

"Greetings favored one! The Lord is with you." Luke 1:28

Dear servants of the child in the manger, the teacher and healer of all, our Lord Jesus Christ. The season of Advent is upon us and there is much to give thanks for as we serve as Christ to our neighbor. When God moves into action God sends out messengers. Angels announced the coming of Jesus, to Zechariah, to Mary, to Joseph and to the shepherds while they tended their flocks. God comes to us as good news.

During our Advent worship services this season we will explore the visits of these messengers who bring good news to the world. They announce the coming of the God's Kingdom, a good thing. Though we are caught up in our fear, they announce "Do not be afraid". Though we have a fearful concept of God, they bring a different message. With the coming of Christ, we are awakened to God among us, God with us, God for us, if only we have eyes to see and ears to hear. These messengers bring the Good News that God is not to be feared, God is benevolent, kind and forgiving. Jesus Christ comes with that same message, "Do not be afraid." It is time to let go of the barriers in our life that keep us from seeing the Kingdom of God right here and right now. Let go of the false notions that God is distant and angry, let go of the belief that God is to be feared. The angels announced good news of great joy for all people. God is not to be feared. God is Love and true love casts out all fear. God so loved the cosmos, God sent Jesus to embody love to all and for all. Let Christ flood your heart with the love of God who has never stopped sending messengers of love and who will never stop loving each and every one of you.

So, this Advent and Christmas season be on the lookout for God's messengers, God's angels sent to you. For many have entertained angel's unknown in the unexpected visits of strangers. You are loved. God is among us today.

Peace fill your hearts...Pastor John Streccius

Pastoral Acts

Baptisms

- Amari Logan Manning, daughter of Tyler Manning and Shaiyan Davis on October 22, 2023
- ✤ Jocelyn Mae Jirava, daughter of Jeffrey and Alayna Jirava on November 19, 2023

Funerals

- ✤ Helen Simons, September 28, 2023
- ✤ Annie Mae Johnson, September 30, 2023
- ✤ Myrna Ryberg, October 14, 2023

Memorials

- 5 General Memorials in memory of Helen Simons, Myrna Ryberg, and Wallace Bolte
- 4 Quilter Memorials in memory of Helen Simons and Colleen Roberts
- 1 Choir Memorial in memory of Cathy VanMiddlesworth

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY is held Thursday mornings at 11:00 am. If you would like more information, please contact the church office at 223-2986.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY will meet December 12 and January 9 at 9:30 am. All are welcome to join our group!

Piecemakers

The quilters would love to have you come and help sew or tie quilts. We meet the 1st and 3rd Monday at 6:30 pm and the 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 9:30 am. You are guaranteed to have a good time! Thank you to everyone that helped make quilts, putting them on the pews and packing them. In October we were able to ship 59 quilts to Lutheran World Relief. Thanks to Rod Kudrna and Dan Wrolstad for delivering the many boxes to Midwest Motor Express. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Lord of Life at Heaven's Helpers Soup Café

Lord of Life is scheduled to help Heaven's Helpers Soup Café December 13 and January 10. You can sign up for a shift, or if this day's schedule is inconvenient or already filled, feel free to choose another day, the cafe will always find a job for you. Shifts are two hours in length from 8 AM through 6PM. Just log in to <u>https://www.soupcafe.org/volunteer/</u> or, if you need assistance signing up, please contact Shirley Klein at <u>Shirley.klein7166@gmail.com</u> or call her at 701-391-7166. Please remember to wear closed toe shoes and a Lord of Life shirt if you have one.







We would love to see you at the following Young at Hearts functions as we meet for fun, food and fellowship. December 11th at 2:30 pm (Coffee and dessert) Christmas Party. January 8 at 11:30 am (Annual POTLUCK) Pastors will provide the program. February 12 at 2:30 pm (Coffee and dessert) Mike Bolme, Bismarck Police Department presenting on rising crime in Bismarck, fentanyl, the effect of the Defund the Police movement in large cities on morale and recruitment locally. March 11 at 11:30 am (Lunch) KFYR's Jody Kerzman, on her GOOD NEWS program with uplifting, heart warming human interest stories. April 8 at 2:30 pm (Coffee and dessert) Program pending. May 13, at 11:30 am (Lunch) Musical program by Becky Salveson. We will gather in the choir room for the program and then enjoy lunch in fellowship hall. We begin our summer schedule for June 10, July 8, and August 12, all at 2:30 pm for coffee and dessert. There will be no programs in the summer.

Coffee with Memory Caregivers



Coffee with Memory Caregivers meet twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Fridays in the church conference room at 10:00 am. Anyone caring for or relating to someone with memory issues is encouraged to attend to share experiences, ideas and information.

Cozy Comfort

The Cozy Comfort group meets on the first Monday of every month from 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. in the church library. For more information, please contact Deb Knudsen at 701-220-8688.

FAITH & FOOD: CONVERSATIONS IN PUBLIC PLACES

(Formerly Pub Theology)

Welcoming and listening by creating respectful space for diverse people to explore faith together. Join us on the fourth Tuesday of every month at Lucky's 13 Pub (915 S. 3rd St in Bismarck) at 5:30 pm.

BRUNCH WITH BETH

Join us for Brunch with Beth every Thursday at 9:30 am.



Adult Forums

December 3 – No Adult Forum – join us in the Fellowship Hall for the Advent Fun Day December 10 – No Adult Forum – Youth Yummy in my Tummy Auction December 17 – No Adult Forum – Church School Christmas Program at 11:00 am December 24 & 31 – No Adult Forum – Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

In January we will focus on Emergency Services/Suicide Prevention. Watch the bulletins and weekly newsletters for more information!

LORD OF LIFE BOOK CLUB

The Lord of Life Book Club will meet on Wednesday, December 6th at 4:45 pm. This will be a planning session for choosing books for discussion throughout 2024. Join us January 3rd at 4:45 pm as we discuss the book "The Black Echo" by Michael Connelly. The Black Echo is the first book in the Harry Bosch detective series. It follows Harry as he gets demoted to the Hollywood homicide desk after killing the main suspect in a serial killer investigation. In the Black Echo, one of Bosch's old war buddies, Billy Meadows is killed. Bosch connects the death to a bank robbery and works with the FBI to solve the case. The entire plot of The Black Echo is driven by Bosch's investigation of the murder of his friend, and this introductory novel also uses the story to explain Bosch's origins, his Vietnam story as a "tunnel rat".

ORDER YOUR POINSETTIAS!

Poinsettias will again adorn our church at Christmas. If you would like to purchase a poinsettia, the cost is \$14. Order forms can be found at the Information Desk, please return them to the church office. **Checks should be made out to Lord of Life with Poinsettia in the memo line.** Poinsettias may be taken home on December 24th or left to be taken to homebound or care center members. Thank you for sharing the spirit of Christmas!



Lord of Life will be collecting \$5.00 gift cards again for the Angel tree through December 17th. Purchase gift cards from your favorite store, restaurant, or activity. (**Please no cash or check**). They can be mailed or dropped in the church office Monday through Friday 8:00 am-3:00 pm. Thank you for continuing to bless the students in our community.

Bi-Monthly Newsletters

Bi-monthly newsletters will be emailed and can also be viewed on the Lord of Life website. A limited number of copies will be printed and available by the library at church if you prefer a paper copy. Please add <u>lordoflife@lordoflifebismarck.org</u> to your email list. In addition, a weekly newsletter is emailed out every Wednesday morning with reminders of what's happening that week. If you have not received the weekly news and would like to be added to the email list, let Jessica in the office know!

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

For all who participated in our stewardship drive, "Growing Community through Building Relationships", thank you. As of this newsletter, 125 statements of intent have been received with 60% of them growing in giving. We've had 25 families complete a statement of intent for the first time! In addition, special one-time gifts toward our goal of a new elevator and a full-time youth minister represent 47.5% of our goal of \$160,000. If you have not yet completed a statement of intent, I ask that you prayerfully consider sharing your giving plan.

Signed Statements of Intent allow the council to boldly step forward toward our priorities. A statement of Intent form is available in the church office, online at <u>www.lordoflifebismarck.org</u> or by scanning the QR code, or emailed to: <u>LordOfLife@lordoflifebismarck.org</u>

Thank you for your faithful giving. Together our offerings make possible the vibrant ministries of Lord of Life.



Wednesday Meals During Advent

Join your Lord of Life family for Wednesday evening meals during Advent. Suppers will be provided by our various council teams. Meals will be served from 5:00 pm- 6:00 pm each week before our midweek Advent worship services. December 6th – Baked Potato Bar. December 13th – Papa Murphy's Pizza & Salad followed by the Church School Christmas Program. December 20th – Taco Bar.

Christmas Eve Worship December 24; 9:30 am, 3:30 pm & 5:00 pm

Join us for the BIG celebration on Christmas Eve. All services will be by candlelight and will feature familiar lessons and carols heralding Christ's birth. Ushers are needed for these services. If you can help, please sign up at the Information Desk. PLEASE NOTE: There will be NO 9:00 pm worship service on Christmas Eve. There will be ONE Service of Lessons and Carols on December 31 at 9:30 am. There will be NO Wednesday night worship service on Wednesday, December 27.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the Staff at Lord of Life!

Mark Your Calendars!

- Church Office Closed: The church office will be closed Monday, December 25th and Monday, January 1st.
- Annual Report Deadline: Annual reports are due by Friday, December 8th. Early submissions will be happily accepted.
- **2023 Contribution Deadline:** This deadline is Sunday, December 31st.



NOTICE TO THE CONGREGATION OF LORD OF LIFE

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation of Lord of Life Lutheran Church shall be conducted on: Sunday, January 28, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. Your participation is crucial as we will approve the 2024 budget and discuss other topics important to the continued mission of Lord of Life.

Pastor John Streccius Pastor Beth Walch



Page 2

Lord of Life Lutheran Church **YOUTH & FAMILY**MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS





Important upcoming 2024 Youth Gathering Dates:

December 6- monthly meeting for gathering prep (required for participants) December 10- Yummy in my Tummy fundraiser January 3- monthly meeting for gathering



Congratulaions, confirmands!







DECEMBER 3- Open between services 6- Youth Night 10- Open between services 13- Open 17- Open between services 25- Youth Night

JANUARY 3- Youth Night 7- Open 10- 10th-12th grade open 17- 9th grade project meeting 21- Open between services 24- Open 28- Open between services 31- Open

A: 196



"I AM, WE ARE, YOU ARE..." LYO 2023







Financial Stewardship News

Description	<u>October 2023</u>	2023 Year toDate Totals
Income	\$ 60,930.60	\$ 529,343.83
Expenses	\$ 61,954.52	\$ 573,926.86
Income over (under) Expenses	\$ (1,023.92)	\$ (44,583.03)
Projected Income ending October 31st, <u>2023</u> based on our approved budget is: *Does not include transfer from reserves	* \$ 56,417	* \$ 564,170
Actual income over (under) budgeted income	\$ 4,513.60	\$ (34,826.17)
General Envelope Giving	\$ 55,699.40	\$ 497,461.26

Lord of Life's income and expense summary ending October 31, 2023 is as follows:

The Financial Stewardship Team is meeting October 14th.

Please consider automatic giving options such as Simply Giving or using your bank's online bill pay features to set up recurring offerings. Using your credit card is another method. Simply Giving is an excellent way our members can help assure that our giving is more equally distributed throughout the year. If you'd like to sign up for this feature go to our web site at www.lordoflifebismarck.org and click on "online donations" or visit your banks online application.

We have been blessed with generous support for God's mission at Lord of Life and look forward to continuing and expanding this work throughout 2023. If you have any questions or suggestions please feel free to contact any of the team members. They are Keith Demke, Jordan Nygaard and Judy Kudrna.

Thank you for your financial offerings to the ministry of Lord of Life Lutheran Church. If you would like to give now using your smartphone, just take a picture of the QR code and you will be taken to the secure church website for giving.





Lord of Life Lutheran Church Council October 17, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Council Members Present: President Cindy Anderson; Vice-President Bob McConnell; Secretary Randy Binegar; Team of Education-Michelle Mielke; Team of Congregational Care & Outreach-Denise MacDonald; Team of Property and Maintenance-Rod Kudrna; Team of Worship and Music-Kylah Aull; Team of Nominations and Placement-Erin Dukart; At-Large Council Member-Tammie Sauer; Pastor John Streccius, and Pastor Beth Walch Also Present: Jordan Nygaard, Chairperson, Team of Financial Stewardship

Members Absent: Amanda Gill

- A. President Cindy Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:57 pm.
- B. Devotions were led by Erin Dukart
- C. Michelle Mielke moved, and Rod Kudrna second, a motion to approve the Sept. 19, 2023 Council meeting minutes. Motion passed.
- D. The financial report was provided by Jordan Nygaard. Year-to-date offerings are above 2022 levels. Randy Binegar moved, and Erin Dukart second, a motion to approve the financial report. Motion passed.
- E. Team Concerns
 - a. Michelle Mielke reported that the Team of Education is still looking for 3 volunteers to be shepherds for Wednesday.
 - b. Denise MacDonald reported the Team of Congregational Care and Outreach is looking for volunteers for the Nov. 12 meal.
 - c. Rod Kudrna of the Team of Property reported they received a \$200,000 cost estimate for a new elevator. Work has been completed on the leaking/seeping classroom wall.
 - d. Kylah Aull of the Team of Worship and Music reported that folks can let their team or the pastors know if they are willing to be service helpers. They are still looking for someone to fill the Youth Ministry position.
 - e. Pastor Beth indicated the Team of Youth Ministry needs volunteers for Trunk or Treat on Oct. 29, from 2-4 pm.

F. Old Business

- a. Updates to team duties in the continuing resolutions are being worked on.
- b. GSB Stewardship for All Seasons stewardship campaign is in full swing. Brochures and pamphlets have been completed.
- c. Budgets are due by the various teams by the end of Oct.
- G. New Business
 - a. Advent meal planning was discussed. Assignments for the Council teams were handed out. Confirmation kids will not be used this year.
 - b. Pastor Beth presented a written eight-week sabbatical request (starting in April 2024) to the Council. Randy Binegar moved, and Erin Dukart second, a motion to approve Beth's sabbatical request. Motion passed.
 - c. Denise MacDonald moved, and Rod Kudrna second, a motion to approve the list of students for confirmation. The list includes: Emerson Brousseau, Jaden Feist, Riley Gabbert, Rayne Hertel, McKenzie Hildremyr, Brycen Johnson, Danae Kern, Brayden Lein, Trent Smith, and Maddox Thiele. The motion passed.
- H. Next Council meeting: November 21, 2023

Closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully Submitted, Randy Binegar



Council Members Present: President Cindy Anderson; Vice-President Bob McConnell; Secretary Randy Binegar; Team of Property and Maintenance-Rod Kudrna; Team of Youth Ministry-Amanda Gill; Team of Nominations and Placement-Erin Dukart; At-Large Council Member-Tammie Sauer; and Pastor John Streccius

Members Absent: Michelle Mielke, Denise MacDonald, and Kylah Aull

- President Cindy Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
- Devotions were led by Amanda Gill.
- Bob McConnell moved, and Amanda Gill second, a motion to approve the October 17, 2023 Council meeting minutes. Motion passed.
- The financial report was provided by Pastor John. October, and for the most part, the whole year has been a good year for giving at Lord of Life. Rod Kudrna moved, and Tammie Sauer second, a motion to approve the financial report. Motion passed.
- Team Issues
 - Global Feast went well.
 - Rod Kudrna reported the lights have been changed in the narthex, and they are considering changing the light bulbs in Fellowship Hall. A back door fob has been installed.
 - The first ever youth auction, Yummy in my Tummy, will be held December 10.

- Old Business
 - Stewardship for All Seasons
 - Send out follow-up postcards to those who haven't returned a statement of intent. Discussed option of making phone calls as an additional follow-up. Estimated that about 100 calls would need to be made. Plan to make the calls starting at 4 pm on Dec. 7. Twenty-five new statements of intent have been submitted so far this year.
 - Budget Review—Pastor John and Bob McConnell reviewed the proposed 2024 budget.
 - Advent meals The various teams all understand their responsibilities.
 - Updates to team duties in the continuing resolutions were reviewed. Randy Binegar moved, and Erin Dukart second, a motion to accept the revised continuing resolutions as presented.
- New Business

Tammie Sauer will be joining the Executive Team next year.

• Next Council meeting: December 19, 2023

Closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully Submitted, Randy Binegar

December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 8:00 am: Conference in F.H.	2 8:00 am: Conference in F.H. 9:00 am: Christmas Decorating at church
3 8:30 am: Worship 9:45 am: Church School & Advent Fun Day 11:00 am: Worship	4 2:00 pm: Cozy Comfort 5:30 pm: Youth Team Meeting 6:30 pm: Piecemakers	5 9:30 am: Piecemakers 10:00 am: Staff Meeting 5:00 pm: Worship Team Meeting 5:00 pm: Nominations Meeting 5:30 pm: Property Team Meeting 6:00 pm: CCO Team Meeting 7:00 pm: Education Team Meeting 7:00 pm: Boy Scouts	6 3:30 pm: Plarning 4:45 pm: Book Club 5:00 pm: Advent Meal 6:15 pm: Worship 7:00 pm: Church School 7:00 pm: Confirmation 7:00 pm: Youth Gathering Meeting 7:00 pm: Bible Study	7 8:30 am: Centering Prayer in Sanctuary 9:30 am: Brunch with Beth 11:00 am: Men's Bible Study	8 10:00 am: Coffee with Memory Caregivers	9
10 8:30 am: Worship 9:45 am: Church School 9:45 am: Yummy in my Tummy Auction 11:00 am: Worship & Baptism 2:00 pm: St. Lucia Program	11 2:30 pm: YAH's	12 9:30 am: Women's Bible Study 10:00 am: Staff Meeting 7:00 pm: Boy Scouts	13 LOL @ Heaven's Helpers 3:30 pm: Plarning 5:00 pm: Advent Meal 6:15 pm: Church School Christmas Program	14 8:30 am: Centering Prayer in Sanctuary 9:30 am: Brunch with Beth 11:00 am: Men's Bible Study 3:30 pm: Executive Meeting	15	16
17 8:30 am: Worship 11:00 am: Church School Christmas Program	18 5:00 pm: ABC Meeting 6:30 pm: Piecemakers	19 9:30 am: Piecemakers 10:00 am: Staff Meeting 6:00 pm: Stewardship Team Meeting 7:00 pm: Council Meeting 7:00 Boy Scouts	20 3:30 pm: Plarning 5:00 pm: Advent Meal 6:15 pm: Blue Christmas Worship No Church School 7:00 pm: Confirmation – Caroling at Valleyview 7:00 pm: Bible Study	21 8:30 am: Centering Prayer in Sanctuary 9:30 am: Brunch with Beth 11:00 am: Men's Bible Study	22 10:00 am: Coffee with Memory Caregivers	23
24 9:30 am: Worship 3:30 pm: Worship 5:00 pm: Worship	25 Office Closed	26 10:00 am: Staff Meeting 5:30 pm: Food, Faith & Conversation at Lucky's 13 Pub 7:00 pm: Boy Scouts	27 No Worship No Church School No Confirmation	28 8:30 am: Centering Prayer in Sanctuary 9:30 am: Brunch with Beth 11:00 am: Men's Bible Study	29	30
31 9:30 am: Worship 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm: New Years Eve Party in Fellowship Hall						

January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Office Closed 2:00 pm: Cozy Comfort 5:30 pm: Youth Team Meeting 6:30 pm: Piecemakers	2 9:30 am: Piecemakers 10:00 am: Staff Meeting 5:00 pm: Worship Team Meeting 5:00 pm: Nominations Meeting 5:30 pm: Property Team Meeting 6:00 pm: CCO Team Meeting 7:00 pm: Education Team Meeting 7:00 pm: Boy Scouts	3 3:30 pm: Plarning 4:45 pm: Book Club 6:15 pm: Worship 7:00 pm: Church School 7:00 pm: Confirmation 7:00 pm: Youth Gathering Meeting 7:00 pm: Bible Study	4 8:30 am: Centering Prayer in Sanctuary 9:30 am: Brunch with Beth 11:00 am: Men's Bible Study	5	6 9:00 am: Christmas Decoration Removal
7 8:30 am: Worship 9:45 am: Church School 9:45 am: Adult Forum 11:00 am: Worship	8 11:30 am: YAH's Potluck	9 9:30 am: Women's Bible Study 10:00 am: Staff Meeting 7:00 pm: Boy Scouts	10 LOL at Heaven's Helpers 3:30 pm: Plarning 6:15 pm: Worship 7:00 pm: Church School 7:00 pm: Confirmation 7:00 pm: Bible Study	 11 8:30 am: Centering Prayer in Sanctuary 9:30 am: Brunch with Beth 11:00 am: Men's Bible Study 3:00 pm: Executive Meeting 	12 10:00 am: Coffee with Memory Caregivers	13 5:00 pm: Altar Guild Meeting
14 8:30 am: Worship NO Church School 9:45 am: Adult Forum 11:00 am: Worship	15 11:30 am: PEO Meeting 5:00 pm: Association Better Childcare Meeting 6:30 pm: Piecemakers	16 9:30 am: Piecemakers 10:00 am: Staff Meeting 6:00 pm: Stewardship Meeting 7:00 pm: Council Meeting 7:00 pm: Boy Scouts	17 3:30 pm: Plarning 6:15 pm: Worship 7:00 pm: Church School 7:00 pm: Confirmation 7:00 pm: Bible Study	18 8:30 am: Centering Prayer in Sanctuary 9:30 am: Brunch with Beth 11:00 am: Men's Bible Study	19	20 Newsletter Deadline
21 8:30 am: Worship 9:45 am: Church School 9:45 am: Adult Forum 11:00 am: Worship	22	23 10:00 am: Staff Meeting 5:30 pm: Faith, Food & Conversation 7:00 pm: Boy Scouts	24 3:30 pm: Plarning 6:15 pm: Worship 7:00 pm: Church School 7:00 pm: Confirmation 7:00 pm: Bible Study	25 8:30 am: Centering Prayer in Sanctuary 9:30 am: Brunch with Beth 11:00 am: Men's Bible Study	26 10:00 am: Coffee with Memory Caregivers	27
28 8:30 am: Worship 9:30 am: Annual Meeting 9:45 am: Church School 11:00 am: Worship	29	30 10:00 am: Staff Meeting 7:00 pm: Boy Scouts	31 3:30 pm: Plarning 6:15 pm: Worship 7:00 pm: Church School 7:00 pm: Confirmation 7:00 pm: Bible Study			