4

Write verse 13 on a sticky note and place it where you'll see it daily.

Mile 6 Read Colossians 2

Review verses 6 and 7, make a gratitude list and say a prayer of thanks to God.

Mile 8 Read Colossians 4

Write a note or letter to someone who needs spiritual encouragement.

Mile 10 Read 1 Timothy 2

Re-read verses 5 and 6. Offer praise to Jesus for being our mediator and ransom — and for running the race perfectly for us.

Mile 12 Read 1 Timothy 4

As you exercise, ponder verse 8 and brainstorm ways to build your spiritual muscles.

Mile 14 Read 1 Timothy 6

Review verses 11 and 12. In what ways might faith be viewed as a fight? To whom have you made bold profession of your faith?

Mile 16 Read 2 Timothy 2

Re-read verse 5. The next time you participate in or watch a sporting event, compare the value of God's "victor's crown" to earthly achievements.

Mile 18 Read 2 Timothy 4

Memorize verse 7. Think about people you know who have already "finished the race." How can their example strengthen you?

Mile 20 Read James 2

Put your faith into action today by meeting someone's needs.

Mile 22 Read James 4

Review verse 8. Confess your sins to God and ask him to come near you.

Mile 24 Read Luke 15:11-32

When have you run away from God? What brought you back? When have you seen proof of God running toward you (see verse 20, as well as James 4:8)?

➔ Mile 26 Read 1 John 1

Re-read verse 7. Write "Walk in the Light" on a sticky note, and place it by a lamp or light switch.

Mile 26.2 Read Revelation 2:10 Praise God aloud: "Come, Lord Jesus!"

Faithfulness: The Stewardship Standard

"Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2).

What is the standard to which a steward is held? Ask the average person, and they might talk about percentages, tithes, and commitments. Too often, the default mode of measuring stewards is by how much and how frequently they give. This is not helpful. Measuring activity without any connection to baptismal identity is a recipe for disaster. It can either breed a sense of superiority and self-righteousness or create a culture of scarcity and despair. Neither outcome is godly or helpful.

This is not to say that stewardship should be regarded as "no big deal." St. Paul, within his discussion of the ministry to which he has been called, sets the standard of accountability for the steward: faithfulness. This removes any sense of superiority or self-righteousness and dispels scarcity and despair. When a steward manages what the Lord has entrusted to them — resources and all aspects of life — for God's purposes, the focus is not on how much or how frequently they give.

This standard reflects the stewardship portrayed in the Gospels where Jesus entrusts varying amounts, each according to ability. The commended stewards were recognized for their faithfulness in their vocation, not the amounts they managed. Conversely, the condemned stewards were not castigated for their lack of performance but for their lack of faithfulness.

What does this mean for the steward in the pew? The Lord has entrusted you with various things. Luther captures them in his explanation of the First Article of the Apostles' Creed and the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer. The familiar couplets of food and drink, house and home, spouse and children, land, animals and all possessions are the Lord's, and He has entrusted them to you for His purpose. This trust brings an active realization of thanksgiving.

This active thanksgiving is our stewardship. It can be distilled into two questions that the steward regularly needs to answer:

1. How has God blessed me?
2. How is He calling me to respond?

The first question is quite simple to answer: if the Lord has entrusted something to you, it is a blessing. This blessing is for God's glory and the benefit of your neighbor. The second question is more challenging to measure; it is not about percentages and charts. Instead, it is about a life of thanksgiving that flows from the mercies of God revealed in Jesus Christ. This thanksgiving starts at and flows from the cross and the empty tomb. Our stewardship of the Gospel drives our stewardship of everything else.

The standard, then, is faithfulness. Faithfulness flows from eyes focused on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. It does not come from our efforts but through the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives, through Word and Sacrament. It begins at the altar in the Divine Service but extends into the world — from hearth and home to workplace and classroom, from commerce to leisure. The mercy of God, freely given in Jesus, leads us to demonstrate a faithfulness that reveals to others the same mercy we have received in Jesus.

This faithfulness cannot be measured empirically. It is simply allowing the Holy Spirit to work in and through us for the glory of God and the benefit of our neighbor. Weekly. Daily. Faithfully.



- 1 Don Bunger
- 2 Ana Scarth
- 2 Emily Scarth
- 3 Karla Rempert
- 3 Nelda Schrank
- 5 Mike Phelan
- 8 Emma Padgett
- 8 Suzanne Smith
- 10 Brooks Smith
- 12 Suzan Grabow
- 13 Carter Bunger
- 13 Eleanor Conrad
- 13 Sandy Ehrett
- 13 Ethan Hacker
- 13 Garrett Hacker
- 14 Carol Nance
- 14 Eric Wilde
- 15 Gary & Charlotte Bennefeld (64)
- 17 Ben & Melanie Scarth (15)
- 18 Kathy Plagens
- 19 Carolyn Moudy
- 19 Emma Ziegelbein
- 19 Noah Ziegelbein
- 20 Robert Padgett
- 20 Magdalena Rector
- 24 Jonelle Peters
- 26 David Armstrong
- 26 John Frinsko
- 26 Winona Parish
- 28 Mark Knowles
- 28 Susan Knowles
- 29 Phil & Candace Klein (36)
- 30 Charlotte Bennefeld
- 30 Linda Francis
- 30 Charles & Dixie Hacker (31)



Lord of Life Small Groups

EPIC PARENTING

- † For 30ish couples with kids
- † For info contact Ben Scarth
BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com
- † Usually meets one Sunday a month in the afternoon or evening

FRUITS OF THE VINE CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Scott Peters at 972-898-3351 cell or speters@planolutheran.com
- † Usually meets on Saturday a month at 6:30 PM for Bible study

GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Will meet Sat., July 12 at 6:30 PM for Bible study

YOUNG ADULTS

- † For those in their 20's and 30's
- † For info contact Lauren Moudy at laurenemoudy@gmail.com or (214) 415-8939
- † Will meet Sun, July 20 at 6 PM for Bible study and dinner



prepare for worship in July

July 6: Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Is. 66:10-14; Gal. 6:1-10, 14-18; Luke 10:1-20

HotD: "Christ Is the World's Redeemer," 539

July 13: Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Lev. (18:1-5) 19:9-18; Col. 1:1-14; Luke 10:25-37

HotD: "Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord," 497

July 20: Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Gen. 18:1-10a (10b-14); Col. 1:21-29; Luke 10:38-42

HotD: "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest," 498

July 27: Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Gen. 18:(17-19) 20-33; Col. 2:6-15 (16-19); Luke 11:1-13

HotD: "Rise, Shine, You People," 825



Friends,

On behalf of all of our team at Forerunner thank you so much for faithfully supporting our ministry to the fatherless. This year we were able to serve 194 boys, and we had 42 of them make decisions to put their faith in Jesus and/or declare their faith through baptism. Thank you for helping to make this possible!

- Beth Winter

Dear Members of Lord of Life Lutheran Church,
Thank you all so much for being so kind and welcoming to me this past weekend. It was a pleasure to get to know so many of you! I can't wait to come back in August to serve the Lord and all of you in gladness. You will be on my heart and in my prayers! Blessings to all of you and see you soon!

In Christ,
Paige Rebber

"I do not cease to give thanks for you..." (Ephesians 1:16)

