

# Welcome to Lord of Life!

We are a member  
of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in  
America (ELCA)

**MINISTERS**  
The Lord of Life  
Faith Family

**WORSHIP TIMES**  
Sunday  
Traditional  
8:30 am

Sunday  
Contemporary  
10:30 am

Wednesday  
Evening  
6:30 pm

**OFFICE HOURS**  
Mondays, Tuesdays,  
and Thursdays:  
8:30 am - 5 pm

Wednesdays:  
11 am - 5 pm

Our Office is closed  
on Fridays

**CONTACT US**  
(218) 828-9374

[office@lolbaxter.org](mailto:office@lolbaxter.org)

PO Box 685  
Brainerd, MN, 56401

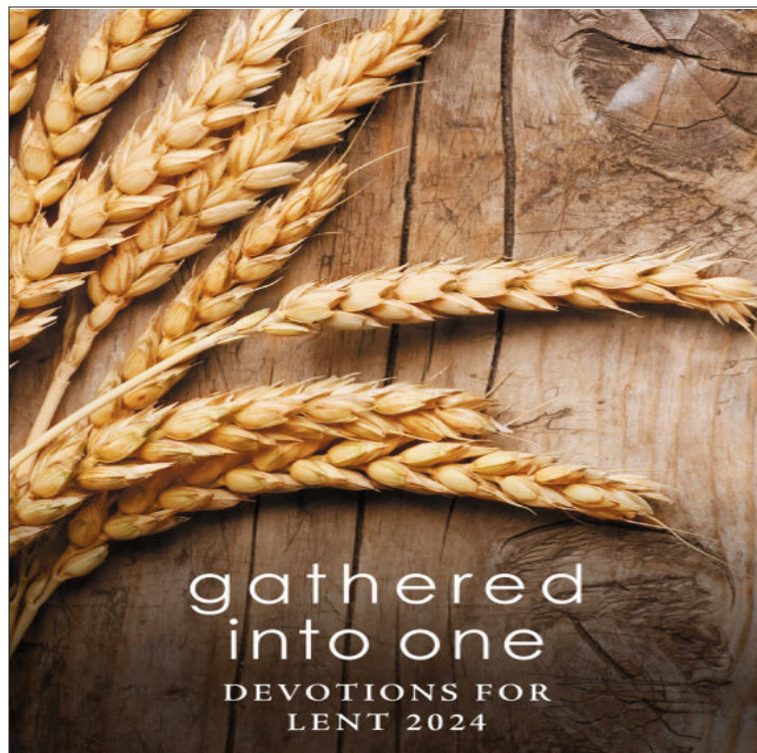
# The Good News at Lord of Life February 2024

**Approaching Lent**  
Pr. Erika Nilsen

Dear Friends,

As we move from the cold of January to the slow warming of February – we turn our hearts from the season of Epiphany to the season of Lent. This transition can be a tough one! Epiphany is about LIGHT and spreading the good news of great joy that unto us a savior, a healer has been born and Jesus is his name. Epiphany is about eyes wide open to see God in our midst, at work in this world, embodied in one another. But then Lent comes around and invites us to shift our gaze. Now, instead of looking out at this big world to see God, we look inward – to our own hearts and lives and examine the ways in which our lives reflect LIGHT and ways in which we still walk in darkness. While it is an interior, solitary journey, it's not one we are meant to travel alone.

To that end, we invite you to pick up a Lenten devotional at church so that, together, we can walk towards the truth of our need for a healer and receive that gift to its fullest. The devotion is called Gathered into One and it provides daily devotions for each day from Ash



Wednesday to the Resurrection of Our Lord/Vigil of Easter (traditionally known as Holy Saturday). Devotions begin with an evocative image and a brief passage from First Corinthians. The writers then bring their diverse voices and pastoral wisdom to the texts with quotations to ponder, reflections, and prayers.

Lent is a tender time. Whenever we have the courage to face our shortcomings, our failings, our humanness, it's best that we face it together. And so Lent begins on FEBRUARY 14th – Ash Wednesday. At this service you have a chance to come forward to receive the sign of the cross made

and marked in ashes on your forehead. This mark is not a boasting of your religiosity – but a humble claiming of your humanity – your earthiness and temporariness and again, your need for someone more powerful than you at work in your life. And we bear that mark together.

As we are gathered into one, may we see in each other the beauty of our brokenness, the holiness of the hurt we carry, the tenderness of the troubles that we bear and may we, as one, receive the gorgeous grace of God that comes to us all in Jesus Christ.

Peace,  
Pastor Erika

# February Readings

First Readings	Psalms	Second Readings	Gospel Readings
February 4th Isaiah 40:21-31	February 4th Psalm 147:1-11	February 4th 1 Corinthians 9:16-23	February 4th Mark 1:29-39
February 11th 2 Kings 2:1-12	February 11th Psalm 50:1-6	February 11th 2 Corinthians 4:3-6	February 11th Mark 9:2-9
February 18th Genesis 9:8-17	February 18th Psalm 25:1-10	February 18th 1 Peter 3:18-22	February 18th Mark 1:9-15
February 25th Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16	February 25th Psalm 22:23-31	February 25th Romans 4:13-25	February 25th Mark 8:31-38

# Gospel Reflections

<b>Mark 1:29-39</b> Everywhere Jesus goes, many people expect him to set them free from oppression. Everywhere he goes, he heals people and sets them free. Disease, devils, and death are running for their lives. The forces that diminish human life are rendered powerless by Jesus.	<b>Mark 9:2-9</b> Mark's gospel presents the transfiguration as a preview of what would become apparent to Jesus' followers after he rose from the dead. Confused disciples are given a vision of God's glory manifest in the beloved Son.	<b>Mark 1:9-15</b> The Spirit that comes upon Jesus at his baptism sustains him when he is tested by Satan so that he might proclaim the good news of God's reign.	<b>Mark 8:31-38</b> After Peter confesses his belief that Jesus is the Messiah, Jesus tells his disciples for the first time what is to come. Peter's response indicates that he does not yet understand the way of the cross that Jesus will travel.
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# Youth Ministry Update

## Confirmation Collaboration Night: Feb. 7th

On Wednesday, February 7th the Lord of Life confirmation program and parents will be gathering with area ELCA confirmation programs at First Lutheran in

Brainerd! A time to connect with family and friends and grow in faith together!

Programming begins at 7 pm.

## Middle School Late Night Out

Below zero temperatures made for a great excuse to stay indoors and join our middle school late night out event this past month. Lord of Life middle schoolers gathered with their friends from area ELCA congre-

gations! Who doesn't love night games, team building activities, late night snacks and a great Bible study about God being our firm foundation in life!

## Summer Trip Pancake Breakfasts

We have kicked off our monthly pancake breakfasts at Lord of Life. Thank you to everyone who joined us for a wonderful pancake breakfast during our community hour on Sunday morning! Mark your calendar today for our next pancake breakfast happening Sunday, February 25th 9:30am-10:30am.

Can't make it to a pancake breakfast? There are many ways in which you can support our high school youth going to the national youth gathering in the future months!

Contact Tim Slinger Youth Director to learn more!

## Club 56 One Session Ends & The Last One Begins

January was filled with Bible studies around the topic of, "Health & Wellness". Our class took time to read through and discussed the book, "Kryptonite for Bullies" by Chuck Butenhoff. Our final session we

will focus in on the Holy Sacraments of baptism and communion. We have a two week break from class in the middle of February! Our last session begins Wednesday, February 28th!



**Tim Slinger,  
Youth Director**

## 9th Grade Confirmation

During the season of Lent our 9th grade confirmation class will be meeting weekly with their faith mentor. We have a great group of faith mentors this year made up of members from Lord of Life, the community and beyond! Join us on Wednesday nights for worship and get to know our 9th graders and their mentors!

## FEBRUARY YOUTH EVENTS

**National Youth Gathering Connect**  
February 4th, 5:30 pm

**Confirmation Collaboration Night**  
February 7th, 7 pm

**Ash Wednesday Confirmation Parent Night**  
February 14th, 6:30 pm

**Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser**  
February 25th, 9:30 am

**Middle School Youth Group**  
February 25th, 5:30 pm

**Club 56**  
February 6th and 28th, 7:15 pm

**Teen's Upstream**  
Wednesdays at 8 pm



# What's Happening at LOL

## Micah Group

Black History Month, observed every February, serves as a poignant reminder of the countless contributions and achievements made by Black individuals throughout history. This annual commemoration provides an opportunity to delve into the rich tapestry of African American heritage, highlighting the resilience, creativity, and leadership that have shaped our society.

From the struggle for civil rights to groundbreaking achievements in various fields, Black history is an integral part of the American story. It's a time to honor visionaries like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, and countless others who played pivotal roles in advancing justice and equality.

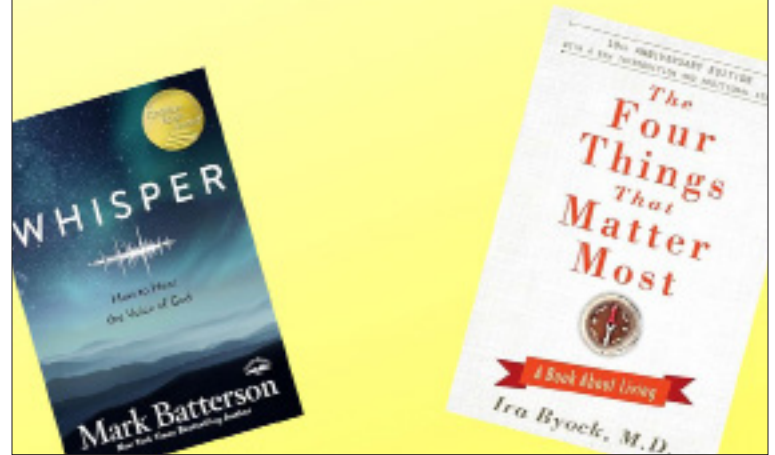
Beyond historical figures, Black History Month is a chance to celebrate the cul-

tural, artistic, and scientific contributions of the Black community. From literature and music to science and sports, Black individuals have left an indelible mark, influencing and inspiring generations.

As we reflect on the struggles and triumphs of the past, we should also acknowledge the ongoing journey toward equality. Black History Month is a call to action, urging us to confront systemic issues, advocate for justice, and foster an inclusive society where everyone's story is valued.

In our Lord of Life community, let's use this month to engage in meaningful conversations, educate ourselves, and appreciate the diversity that makes us stronger. Together, we can build a more inclusive future that honors and respects the heritage of every individual.

## Upcoming Book Discussions



## Book Discussions

February will see the start of two new book studies at Lord of Life.

In February, Teresa King-sley will lead a group looking at "Whisper - How to Hear the Voice of God" by Mark Batterson.

This book examines how although it is different from the proclamations heard in The Old Testament, God is still speaking to each and every one of us today.

Sign up in the Narthex, dates and times will be decided once the group is formed

Meanwhile, during their meetings on the 2nd and

4th Monday of February at 4 pm, Stephen Ministry invites people to join them in studying "The Four Things That Matter Most" by Ira Byock, M.D.

In this book, Byock talks about preserving and protecting the most important things in our lives, our relationships with other people.

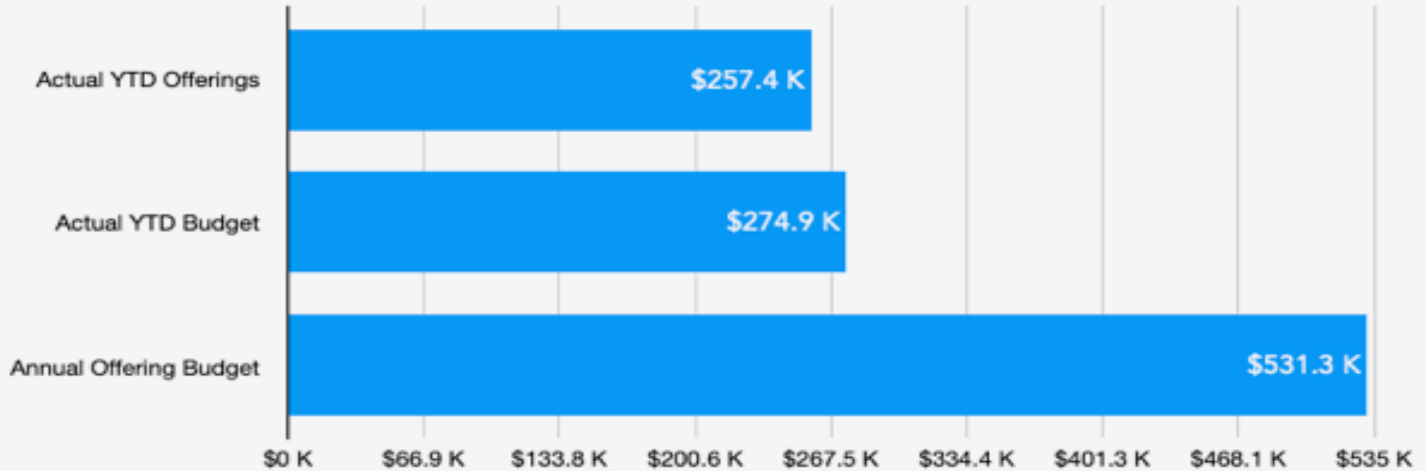
Sign up in the Narthex, and purchase a book before Monday, February 12th.

For more information about any of our programs here at Lord of Life, or if you would like to start something of your own, call the Office at (218) 828-9374.



# Financial Report

## LORD OF LIFE OFFERINGS 6 months ending December 31, 2023



### LOL General Fund Offerings (7/1 - 12/31)

General Fund offerings year-to-date, as shown above, reflect a continued need. We are grateful for the generous gifts received and appreciate your continued support. Please give as you are able to support the many ministries at Lord of Life. Give online: <https://bit.ly/LOLBGive>



**We have listed  
the 35-acre  
Barrett Property  
For Sale**

**Speak with  
Close Converse or  
Council President Kurt Porter  
if you are interested in  
purchasing the property**



# February Calendar

## Thursday, February 1

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am  
Parkinson's Support Group, 1 pm

## Friday, February 2

Men's Breakfast, 7 am  
Al-Anon, 7 pm

## Saturday, February 3

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

## Sunday, February 4

Traditional Worship, 8:30 am  
Community Hour, 9:30 am  
Contemporary Worship, 10:30 am  
Soup Kitchen, 11:30 am

## Wednesday, February 7

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
Worship w/ Confirmation, 6:30 pm  
Club 56, 7:15 pm  
Teens Upstream, 8 pm

## Thursday, February 8

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am  
Martha Circle, 1 pm  
Worship Planning Meeting, 2 pm

## Friday, February 9

Men's Breakfast, 7 am  
Al-Anon, 7 pm

## Saturday, February 10

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

## Sunday, February 11

Traditional Worship, 8:30 am  
Community Hour, 9:30 am  
Contemporary Worship, 10:30 am  
MG Book Discussion, 11:30 am

## Monday, February 12

Stephen Min. Book Discussion, 4 pm

## Tuesday, February 13

Bible Study, 9 am  
Sarah Circle, 1 pm  
Shrove Tuesday Meal, 5:30 pm

## Wednesday, February 14

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
Ash Wednesday Worship, 12 pm  
Finance Team Meeting, 4 pm  
Ash Wednesday Worship, 6:30 pm  
Teen's Upstream, 8 pm

## Thursday, February 15

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am

## Friday, February 16

Men's Breakfast, 7 am  
Al-Anon, 7 pm

## Saturday, February 17

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

## Sunday, February 18

Choir Practice, 7:45 am  
Traditional Worship, 8:30 am  
Community Hour, 9:30 am  
Contemporary Worship, 10:30 am

## Wednesday, February 21

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
Worship w/ Confirmation, 6:30 pm  
Teens Upstream, 8 pm

## Thursday, February 22

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am  
First Communion Class, 6:30 pm

## Friday, February 23

Men's Breakfast, 7 am  
Middle School Late Night Out, 5 pm  
Al-Anon, 7 pm

## Saturday, February 24

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

## Sunday, February 25

Traditional Worship, 8:30 am  
Pancake Breakfast, 9:30 am  
Contemporary Worship, 10:30 am  
MG Book Discussion, 11:30 am  
Middle School Youth Group, 5:30 pm

## Monday, February 26

Stephen Min. Book Discussion, 4 pm

## Tuesday, February 27

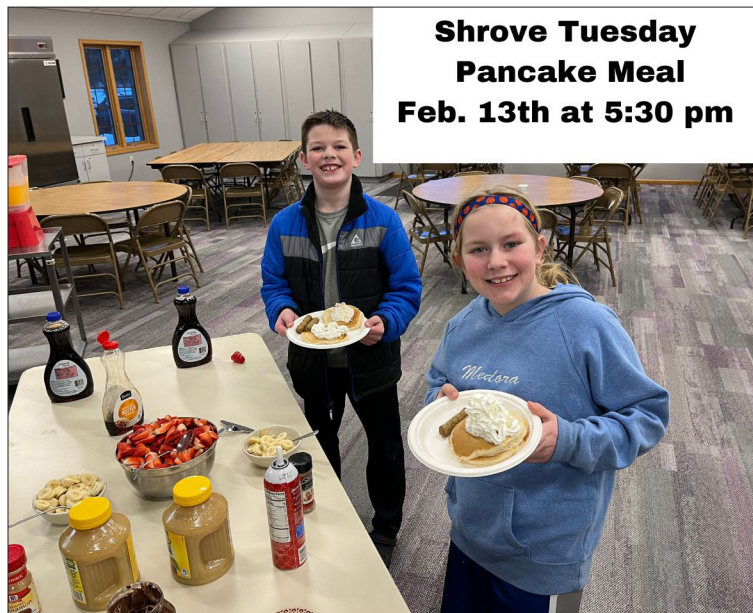
Bible Study, 9 am

## Wednesday, February 28

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
Worship w/ Confirmation, 6:30 pm  
Club 56, 7:15 pm  
Teens Upstream, 8 pm

## Thursday, February 29

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am  
Church Council, 6 pm  
First Communion Class, 6:30 pm



**Shrove Tuesday  
Pancake Meal  
Feb. 13th at 5:30 pm**

## Our Team

**Pr. Steven Rye,**  
Senior Pastor  
steven@lolbaxter.org

**Pr. Erika Nilsen,**  
Associate Pastor  
erika.nilsen@  
lolbaxter.org

**Anne Laechel,**  
Business Administrator  
anne.laechel@  
lolbaxter.org

**Tim Slinger,**  
Youth Director  
tim@lolbaxter.org

**Tyler Jensen,**  
Communications  
Coordinator  
tyler@lolbaxter.org

**Paul and Karen  
Erickson,**  
Custodians

**Kennedy Niska,**  
Music Coordinator  
kennedy@lolbaxter.  
org

**Koreann Martin,**  
Contemporary  
Worship Leader

# Council Minutes

Lord of Life Church Council Regular Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, November 30th, 2023  
Location: Lord of Life

<b>Present (10)</b> <i>Pastor Steven Rye</i> <i>Kurt Porter</i> <i>Greg Bennett</i> <i>Andy Isackson</i>	<i>Brian Orlowski</i> <i>Jessamyn Foley</i> <i>Pastor Erika Nilsen</i> <i>Josh Freeloove</i> <i>Jolene Parks</i>	<i>Karla Skwira</i> <b>Absent: (1)</b> <i>Erica Dolven-Kolle</i> <b>Guests (1)</b> <i>Anne Laechel</i>
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Meeting called to order by President Kurt Porter at 6:00 PM

Devotions by Pastor Erika Nilsen

**Consent Agenda**

- Approval of October financial reports
- Approval of October meeting minutes

Motion to approve by Greg Bennett; second by Josh Freeloove, All ayes (CC.2023.11.30.01)

**Barrett Estate**

Motion to authorize Kurt Porter, LOL Council President, to sign the Close Converse Barrett Property listing as is, or a better offer made by Greg Bennett; second by Andy Isackson, All Ayes. (CC.2023.11.30.02)

Motion to propose an amendment to the motion (CC.2023.11.30.02) to remove “as is or better”, to instead read to authorize Kurt Porter to sign the listing agreement with the following changes:

1.) If Lord of Life brings a buyer the seller commis-

- sion would be 3%.  
2.) If Close Converse acts as both buyer and seller agent, then their seller commission would be 6%.  
3.) Request increase of buyer agent commissions from 2.4% to 3%.

If changes are not accepted, the original or revised listing agreement will need to be approved by electronic, or in-person vote. Motion made by Greg Bennett; second by Andy Isackson, All ayes. (CC.2023.11.30.03)

**Christmas Eve Offering**

Motion to tithe 10% of the Christmas Eve offering towards mental health resources organization. Motion made by Brian Orlowski; second by Josh Freeloove, All ayes. (CC/2023.11.30.04)

Next regular council meeting is scheduled for December 28th, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Meeting adjourned with closing prayer led by Pastor Erika Nilsen at 8:15 PM

## Church Council

**Kurt Porter, President**  
kurt@seversonporter.com

**Andy Isackson, Vice-President**  
andy.isackson@gmail.com

**Greg Bennett, Treasurer**  
gregbennett@brainerd.net

**Jessamyn Foley, Secretary**  
jessamynfoley@gmail.com

**Karla Skwira, Upward Min.**  
karla.skwira@gmail.com

**Jolene Parks, Inward Min.**  
jolene.parks@gmail.com

**Erica Dolven-Kolle, Outward Min.**  
ericabdk@gmail.com

**Brian Orlowski, Ground Min.**  
brian@bearcreekmn.com

**Josh Freeloove, Youth Rep.**  
annefreeloove@gmail.com

# First Communion Class

If there is a 5th Grader in your life, then it is time for another huge milestone in their faith journey - First Communion.

On February 22nd, 29th, March 7th, and 21st from 6:30 to 7:30 pm, students and parents will gather to learn more about the Sacrament of Holy Communion, and prepare to receive it for the first time at March 28th's Maundy Thursday Service.

Among the lessons about communion will be studying scripture, talking as a group, and baking communion bread.

To sign up for the class, go to [lolbaxter.org](http://lolbaxter.org) and click on the First Communion graphic on the front page.

For more information, contact Pastor Erika at [erika@lolbaxter.org](mailto:erika@lolbaxter.org).

