

LIFELINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Vol. 40, No. 5

Plano, Texas

May 2026

Good Shepherds

I recently had the privilege of preaching the sermon for the vicarage assignment service for Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. I was invited to do so because my son, Ambrose, received his placement at the service. He will be serving his vicarage at Trinity Lutheran Church in Springfield, Missouri.

Because the previous Sunday was "Good Shepherd Sunday" the readings for the service (Jeremiah 23 and Mark 6) both talked about shepherds and sheep. I attempted to contrast good and faithful pastors (shepherds) with bad ones, and urged the future vicars to strive not to be bad pastors, but good and faithful ones. Along with that, I passed on some very practical advice given to me about being a faithful pastor, namely, a good pastor needs to do three things: 1. Preach and teach well. 2. Love your people. 3. Work hard.

The following is an excerpt from the sermon:

#2 Love your people. ... Through the prophet Jeremiah, God promised Israel, "**I will set shepherds over them who will care for them.**" That is still His intention. Good shepherds love the sheep and are not like the hired hands. But here's the thing: you actually have to love the people. You can't fake it. If you don't really care about the people you are given to serve, they'll all know it. The sheep can smell a fake from a mile away. And if you don't care, it will undermine everything you do and say. So, if you are going to genuinely love them, then first and foremost, you must remember your role. The sheep you serve are not your sheep, they are the Lord's and you are His servant and He calls you to a life of service.

... -Just as Jesus told His disciples: "**... whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.**" So, this I say to you [deaconess] interns and to our vicars as well: Don't aspire to be great or you may become conceited and fail; instead, aspire to be a servant and you will be great.

In loving-service, our Lord Jesus Christ came to rescue mankind and give His life as a payment for sin; and now He sends us to go forth with that same love in joyful service to others that through our loving service, they may know what He has done. ...

I believe the message was well-received, but you can check out the service and see for yourself at the following link. <https://vimeo.com/showcase/6877522?video=1185307869>

Blessings,

PrS



A Letter from Our Deaconess Intern

Being a Seminarian

The end of April/beginning of May is one of the most exciting periods at the seminary: vicarage/internship assignments and call day. This is what you spend your whole seminary career working towards. You sit in chapel and wait for your name to be called, letting you know where you will be going, either for the next year or for the foreseeable future. Emotions are high as you either get placed exactly where you wanted or you end up going somewhere you've never even thought of going. There are smiles, tears, laughter, and all kinds of reactions to the news. For seminarians like Ambrose, they will serve a vicarage, return to seminary for a year, and then be called to serve a congregation after completing their fourth year of study. For deaconess students like me, it's a little bit different. We complete two years of seminary before being sent out on internship. Then, immediately after our internships are complete, we are either called back to the congregation where we served during our internship or called elsewhere to serve another congregation in need of our gifts.

These are the joys and trials of being a seminarian. In the first two years of seminary, it almost feels like you're back in college. There are new people to meet, classes to go to, and homework to complete. All of the camaraderie is a joy. Then comes vicarage and internship, where you get a chance to apply all you have learned in service to wherever you have been placed. One of the biggest misconceptions about this process is that the seminarian can choose where they would like to serve during their internship or vicarage. Nope. Not at all. I can't speak to how it is done for vicarage candidates (although I can assume it's similar), but for the deaconess interns, we are given a survey of preferences. Rank what district you'd like to be in from most to least preferable. Would you like to be in a rural or urban area? How big of a town would you like to be in? What demographic do you want to serve? Would you like a traditional or contemporary church? How important is the hymnal in worship? How big of a congregation would you like to serve? On and on for five or six pages, getting an overview of your personal preferences. Then you attach a headshot, resume, and other personal biographical information to help churches decide on whether or not they'd like to interview you for a position at their church. They have us do all that work, and it does have a purpose, but just because you say, "I want to serve in a church in my hometown," doesn't mean that there is a position there that you can fill.

This is where the trial comes into play. Once your name gets called, you can be left thinking, "Wait... this church is nothing like what I described that I wanted on my profile! What gives? Did they make me fill out all of those forms for nothing?" It can be frustrating to feel as if you didn't get what you wanted. For example, I would never have thought of coming to Texas for my internship, since I filled out my preferences in favor of the Midwest. Texas wasn't even on my radar! When you think about it, it makes sense: you want to go to familiar places, so you make sure to list familiar places. But familiarity doesn't necessarily mean growth. The purpose of an internship is for you to grow and be molded into a better servant of the Lord. Sometimes, if you stay too far in the familiar, you don't grow. The seminary knows that, so instead of sticking you somewhere familiar and safe, they will oftentimes push you outside of your comfort zone and place you where they think you will grow.

And boy, I'm so glad that I was pushed out of my familiar Midwest and into Texas because I have grown so much in my time here. I have learned how to work in a church and be an effective addition to the staff at Lord of Life. I have gotten to know and love the congregation here and how best to serve when the need arises (which is always). I have learned how to be more confident in my role as a deaconess and dive deeper into mercy work. I have learned to live, love, laugh, cry, comfort, and rejoice. All of these things I wouldn't have learned as well if I had stayed in my comfortable Midwest bubble. I love this congregation and the work I am able to do here. It is my sincere hope and prayer that the seminary sends me to serve here after my internship is complete. There is always a chance they could send me elsewhere, and I only say this to temper the optimism, just in case. However, the seminary is aware of the congregation's desire to keep me here, and that is a pretty significant factor.

So, whether I am called to stay here on May 14 or called elsewhere, I want you to know that I have loved being at Lord of Life. I want to continue to be here, Lord willing. I want to continue to grow here, have friends here, and make a life here. Thank you for being the answer to my prayers, and I hope that I will be here for years to come.



Jack Michael Cleavenger

2026 Senior Homeschool Graduate. Jack began homeschooling at age 5 with the Classical Conversations Program. He participated in HSAA cross-country for four years and is active in Airsoft. Jack will be serving our nation in the U.S. Marine Corps. We are so proud that Jack is entering Marine Corps basic training on June 8th. We have every expectation that he will enjoy the Corps and provide leadership to his platoon. Commencement Ceremony on May 16, 2026, at 2 pm. Plano Bible Chapel. 1900 Shiloh Rd. Plano. Please join us in praying for the Lord's blessing on Jack, for his safety, and for his future success in the USMC. "The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace." Numbers 6:24-26

Jonah Gabriel Carter

Jonah is pursuing his goal of becoming an orthopedic surgeon. On May 9, he will graduate from Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska, earning a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry, with a pre-medical emphasis, in an accelerated three-year timeframe. Following graduation, he will spend a year working to reduce student loans before matriculating to medical school the following year.



Emma Elise Ziegelbein

Emma will graduate from Texas A&M with a degree in Education. She plans to pursue a graduate degree in Speech Language Pathology at the University of Texas at Dallas in the fall.



Noah Paul Ziegelbein

Noah will graduate from Texas A&M with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He has accepted a job with McMaster-Carr in Fort Worth.



Stephanie Ann Tabor

Stephanie graduated in December 2025 with a Juris Doctor degree from Regent University School of Law. She took the Texas Bar exam in February, and received confirmation of passing in April. Stephanie is currently interviewing and has received job offers from several firms. Her Law School Commissioning is May 8 and Commencement is May 9. She expects to begin working mid-May.



Follow Him in Generosity

Our Savior calls us to follow Him in generosity. “For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you” (John 13:15). We cannot give our lives for the salvation of the world, of course. Praise God, that job is already done! But with hearts full of thanksgiving for what Jesus has given us, we can follow His example of generous giving. And Jesus’ generosity is not merely an example. Our Lord also commands us to act according to our gifts: “The one who contributes, [let him give] in generosity” (Rom. 12:8).

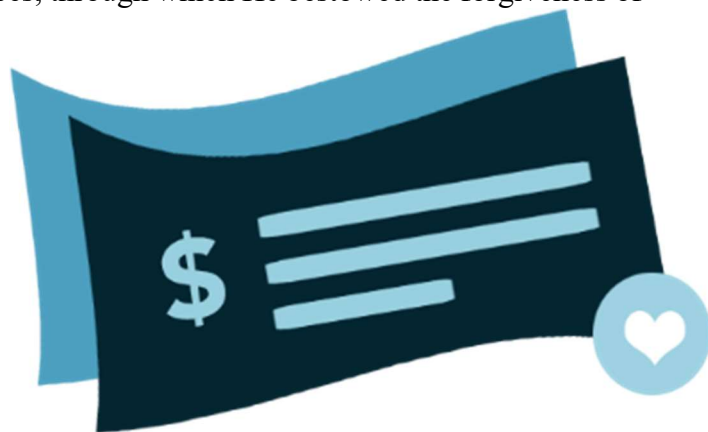
So, when we bring offerings to the Lord, we should strive to heed His command and follow the pattern He has established for us. Jesus did not give us leftovers. He gave His best. We should not give leftovers, either, but the first and best of what He has given us. Jesus did not give as an afterthought — He gave according to the plan of salvation God established from the foundation of the world. So, when it comes to our own offerings, we should make a thoughtful plan to give generously, in proportion to the way He has blessed us. Like the Macedonian Christians, who gave according to their ability, and even beyond their ability (2 Cor. 8:3), we should honor the Lord by giving a generous portion of the income that God provides us.

We should also give freely, just as Jesus gave freely for us. There is no compulsion involved in our works of love and our offerings to the Lord. We do not give grudgingly, but willingly and cheerfully, each “as he has decided in his heart,” as the Lord says (2 Cor. 9:7). There is no New Testament ceremonial law involved here. Rather, we are free to give as generously as our Savior has given for us!

In the same way, our Lord teaches us to give generously out of our love for Him and for our neighbor. Jesus shows us that genuine love is always love “in deed” (1 John 3:18). It is love that sees our neighbor in need and gives generously to help him. It is love that hears the Word of the Lord and does what it says. If we truly love, we give generously. If we give without love, our giving is not truly following Jesus.

Finally, we follow Jesus in generosity when we support His Gospel ministry and other works of mercy. The people of Israel gave generously to construct and support the operation of the tabernacle, for that was the place where the Lord received the Old Testament sacrifices, through which He bestowed the forgiveness of sins on His people. So, they gave abundantly, so abundantly that they had to be told to stop giving! (Ex. 36:5–6). In the same way, we should bring generous offerings to support the Lord’s work. We support our congregations in the preaching of His Word, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, which bestow His gifts of forgiveness, life and salvation, and we take care of those who are poor and needy.

Our Savior calls us to follow His example in generous giving. Let us then, with thankful hearts, rededicate ourselves to following Him in generosity.



The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry – <https://www.lcms.org/stewardship>

Newsletter Article – May 2026 (Originally published in May 2023)

Three WAYS to GIVE at

Lord of Life

Lord of Life Lutheran Church
Plano, TX 75075
972-867-5588

Visit planolutheran.com
for more information.



Mail-In

In person or through your own bank, mail in your offering directly to our church office at:

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH
3601 W 15TH STREET
PLANO, TX 75075



Online Giving



Visit online at planolutheran.com to use our giving website directly. *Use the QR code.*



Drop Off ^{or} In-Person

Visit our church office or use the offering basket at our service times.

Please join us at our Ascension Day Service
on Thursday, May 14 at 7:00 pm.



- 2 Remy Nuschler
- 2 Ambrose Shaltanis
- 5 Ben Slater
- 6 Fred Bernhardt
- 6 Gideon Selvaraj & Annie Joseph (34)
- 8 Mike & Cheryl Scaglione (33)
- 10 Laurie George
- 11 Larry Dibbern
- 12 Pat Greer
- 12 Dave Senter
- 13 Abby George
- 14 Elisabeth Bennett
- 15 Alyson Wood
- 16 David Messinger
- 17 Paula Bunger
- 17 Max Tyler
- 19 Grace Slater
- 20 Charis Bennett
- 22 Nicholas Moudy
- 23 Faith Schifani
- 23 Greg & Audrey Kostrzewa (39)
- 25 Mark Plagens
- 26 Greg & Beverly Moudy (30)
- 27 Audrey Kostrzewa
- 28 Dave & Gail Senter (49)
- 29 Cindy Carter
- 29 Paul & Susan Grabow (44)
- 31 Duffy Carter
- 31 Vicki Frinsko

THANK YOU

to all of the Meals for Moms
volunteers who provided
dinners and supported our
family after Logan's birth.

Nick, Lauren,
& Logan Gregory Moudy



Women's Ministry Field Trip to the Kimbell Art Museum



Pictured in front of a floor-to-ceiling tapestry of the Jerusalem Cross

Our field trip to the Kimbell Art Museum turned out to be a wonderful time. There were ten of us in total, and we all piled into a van to make the trip together. From the moment we hit the road, it felt less like a formal outing and more like an adventure with friends. We laughed, caught up on each other's lives, and enjoyed the simple pleasure of being together.

When we arrived, we were excited to see the special exhibit that we came for, "The Holy Sepulcher: Treasures from the Terra Sancta Museum, Jerusalem." Walking through the exhibit, I found myself really drawn in by the history and meaning behind the artifacts. Each piece seemed to tell its own story, and I appreciated being able to experience it alongside the others. We shared our thoughts as we moved along, sometimes pausing longer at certain displays that particularly caught our attention.

Whether we were discussing a piece of art or just chatting as we walked from one room to the next, there was an easy, joyful energy and it reminded me how meaningful it is to take time away from our usual routines and simply enjoy each other's company.

As we climbed back into the van to head home, we were a little worried about the impending weather, but all we saw was a few showers on the drive. We were blessed to have missed anything serious. All in all, it was a day filled with beauty, laughter, and friendship, and I'm looking forward to our next event!

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

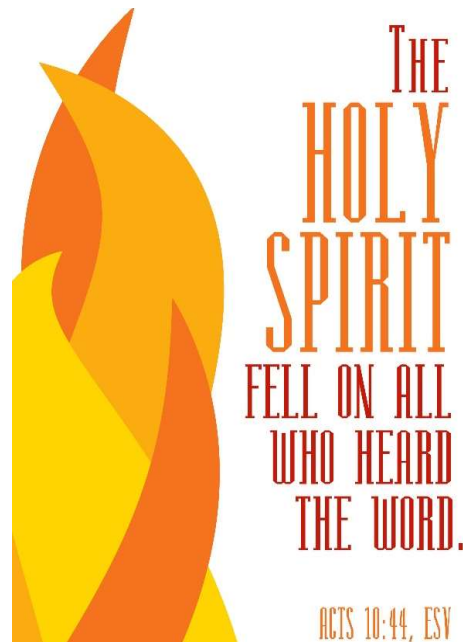
- † For info contact Scott Peters at 972-898-3351 cell or speters@planolutheran.com
- † Usually meet one Saturday a month at 6:00 PM for Bible study

GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Will meet Sat., May 9th at 6:30 PM for Bible study

YOUNG ADULTS

- † For those in their 20's and 30's
- † For info contact Lauren Moudy at laurenmoudy@gmail.com or (214) 415-8939
- † Will meet Sun, May 17th at 6 PM for Bible study and dinner



PREPARE FOR WORSHIP

In May

May 3: Fifth Sunday of Easter

Texts: Acts 6:1-9, 7:2a, 51-60; 1 Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14

HotD: "At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing," 633

May 10: Sixth Sunday of Easter

Texts: Acts 17:16-31; 1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21

HotD: "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice," 556

May 14: The Ascension of Our Lord, 7PM

Acts 1:1-11; Eph. 1:15-23; Luke 24:44-53

May 17: Seventh Sunday of Easter

Texts: Acts 2:14a, 36-41; 1 Peter 1:17-25; Luke 24:13-35

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

May 24: The Day of Pentecost

Texts: Num. 11:24-30 Acts 2:1-21 John 7:37-39
HotD: "Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord," 497

May 31: The Holy Trinity

Texts: Gen. 1:1-2:4a; Acts 2:14a, 22-36; Matt. 28:16-20

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

