

# 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**  
(218) 828-9374

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

PO Box 685  
Brainerd, MN, 56401

# The Good News at Lord of Life

## March 2025

Dear Friends,

There's a wonderful story in the book of Acts that describes a paralytic man who is brought to the temple every day by his friends, to beg for money for food. One day, two of Jesus' followers, filled with the Spirit of Christ, stop and talk to the man.

When asked if they had money to spare, they had none. But what they could offer, they did. And in the name of Jesus, they told the man to get up and walk. And he did! And the scriptures tell us that he went with them into the temple, *"Walking and leaping and praising God!" (Acts 3:8)*

Lord of Life has hardly been "paralyzed" and most certainly not "lame", yet we have been burdened by a large mortgage debt and the financial needs of an aging building and it's time to be set free so that we can move forward together, "walking and leaping and praising God!"

Lord of Life has faithfully lived out its mission to grow deeper and richer in our connections to Christ, community and each other and for all of the faithfulness, throughout the past decades, we give thanks!!

We face a marvelous moment right now, where we have a chance to work together to rid ourselves of our

debt, tend to our building and then dream big for what is next.

Be a part of this moment!!

This month we launch our Capital Campaign: **FORWARD TOGETHER!**

Please take time to read all of the information that will come your way, to pray for your faith family throughout the campaign and ponder and pledge your own commitment to the future of your church.

Forward Together,  
Pastor Erika Nilsen



**FORWARD  
TOGETHER**  
LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

**Sunday**

**Monday**

**Tuesday**

**Wednesday**

**February 23rd**

Sunday Worship, 9:30 am  
Heartland Conference, 2 pm  
Middle School YG, 5:30 pm

**February 24th**

Stephen Ministry, 4 pm  
MG Book Discussion, 7 pm

**February 25th**

**February 26th**

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
Worship w/ Conf., 6:30 pm  
Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 pm  
High School YG, 7:30 pm

**March 2nd**

Sunday Worship, 9:30 am  
Capital Camp. Visits, 10:45 am  
Soup Kitchen Serving, 11 am

**March 3rd**

Grief Support Group, 1:30 pm

**March 4th**

**March 5th**

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
Ash Wednesday Worship, 12 pm  
Pancake Dinner, 5:30 pm  
Ash Wed. Worship, 6:30 pm

**March 9th**

Sunday Worship, 9:30 am  
*Noisy Offering*

**March 10th**

Pinetree Patchworkers, 1 pm  
Grief Support Group, 1:30 pm  
Stephen Ministry, 4 pm

**March 11th**

Sarah Circle, 1 pm  
Property Team Meeting, 4 pm

**March 12th**

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
Finance Team, 4 pm  
Fellowship Dinner, 5:30 pm  
Worship w/ Conf., 6:30 pm  
*Noisy Offering*  
Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 pm

**March 16th**

Sunday Worship, 9:30 am

**March 17th**

Grief Support Group, 1:30 pm

**March 18th**

Driver Improvement Class, 12 pm

**March 19th**

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

**March 23rd**

Sunday Worship, 9:30 am

**March 24th**

Grief Support Group, 1:30 pm  
Stephen Ministry, 4 pm  
MNTLC Presentation, 7 pm

**March 25th**

**March 26th**

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
Fellowship Dinner, 5:30 pm  
Worship w/ Conf., 6:30 pm  
Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 pm  
High School YG, 7:30 pm

**March 30th**

Sunday Worship, 9:30 am  
Pancake Breakfast, 10:30 am  
Forward Together Brunch, 11 am  
Middle School YG, 5:30 pm

**March 31st**

Grief Support Group, 1:30 pm

**Thursday****February 27th**

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

**March 6th**

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

**March 13th**

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

**March 20th**

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am  
Tech Help Ministry, 11:15 am

**March 27th**

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

**Friday****February 28th**

Men's Breakfast, 7 am

**March 7th**

Men's Breakfast, 7 am

**March 14th**

Men's Breakfast, 7 am

**March 21st**

Men's Breakfast, 7 am

**March 28th**

Men's Breakfast, 7 am  
Middle School LNO, 5 pm

**Saturday****March 1st**

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

**March 8th**

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

**March 15th**

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

**March 22nd**

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

**March 29th**

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

# LENT 2025

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## Sunday AM JAZZ LITURGY

For Lent we'll be using a jazz liturgy written by Chris Fogderud - Band Director at BHS! Jazz music is complex and intriguing- a fitting background for the season.

## Wednesday Evenings: Fellowship Dinner between 5:30pm - 6:30pm

3/5 - Ash Wednesday - worship at 12:00pm and 6:30pm

## Wednesday Worship @ 6:30pm

Weekly we'll journey together with someone whom Jesus encountered as he walked to the cross.

3/12 - The Woman in the Temple

3/19 - A Pharisee

3/26 - The Woman with a Jar

4/2 - Judas

4/9 - A Disciple in the Garden

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*Lenten Vespers*  
7:00 pm  
at Bethlehem Lutheran

March 9  
March 16  
March 23  
March 30  
April 6  
April 13

Sunday Evenings in lent, join together with the Brainerd Lakes Area ELCA Lutherans in a quiet Sunday evening Lenten Vespers experience centered around Kate Bowler's "The Hardest Part: hurt we carry, hope we find."

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## 40 Days of Generosity



Grow in generosity this Lenten season and join the LOL Youth in a Food Drive !

# Ministry News

## Micah Group

The last couple of months involved a variety of activities for Micah members. On January 18th several members participated in The Brainerd People's March despite a -10 ° windchill. The march was part of a national movement driven by a commitment to justice, equality and progress. It was a call to an inclusive future with participants advocating for justice across social, economic and political issues.

In January and February four robust conversations were held on the book *White Poverty: How Exposing Myths about Race and Class Can Reconstruct American Democracy* by Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II. Additional book discussions will be held in the future. Watch here for further information as all are welcome.

Micah Group also served at the Soup Kitchen on Feb-

ruary 2nd, providing 48 meals for those in need in our community. In addition, leftover food was distributed to the Lighthouse Beginnings/Open Arms program in Baxter.

### What's Next?

March 24th Mondays with Micah Group, 7 - 8:30 pm, there will be a presentation in the sanctuary by My Neighbor to Love Coalition. Presenters will be Vicky Kinney, Stephanie Pontius and Chuck Gifford. This will be an opportunity to hear a brief history of how and why MNTLC started and what has been learned during their first few years. MNTLC has a mission to solve homelessness by focusing on three areas-building homes, building healthy lives and building community. An update will be provided to discuss their current situation and what plans are coming up for their

Creekside Community project. They will also talk about their current collaborations with Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen and Lighthouse Beginnings/Open Arms.

We will give a brief history of how and why MNTLC started and what we learned during those first few steps. Then we will describe our mission to solve homelessness by focusing on three areas – building homes, building healthy lives, and building community. Within each of those areas we will discuss our current situation and what plans we have coming up (Lord willing) for Creekside Community. We will include opportunities for people to get involved and introduce the collaboration between MNTLC, Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen, & Lighthouse Beginnings/Open Arms in volunteerism.

## First Communion

### Dear 5th graders and Parents!

You are invited to participate in 3 classes that will help you understand more about the gift of holy communion. We'll learn the biblical story, spend time in prayer and play and wonder together about this wonderful gift from God.

Classes are for 5th graders and parents!

Thursday Nights from 6:30 - 7:30 pm on March, 27, April 3, and April 10.

Holy Communion will be received for the first time on Maundy Thursday, April 17th during the 6:30pm worship service.

## Grief Support Group

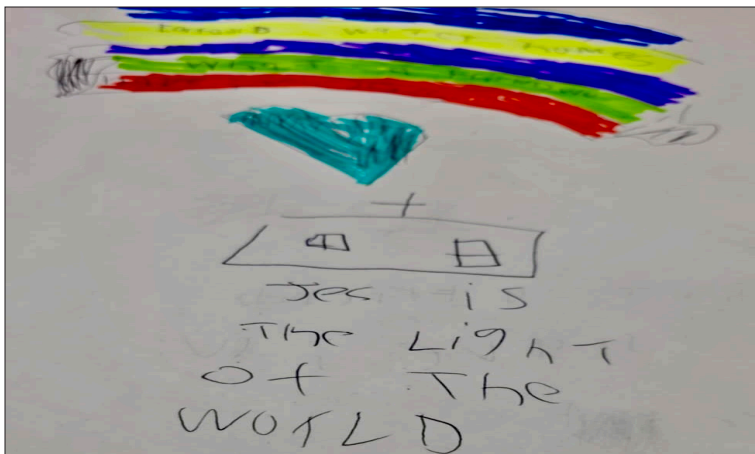
A grief support group will be starting at Lord of Life on Monday, March 3rd from 1:30-3:00.

If you have questions please contact Deb Bergstrom at (701) 678-4053.

Please know that it is pri-

vate, totally up to you what you want to say or not.

This is a space to honor your loved ones and share with others. Please consider joining us!



*Thank you for sharing your gift of Faith, Nate!*



***Dear Lord of Life Family!***

***All I can say is, "It's Good To Be Family!"***

***I have felt so sustained, supported, loved, and blessed through this time. For all who took on extra tasks & leadership in my absence — THANK YOU! And for all the prayers & meals & offers to help & showing up at just the right time — I cannot thank you enough. And, for the gorgeous flowers sent to the Church! — Such an offering of LOVE!***

***So deeply grateful,  
Pastor Erika***

# Youth Update

## Summer Mission Trip

Lord of Life hosted our first pre mission trip gathering which included Bethlehem, Trinity, First Lutheran in Brainerd and Hope Lutheran in Walker. We will be traveling together for our summer mission trip to Knoxville, TN!

was around getting to know each other with games and activities. Our Bible study focused around Micah 6:8 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

This month we will be gathering at Bethlehem Lutheran Church Sunday, March 23rd.

Our focus this past month

## Confirmation

What does fresh homemade bread and American Sign Language have in common?

On Wednesday, February 12th Ryan Larson joined us during worship and using the gift of American Sign Language (ASL) signed the words to the song "The Lord's Prayer (It's Yours)". Ryan then took time the last few weeks to help teach that song in ASL to our confirmation students.

Special nights that were a part of our confirmation study around the Lord's Prayer and Luther's Small Catechism. A special thanks for Lilja Behr who provided loaves of fresh baked sweet bread as we learned about, "Give us today our daily bread."

Thank you both to Lilja and Ryan for sharing your gifts and talents with us this past month!

## March Minnesota Food Share Month

During the month of March kids and teens at Lord of Life will be busy collecting food for our area food shelves.

They will have a friendly challenge to see how much they can bring in. Look forward to updates on how the challenge is going in the weeks ahead!



## Middle School Late Night Out

Lord of Life hosts the next Middle School Late Night Out on Friday, March 28th from 5 - 11 pm.

This event is open to 5th-8th graders and registration is required. To register scan the QR Code. Space is limited so do not delay and sign up today!



# March Scriptures

## First Readings

March 2nd  
Exodus 34:29-35

March 9th  
Deuteronomy 26:1-11

March 16th  
Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

March 23rd  
Isaiah 55:1-9

March 30th  
Joshua 5:9-12

## Psalms

March 2nd  
Psalm 99

March 9th  
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

March 16th  
Psalm 27

March 23rd  
Psalm 63:1-8

March 30th  
Psalm 32

## Second Readings

March 2nd  
2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

March 9th  
Romans 10:8b-13

March 16th  
Philippians 3:17-4:1

March 23rd  
1 Corinthians 10:1-13

March 30th  
2 Corinthians 5:16-21

## Gospel Readings

March 2nd  
Luke 9:28-36

March 9th  
Luke 4:1-13

March 16th  
Luke 13:31-35

March 23rd  
Luke 13:1-9

March 30th  
Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

# Gospel Reflections

## Luke

**2:22-40**

The conversation about Jesus' suffering and death is enclosed in a dazzling foreshadowing of the resurrection. God affirms Jesus' identity, the disciples are stunned speechless, and Jesus resumes his mission with a demonstration of his power over evil.

## Luke

**15:1-3, 11b-32**

Jesus tells a parable about a son who ponders his father's love only after he has spurned it. The grace he receives is beyond his hopes. That same grace is a crisis for an older brother who believes it is his obedience that has earned his place in the father's home.

## Luke

**4:1-13**

After being filled with the Holy Spirit at his baptism, Jesus is led in the wilderness. Through his responses to the temptations of the devil, he defines what it means to be called "the Son of God."

## Luke

**13:31-35**

Neither Herod's plotting nor Jerusalem's resistance to maternal love will deter Jesus from his sacrificial mission.

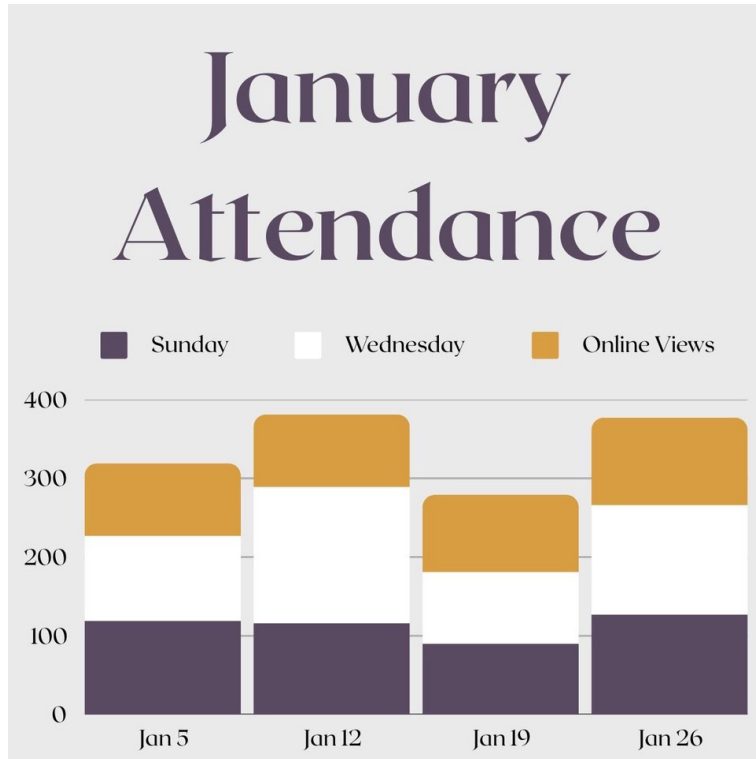
## Luke

**13:1-9**

Asked about current tragic events, Jesus turns a lesson about whether suffering is deserved into a hard call to obedience. He then tells a parable that holds out hope that the timeline for ultimate judgment will be tempered by patience.



# January Financial and Attendance Reports



### JANUARY 2025 FINANCIAL REPORT

	ACTUAL	BUDGET
<b>INCOME</b>	\$45,016	\$53,368
<b>EXPENSE</b>	\$95,380	\$50,511
<b>YTD INCOME</b>	\$390,795	\$373,829
<b>YTD EXPENSE</b>	\$438,410	\$424,641

### MORTGAGE STATUS

January Interest Paid	\$2,337.58
January Principal Paid	\$3,345.42
Balance 01/31/2025	\$561,451.84

Pr. Steven's severance package has been paid in full as of 1/31/2025

### CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE

Dedicated Funds	\$102,780
Unrestricted Funds	\$-40,720



## Noah's Ark

You may want to keep an eye on our Noah's Ark, moored on the wall outside Anne Laechel's Office.

Thanks to Wendy Rueger and Annah Swanson, the ark will be filling up once again with the names of children at Lord of Life, and their baptismal date so we can celebrate them and remember their, and our own, gift of baptism.

# Lord of Life Group Guide

## Finance Team

Using their knowledge and gifts of discernment, this group helps the congregation plan how our financial resources are best used to accomplish the missions we strive to do. *For more information, contact Anne Laechel at [anne@lolbaxter.org](mailto:anne@lolbaxter.org).*

## Friends of Bridges of Hope

Partnering with this local organization, our volunteers provide occasional support at the Bridge on 7th Warming Shelter, helping those who are in need here in our community. *For more information, contact Ruth Nelson at [ruthnelson1570@gmail.com](mailto:ruthnelson1570@gmail.com).*

## Friends of Habitat for Humanity

Helping build homes for families in need is the calling of this group of volunteers. When Lord of Life receives notice of a Habitat Home being built, this group comes forward to share their time and talents. *For more information, contact Bonnie Henningson at [bonniebhenningson@gmail.com](mailto:bonniebhenningson@gmail.com).*

## Friends of the Red Cross

Thanks to organizations like the Red Cross, we can give the gift of life-saving blood to people all over our country and world. The volunteers of the Friends of the Red Cross help facilitate blood drives hosted at Lord of Life. *For more informa-*

*tion, contact Sally Jacobsen at [sally@jacobsenlaw.com](mailto:sally@jacobsenlaw.com).*

## Grief Support Group

Whether it is from the loss of a loved one, a change in life circumstances, or some other hard time in your life, it is important to have people to support you on the journey through grief. Our next Grief Support Group begins meeting weekly on Monday, March 3rd at 1:30 pm. *For more information, contact Deb Bergstrom at [deb.bergstrom@lolbaxter.org](mailto:deb.bergstrom@lolbaxter.org).*

## Kids Time Leaders

Do you want to help make a difference in the next generation of the Lord of Life Faith Family? Our Kids Time Leaders do that every Sunday, just by taking some time during worship to lead and supervise Kids Time. Lessons are prepared ahead of time for leaders. *For more information, contact Pastor Erika at [erika@lolbaxter.org](mailto:erika@lolbaxter.org).*

## Martha and Sarah Circle

Martha Circle and Sarah Circle are our two monthly women's groups here at Lord of Life. They give ladies an opportunity for fellowship and Bible Study. Martha Circle meets the second Thursday of each month at 1 pm, while Sarah Circle meets at the same time, but on the second Tuesday of the month. *For more information about Martha Cir-*

*cle, contact Sally Jacobsen at [sally@jacobsenlaw.com](mailto:sally@jacobsenlaw.com).*

*For information about Sarah Circle, contact Ginny Orłowski at [virginialake99@gmail.com](mailto:virginialake99@gmail.com).*

## Men's Breakfast and Fellowship

Every week, we have two opportunities for men to come together for fellowship and contemplating God. Men's Fellowship meets Thursdays at 9:30 am, while Men's Breakfast meets Fridays at 7 am. *For more information about these ministries, contact Ted Anderson at [maryteda@charter.net](mailto:maryteda@charter.net).*

## Micah Group

The Micah Group's mission is "To increase our understanding of human diversity and to transform whatever unknowing, fear, and hostility we may have into hospitality toward each other and all peoples of the earth." *For more information about this group and its various programs, contact Patricia Dickson at [otherpeoplecount.period@gmail.com](mailto:otherpeoplecount.period@gmail.com).*

## Music Ministry

Do you have a musical gift that is begging to be shared? Join our music ministries here at Lord of Life, and use it for the glory of God!. *For more information, contact Koreann Martin at [koreann@lolbaxter.org](mailto:koreann@lolbaxter.org).*

## Prayer Chain

Sometimes the greatest gift you can give someone is to pray for them. Our Prayer Chain receives requests via email and takes time to pray for the person in need. *For more information, contact [tyler@lolbaxter.org](mailto:tyler@lolbaxter.org).*

## Prayer Shawl Ministry

These Lord of Life knitters take projects to work on, creating prayer shawls to wrap people in God's Love. *For more information, contact Jeannine zumBrunnen at [zummyb@brainerd.net](mailto:zummyb@brainerd.net).*

## Property Team

Using their skills and knowledge, this group works to improve and maintain the Lord of Life property. In addition to meeting once a month, they organize property work days twice a year, once in spring and once in the fall. *For more information, contact Anne Laechel at [anne@lolbaxter.org](mailto:anne@lolbaxter.org).*

## Quilters

Every Thursday at 9 am, the Lord of Life Quilters meet and use their gifts to make quilts destined for our High School Seniors, fundraisers for local organizations, and anyone who needs to be wrapped in the love of God. *For more information, please contact Irene Christofferson at [dadsglh@gmail.com](mailto:dadsglh@gmail.com).*

# Lord of Life Group Guide

## **Stephen Ministry**

Our Stephen Ministers are trained to walk alongside people when they need someone to listen. *If this ministry calls to you and are interested in going into Stephen Minister training, please contact Pastor Erika at [erika@lolbaxter.org](mailto:erika@lolbaxter.org).*

## **Women's Bible Study**

Each Wednesday at 10:30 am on Zoom, women from Lord of Life meet to study and discuss Scripture with one another. The group also meets every other month in person for a fellowship event. *For more information, contact Anne Holz at [ispolish47@gmail.com](mailto:ispolish47@gmail.com).*

## **Worship Environment Team**

Have you ever looked at our Sanctuary and wonder, "Who makes it look like this?" The answer is the Worship Environment Team! From Christmas trees and poinsettias to the banners that hang from the walls. *For more information, contact Judy Bialka at [mjtbialka@charter.net](mailto:mjtbialka@charter.net).*

## **Worship Volunteers**

Worship services are a great time to use your gifts for God, and make connections with other Lord of Life members also volunteering! From scripture reading to Communion serving to just offering a warm greeting, there are many opportunities. *For more information, email [tyler@lolbaxter.org](mailto:tyler@lolbaxter.org).*

***Did we miss a ministry?***

***Do you see an opportunity  
for a new group?***

***Contact Tyler Jensen at  
[tyler@lolbaxter.org](mailto:tyler@lolbaxter.org), or  
speak with a member  
of the Church Council.***

**Save The Date!**  
**Peter Mayer Concert**  
**Thursday, May 22nd, 6:30 pm**  
**at Lord of Life**  
**Info On Tickets And More**  
**Coming Soon!**