

# 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  
Morning  
9:30 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**  
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Brainerd, MN, 56401

# The Good News at Lord of Life November 2024

As you may have heard, I have resigned as Senior Pastor effective October 31st, 2024. At this time, I'm reminded of the wisdom of my father - who was also a pastor. He once said that when he resigns from a congregation, he says the following:

**"So far, I have been your pastor and friend. I am no longer your pastor, but I will remain your friend."**

Lord of Life, these seem good words to say to you now. And so I'd like us to reflect - with the help of my AI assistant "Bard" - on what a pastor does versus what a friend does:

## **A PASTOR engages in...**

**Spiritual Leadership:** Conducting worship services, including delivering sermons, leading prayers, providing spiritual guidance to congregation members, and interpreting religious texts and teachings;

**Community Building:** Organizing and leading various church activities and events; Fostering a sense of community and belonging among congregation members; Serving as a spiritual leader and role model;

Overseeing the day-to-day operations of the church, including finances, staffing, and facilities; Developing and implementing the church's vision and goals; Representing the church in the community; and

**Pastoral Care:** Visiting members in hospitals, nursing homes, or their homes; Offering support and comfort during times of crisis or loss; Providing counseling on personal and spiritual matters.

## **In contrast to this, a FRIEND...**

**Listens without judgment:** A friend is someone you can confide in. They'll listen to your thoughts and feelings without judging or interrupting;

**Offers support:** Friends provide emotional support during tough times. They'll offer a shoulder to cry on, words of encouragement, or a helping hand;

**Shares laughter and joy:** Friends are there to celebrate your successes and share in your happiness. They'll make you laugh, have fun, and create positive memories;

**worthy:** A good friend is someone you can trust. They'll be honest with you and keep your secrets even when it's difficult;

**Encourages you to be yourself:** Friends accept you for who you are. They'll support your goals and dreams and encourage you to be your best self;

**Is reliable and dependable:** You can count on a friend to be there for you when you need them. They'll follow through on their promises and be dependable; and

**Shares common interests:** Friends often have similar interests or hobbies. This can make it easier to connect and spend time together.

I will no longer do anything that a Pastor does in the context of this congregation's life. Please don't ask me to.

I firmly desire to support Pastor Erika, the pastor of the congregation, in the work she continues to do among you and will refer you to her for any and all requests.

I will gladly continue my friendship with anyone who would like to further that re-

**Administrative Duties:** **Is honest and trust-**

*Continued on Page 6*

# November Readings

## First Readings

November 3rd  
Isaiah 25:6-9

November 10th  
1 Kings 17:8-16

November 17th  
Daniel 12:1-3

November 24th  
Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

## Psalms

November 3rd  
Psalm 24

November 10th  
Psalm 146

November 17th  
Psalm 16

November 24th  
Psalm 93

## Second Readings

November 3rd  
Revelation 21:1-6a

November 10th  
Hebrews 9:24-28

November 17th  
Hebrews 10:11-25

November 24th  
Revelation 1:4b-8

## Gospel Readings

November 3rd  
John 11:32-44

November 10th  
Mark 12:38-44

November 17th  
Mark 13:1-8

November 24th  
John 18:33-37

### John

**11:32-44**

Through the raising of Lazarus, Jesus offers the world a vision of the life to come, when death and weeping will be no more.

### Mark

**12:38-44**

After engaging in a series of public arguments with religious leaders in the temple, Jesus contrasts the proud and oppressive ways of those leaders with the sacrificial humility and poverty of the widow.

### Mark

**13:1-8**

In the last week of his life, Jesus warned his disciples concerning trials that were to come upon them and upon the world. He exhorts the listener: Do not be alarmed.

### John

**18:33-37**

In John's gospel, the story of Jesus and Pilate presents two different ways of exercising power: through force or with love.

## ***Thanksgiving at Lord of Life***

***Pre-Thanksgiving Meal***

***November 20th, 5:30 pm***

***Thanksgiving Eve Services***

***November 27th, Noon and 6:30 pm***

***Pie Socials Afterward***



# November Calendar

## Friday, November 1

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

## Saturday, November 2

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

## Sunday, November 3

Worship, 9:30 am  
Soup Kitchen Serving, 11 am

## Tuesday, November 5

Hosting General Elections

## Wednesday, November 6

Women's Bible Study, 1 pm  
Worship w/ Conf., 6:30 pm  
Club 56, 7:15 pm  
Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 pm

## Thursday, November 7

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am  
LSS Caregiver Support Group, 11 am  
Parkinson's Support Group, 1 pm

## Friday, November 8

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

## Saturday, November 9

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

## Sunday, November 10

Worship, 9:30 am  
*Noisy Offering*

## Monday, November 11

Stephen Ministry, 4 pm

## Tuesday, November 12

Sarah Circle, 1 pm

## Wednesday, November 13

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
Finance Team, 4 pm  
Worship w/ Conf., 6:30 pm  
*Noisy Offering*  
Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 pm

## Thursday, November 14

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am  
Martha Circle, 1 pm

## Friday, November 15

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

## Saturday, November 16

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

## Sunday, November 17

Worship, 9:30 am

## Wednesday, November 20

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
Fellowship Meal, 5:30 pm  
Worship w/ Conf., 6:30 pm  
Club 56, 7:15 pm  
Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 pm

## Thursday, November 21

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am  
Tech Help Ministry, 11:15 am  
Grief Support Group, 1:30 pm  
Church Council, 6 pm

## Friday, November 22

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

## Saturday, November 23

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

## Sunday, November 24

Worship, 9:30 am  
Community Meeting, 10:45 am

## Monday, November 25

Stephen Ministry, 4 pm

## Wednesday, November 27

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
Worship, 12:30 pm  
Pie Social, 1:30 pm  
Worship, 6:30 pm  
Pie Social, 7:30 pm

## Thursday, November 28

Thanksgiving, Office Closed

## Friday, November 29

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

## Saturday, November 30

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

## Our Team

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

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

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

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

**Paul and Karen**  
Erickson,  
Custodians

**Koreann Martin,**  
Worship Leader



# Youth Ministry

## High School Summer Trip Announcement Coming Soon

It has been a great blessing, that annually Lord of Life has been able to offer a high school summer trip!

This month we will be sharing the news of where we will be going with all of you! This trip experience will be open to those cur-

rently in 9th-12th grade!

Past trips have included partnering with our outdoor ministries, mission trips and the national youth gathering! Thank you for your continued support of these impactful summer experiences for our youth.

## Synod Youth Gathering

Registration is closed for the all youth gathering happening at Cragun's Resort later this month. We have a great group from Lord of Life who are signed up this year!

As we prepare for this All Youth Gathering, I ask for your prayers for the NEMN Synod and NEMN Synod LYO, who will be leading

this event. It takes many volunteers and countless hours to prepare for this experience! Also, a prayer for our youth and adult leaders who will be attending!

We look forward to sharing more about our experience with all of you! This year the theme is, "Let Us Run the Race" with keynote speaker Mike Carlson.

## October Service Nights

During the month of October, we hosted two different service nights!

It started on Wednesday, October 9th as our confirmation small groups helping with final set up for the annual Fall Clothing Give-away and projects around the church!

On October 30th, we conducted a mobile food packing event with The Outreach Program of Brainerd Lakes.



**Tim Slinger,**  
Youth Director





# Ministry News

## ***Lord of Life Christmas Cantata***

***A program for all ages!***

**Sunday, Dec. 15th at 9:30 am  
Wednesday, Dec. 18th at 6:30 pm**

**Rehearsals are  
Wednesdays at 7:30 pm  
Beginning November 6th**

**Sign up in the Narthex!**

## **Christmas Cantata**

This year's Lord of Life Christmas Cantata will bring people of all ages together to glorify God through the gift of their beautiful music! Wednesday, December 18th at 6:30 pm. Rehearsals will be Wednesday nights from 7:30 to 8:30 beginning November 6th.

Koreann Martin will lead this combined adult and children's cantata with performances on Sunday, December 15th at 9:30 am, and Sign up for this amazing event in the Narthex, next to the Main Entrance.

***All Saints Services  
November 3rd and 6th  
If you would like someone recognized,  
send their name to [tyler@lolbaxter.org](mailto:tyler@lolbaxter.org)***

## **Micah Group**

*He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8*

call while shopping. Her daughter-in-law's mother had just lost her home to a fire in another state. She returned the next day to shop just for her.

A young man patiently and caringly held top after top up for his wheelchair-bound mother to inspect. They were able to find her some new clothing.

Many were working parents who didn't have paychecks that covered all the family's needs. 71 volunteers helped receive, organize and fold clothing. They assisted with directions, try-ons and anything that was needed. At the end, they helped pack up the remaining clothing and redistribute it to Lakes Area Pregnancy Support and Common Goods. There were smiles, laughter and camaraderie. And our community was made a little bit better.

There were many stories of shared moments, grateful thank-yous and lives made a little easier. In one case, a woman received a phone

## ***Snow-free sidewalks are great!***

**Join our snow removal team  
and take a week to cover.  
We even have a snowblower  
for you to use!  
Email [tyler@lolbaxter.org](mailto:tyler@lolbaxter.org)**



# September Council Minutes

**Present:**  
Pr. Erika Nilsen  
Greg Bennett  
Eric Davidge  
Matt Delaney  
Landon Stoen  
Guy Kelm  
Erica Dolven-Kolle  
Jane Peterson

**Guest:**  
Anne Laechel

**Absent:**  
Pr. Steven Rye  
Andy Isackson

Columbarium Task force presented a proposal for a site and plan to finalize the plan. Requesting a separate financial budget for the columbarium. They need to get the check and the application to the City of Baxter tomorrow to be at the October 8th meeting.

Pr. Steve opening prayer

Motion by Greg Bennett to approve minutes, second by Guy Kelm, All Ayes. (CC.09.23.2024.01)

Motion to build the Columbarium according to the finalized proposal along with \$100 for the filing fee made by Guy Kelm, second by Matt Delaney, All Ayes. (CC.09.23.2024.02)

Motion to approve the new members pending participation in New Member orientation conversation and

a new member ceremony made by Greg Bennett, second by Pr. Erika Nilsen, All Ayes (CC.09.23.2024.03) Members include: Alex Paysse, Cindi Kavadas, Mike and Kristine Loisel, Adam and Katie Olson, Kim and Barb Anderson, Logan and Emily Nelson, Bill and Shaylyn Lange, Halie and Josh Majerus, Skip and Nancy Peterson, Lindsey and Shane Riffle, and Pete Snell.

Motion for staff at Lord of Life to stay on the Portico Silver+ Plan made by Pr. Steve Rye, second by Eric Davidge, All Ayes (CC.09.23.2024.03)

Discussion about the different music roles along with approving the funds for the choir portion of music. Koreann would like to have the official title of Music Director. However, we would like to have a job description created for her position that outlines what that job looks like at Lord of Life. A conversation about the compensation and a job description will be had with Koreann as to how we will move forward.

Motion by Guy Kelm to approve the choir section of the budget, second by Matt Delaney, All Ayes. (CC.09.23.2024.04)

At Sunday’s Congregational Meeting the 2024-2025 budget was approved.

Over the past couple months concerns have been raised concerning the leadership at the church and the Lead Pastor. Other concerns about transparency, attendance, volunteers and lack of participation at the church were also brought to the council. Statements and letters from approximately 30-40 concerned members were brought forth to the council for their review. Much discussion was had over the concerns and frustrations.

Ultimately a motion was made to seek a mutual separation between the council and Pr. Steven Rye made by Andy Isackson, second by Guy Kelm, it was not mutually agreed upon at this time by Pastor Steve, therefore the motion did not come to a vote as both the council and the Pastor need to mutually agree upon a separation before it can move forward.

Motion to reach out to Bishop Amy for a meeting to gather information on next steps made by Erica Dolven-Kolle, second by Pr. Steven Rye, All Ayes. (CC.09.23.2024.05)

Motion that we have asked Pr. Steven Rye to not reach out to members of the congregation about personal congregational concern statements they have shared with the council, made by Greg Bennett, second by

Eric Davidge, All Ayes. (CC.09.2024.06)

Pr. Steven Rye does not feel like he is in a position to relinquish his call to Lord of Life. He wants to know if Bishop Amy Odgren can come in to talk and explore what that looks like. He really wants to get the pledges brought in to pay off the mortgage before he would consider leaving.

Pr. Erika Nilsen has had conversations with Pr. Steven Rye and he has also expressed that he has not finished his call, he has not given all that he can.

Next meeting October 24th at 6:00pm

Motion to adjourn at 8:44pm made by Guy Kelm, second by Pr. Erika Nilsen, All Ayes.

**Pastor Steven**  
*Continued from Page 1*

lationship.

As far as I know, I’ll be in town for the foreseeable future, and I would welcome a cup of coffee with you—or whatever beverage you like. If you don’t have my number or email address, the good folks on staff can help put you in touch with me.

Blessings!  
Pastor Steven Rye

# Special Council Minutes

**Present:**  
Pr. Erika Nilsen  
Greg Bennett  
Eric Davidge  
Matt Delaney  
Landon Stoen  
Guy Kelm  
Erica Dolven-Kolle  
Jane Peterson

**Guest:**  
Anne Laechel

**Absent:**  
Pr. Steven Rye  
Andy Isackson

A special meeting was called to discuss an understanding of the mutual ending of a call with Pr. Steven Rye and Lord of Life. An agreement was reached between the church and Pr. Steven Rye and the details of the agreement were presented in a packet. Bishop Amy has helped Greg Bennett and Andy Isackson to come up with a 12 month severance package. This would be effective on October 31, 2024.

Pr. Erika will be filling in in the meantime with the help of Tim and potentially Pr. Darrell. She will be gone on a Sunday in November and a Sunday in January.

Pr. Steven Rye has decided that this is the best step moving forward and that staying would be too difficult. He would want to discuss the details of the complainants that were brought forward

and work through the issues. This would be too difficult, and has decided that a mutual agreement to end his call would be in his and the church's best interest.

The congregation is not aware of this yet. A letter has been drafted that Pr. Steven will send out to the congregation and the council will also send out a letter to confirm this news. The letter written by Andy Isackson to the congregation was read aloud at the meeting and council members expressed concern about how the news is delivered. The council will not have knowledge of the contents of the letter written by Pr. Steven Rye, but has worked with Bishop Amy to help guide him in his writing.

Anne would like talking points for staff to use during calls/questions from members. We will update talking points if a decision is made tonight.

Motion to agree to an understanding of a mutual ending of a call as written by Greg Bennett and Andy Isackson was made by Eric Davidge, second by Jane Peterson. All Ayes (CC.10.14.2024.01)

Pr. Erika shared Psalm 23 and in a closing prayer

Meeting adjourned at 7:05pm.

## SEPTEMBER 2024 FINANCIAL REPORT

	ACTUAL	BUDGET
INCOME	\$52,867	\$48,368
EXPENSE	\$47,089	\$55,224
YTD INCOME	\$153,451	\$150,105
YTD EXPENSE	\$137,150	\$152,311

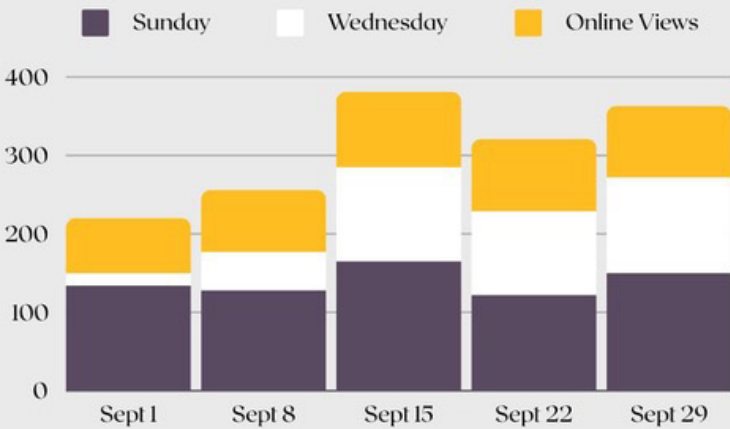
### MORTGAGE STATUS

September Interest Paid	\$2,302.67
September Principal Paid	\$3,380.33
Balance 9/30/2024	\$574,900.56

### CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE

Dedicated Funds	\$107,232
Unrestricted Funds	\$24,874

## September Attendance



**Community Meeting  
w/ Church Council  
Sunday, November 24th  
after worship**