

# 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

## May 2025

Dear friends,

It is with such joy that I get to announce that we have exceeded the stretch goal of our FORWARD TOGETHER capital campaign and currently have commitments of **\$868,782!!!**

I have been so inspired by your generosity, faith and hope! Lord of Life is truly blessed! But because the scope of the campaign is over 3 years, not everything can happen all at once!

Therefore, our excellent council leadership will discern how to best steward the financial gifts as they come in. It will be a joy, in time, to pay off our mortgage, and to start to attend to some much needed updates and repairs in the building.

Please find a moment to thank our Forward Together steering committee: Greg Bennett, Sarah Speer, Greg Parks, Katy Kelm and Andy Rangen! They also invited lots of hearts and hands to help make this all possible!

In addition, our current church council has been so very steady, faithful and cou-

rageously leaning into this time of transition. Please find a moment to thank our incredible church council: Andy Isackson (President), Greg Bennett (VP), Eric Davidge (Treasurer), Jessamyn Foley (Secretary) and Missional Members: Matt Delaney, Erica Dolven-Kolle, Guy Kelm, Jane Peterson and Landen Stoen.



**FORWARD  
TOGETHER**  
LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

And, none of this would be possible without our wonderful staff who have navigated changes and challenges all along the way and did not waiver in their focus on the mission of the church – to deepen and enrich our connections to Christ, Community and Each Other. Please take a moment to thank them: Tim Slinger, Anne Laechel, Tyler Jensen, Karen and Paul Erickson, and Koreann Martin.

Now, we have a chance and honor and obligation to dream about what's next for Lord of Life!

Financial stability is just a part of God's hoped for future for this church!

In June we'll be embarking on a 3-month Discovery Process! With the help and guidance of Pastor Peter Reuss, Pastor Jared Carson, and Lord of Life's Discovery Team (read about that in another article in the newsletter), we will look back at where we've been, take a good look at where we are right now, and then dream about where and how we want to move forward together!

There will be opportunities for the whole congregation to participate in this process and we hope you'll take every opportunity to lend your voice and your vision!

Blessings as we move Forward Together in Christ,

Pastor Erika

***Sunday******April 27th***

Sunday Worship, 9:30 am  
 Choir Rehearsal, 10:45 am  
 Confirmation Retreat, 12 pm  
 Middle School YG, 5:30 pm

***Monday******April 28th***

Driver Improvement Class, 12 pm  
 Stephen Ministry, 4 pm  
 Mondays w/ Micah Group, 7 pm

***Tuesday******April 29th***  
***Special Election******Wednesday******April 30th***

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

***May 4th***

*Synod Assembly*  
 Sunday Worship, 9:30 am  
 Choir Rehearsal, 10:45 am  
 Soup Kitchen Serving, 11 am  
*Donation Drop Off,*  
*10:30 am - 3 pm*

***May 5th***

*Donation Drop Off,*  
*8:30 am to 8 pm*

***May 6th***

*Donation Drop Off,*  
*8:30 am to 8 pm*

***May 7th***

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
 WBS Fellowship, 1 pm  
 Worship, 6:30 pm  
*Donation Drop Off,*  
*8:30 am to 8 pm*

***May 11th***

*Mother's Day*  
*Senior Recognition*  
*Noisy Offering*  
 Sunday Worship, 9:30 am  
 Choir Rehearsal, 10:45 am

***May 12th***

Pinetree Patchworkers, 1 pm  
 Stephen Ministry, 4 pm

***May 13th***

Sarah Circle, 1 pm  
 Property Team, 4 pm

***May 14th***

*Noisy Offering*  
 Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
 LOLLY, 12 pm  
 Finance Team, 4 pm  
 Worship, 6:30 pm

***May 18th***

*Confirmation Sunday*  
 Sunday Worship, 9:30 am  
 Choir Rehearsal, 10:45 am  
 Club 34, 5:30 pm

***May 19th***

Mondays w/ Micah Group, 7 pm

***May 20th***

Driver Improvement Class, 12 pm

***May 21st***

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
 Worship, 6:30 pm

***May 25th***

Sunday Worship, 9:30 am  
 Choir Rehearsal, 10:45 am

***May 26th***

Stephen Ministry, 4 pm  
*Memorial Day, Office Closed*

***May 27th******May 28th***

Women's Bible Study, 10:30 am  
 Worship, 6:30 pm

**Thursday*****May 1st***

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am  
LSS Support Group, 11 am  
Parkinson's Support Group, 1 pm  
U.C. Book Study, 6:30 pm  
Al-Anon, 6:30 pm

***May 8th***

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am  
Martha Circle, 1 pm  
Justice Table, 2:30 pm  
U.C. Book Study, 6:30 pm  
Al-Anon, 6:30 pm  
*Donation Drop Off,  
8:30 am to 12 pm*

***May 15th***

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am  
Tech Help Ministry, 11:15 am  
Al-Anon, 6:30 pm  
U.C. Book Study, 6:30 pm

***May 22nd***

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am  
Church Council, 5 pm  
U.C. Book Study, 6:30 pm  
Al-Anon, 6:30 pm  
Peter Mayer Concert, 7 pm

***May 29th***

Quilters, 9 am  
Men's Fellowship, 9:30 am  
U.C. Book Study, 6:30 pm  
Al-Anon, 6:30 pm

**Friday*****May 2nd***

Men's Breakfast, 7 am

***May 9th***

Men's Breakfast, 7 am  
Rummage Sale, 8 am  
*Sale Ends At 5 pm*

***May 16th***

Men's Breakfast, 7 am

***May 23rd***

Men's Breakfast, 7 am

***May 30th***

Men's Breakfast, 7 am

**Saturday*****May 3rd***

*Synod Assembly*  
Property Work Day, 8 am  
Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

***May 10th***

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm  
Rummage Sale, 8 am  
*Sale Ends At 2 pm*

***May 17th***

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

***May 24th***

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

***May 31st***

Lots of Love AA, 7 pm

**Our Team**

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

**Anne Laechel,**  
Parish Administrator  
anne.laechel@  
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**Tim Slinger,**  
Youth Director  
tim@lolbaxter.org

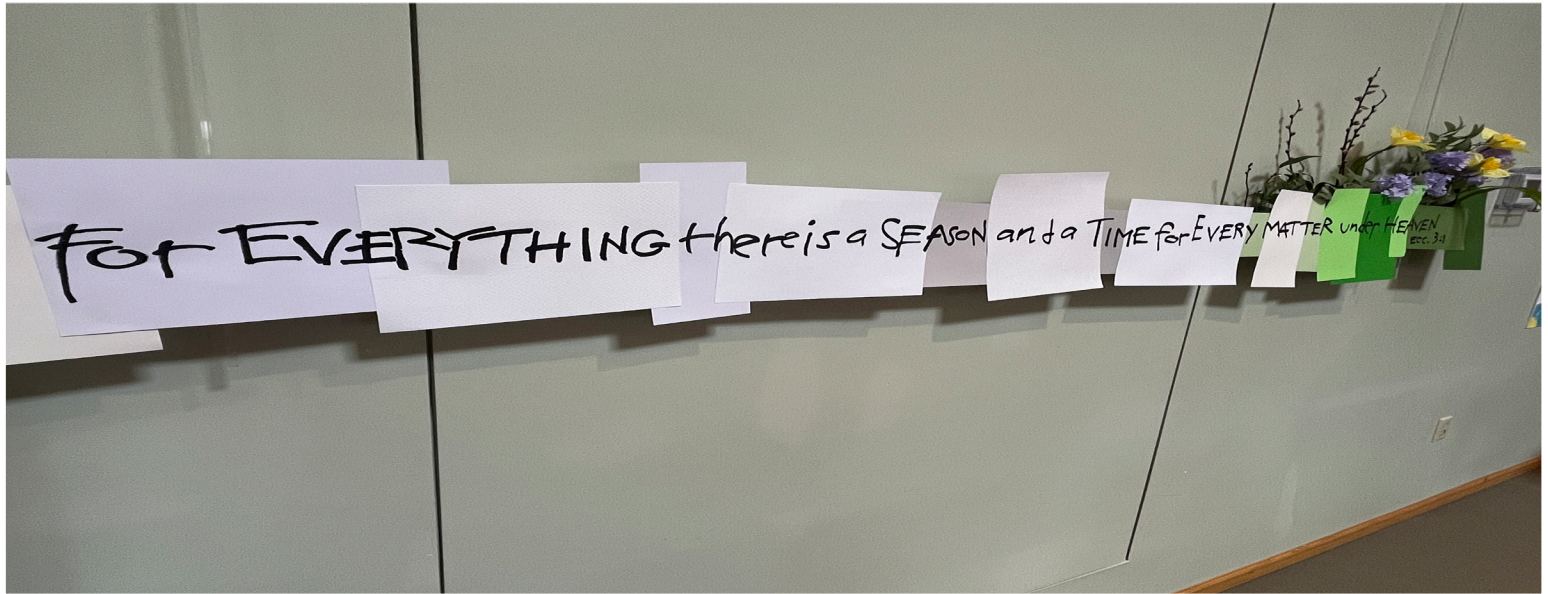
**Tyler Jensen,**  
Communications  
Coordinator  
tyler@lolbaxter.org

**Paul and Karen**  
Erickson,  
Custodians

**Koreann Martin,**  
Worship Leader



# Thank You's



**THANK YOU** Kevin Olson for blessings us throughout the season of Lent with the evolving art in the commons! We have witnessed in our space and in the creation around us – the emerging of spring, of new life and the hope of the resurrection!



**THANK YOU** to our Worship Environment Team for the beautiful Easter decorations. The paper flowers on the bare branches were formed from the prayers of us all over the Lenten season. Our prayers turned to petals of praise!

## Holy Week Volunteers

We would like to thank our Holy Week Volunteers for their amazing support:

Matt and Rachel Delaney, Mike and Andrea Anderson, Layne Danielson, Larry Lundblad, Patty Wallace, Paul and Karen Erickson, Char Berns, Guy Kelm, Cody Ewald, Ryan Finch, Mark and Deb Swirmicky, Jim and Teresa Kingsley, Ted Anderson, Val and Steve Jones, Lydia Kraemer, Darrell and Jennifer Pedersen, Mark Jungclaus, Mike and Colleen Bush, Lisa and Dan Tupy, Judy Bialka, Kristina Loisel, Stan Kalinoski, Jane and Keith Peterson, Jes-

samyn Foley, Tim Bowman, Claire Rud, Jama Davidson, Andy and Emily Isackson, Brian and Renee Shimley, Howie Bahn, Brenda Johnson, Bryan and Paula Barrer, Steve Schaitberger, Greg and Cindy Swenson, John and Wendy VanMoer, Irene Christofferson, Melissa Grover, Bonnie Henningson, Paul Springstead, Carol Ellerbusch, Karlton Anderson, and the Lord of Life Choir!

It takes an incredible amount of work to make Holy Week happen, and we are so grateful for the help of volunteers like these!



# Ministry News

## Discovery Process

You might be wondering how Lord of Life is going to be navigating the future now that the capital campaign is wrapping up and we're still in a time of staff transition?

Well, here's what's happening:

We have entered into a partnership with two consultants to help us take a good look at where we have been and how we are going to move forward.

To walk with them, we are forming a Discovery Team of five to seven members of Lord of Life that will help facilitate the in-gathering of information from the congregation and synthesize people's voice and vision.

The congregation will have three opportunities to gather for a community conversation. With each conversation there will be a short survey as well as an opportunity for a one-on-one conversation with one of our consultants. The Discovery team will listen deeply and

invite the congregation into greater and greater discovery of who we are and where God is leading us.

Our Sunday conversations will take place right after worship on **June 8, July 13th, and August 24th.**

**June 8th:** Where Have We Been?

**July 13th:** Where Are We Right Now?

**August 24th:** Where Is God Leading Us?

Please keep Lord of Life in your prayers as we discover how to move Forward Together!

If you would like to sign up for a one-on-one conversation with our Transitional Ministry consultants Peter Reuss and Jared Carson please call the church office at (218) 828-9374.

These conversations will happen after each community conversation.

**Community Conversation:  
Where Have We Been  
Sunday, June 8th  
After Worship**

## Micah Group

Micah Group continues to provide monthly opportunities to learn more about justice, compassion and issues that face our community. Mondays with Micah will meet in May with dual presentations on Monday, May 19th from 7 to 8:30 pm in the sanctuary at Lord of Life.

### Make It Okay - Gail Mueller

Make it Okay is a community campaign to reduce stigma by increasing understanding and creating caring conversations about mental illness. 1 in 4 people in Crow Wing County will experience a mental illness in their lifetime. Gail will share her own experience with depression after the loss of her brother. Making it okay to talk about mental health is the focus of the presentation.

*Gail Mueller is a community volunteer trained by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. She educates Crow Wing County residents on mental health issues and suicide prevention. The loss of her brother by suicide in 2010 moved her to become a mental health advocate. She presents "Make It Okay" and also facilitates the Suicide Loss Support Group that meets monthly at*

*the Northland Arboretum in Brainerd.*

### The Basics of ACEs - Julie Christensen

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can have long-term negative impacts on health, opportunity and well-being. Resilience is necessary for recovering from these impacts. The basics about ACEs and Resiliency will be presented.

Julie Christensen, MSW, LICSW is a licensed mental health professional and board approved clinical supervisor for Nystrom and Associates in Baxter. Her mental health experience includes outpatient therapy, crisis intervention, group therapy, individual and group skills, school based mental health and clinical supervision. She co-chairs the Crow Wing Mental Health Alliance, is a member of the Crow Wing Energized steering committee and an adult advisory member for The Lighthouse Project.

This presentation is free and no registration is needed.

# LORD OF LIFE RUMMAGE SALE

## DATE & TIME

FRIDAY, MAY 9<sup>TH</sup> 8AM-5PM

SATURDAY, MAY 10<sup>TH</sup> 8AM-2PM

DONATION DROP OFF  
BEGINS...

SUNDAY MAY 4<sup>TH</sup>  
AFTER CHURCH - 3PM

MONDAY-WEDNESDAY  
8:30AM-8PM

THURSDAY  
8:30AM-NOON

## VOLUNTEER SIGN UP



VOLUNTEERS  
NEEDED  
MAY 4TH-10TH

# Youth Update

## Programming Year Wrap-up

It is hard to believe but our Wednesday night programming, Confirmation and Club 56 have wrapped up for the year!

close out the year!

Thank you to everyone who participated in these programs!

Our last night was on Wednesday, April 30th. We had an end of the year party and our 9th graders enjoyed the annual scavenger hunt to

A special thank you to all of the parents, adult leaders and mentors who volunteered their time to help make it a great year!

## Summer Stretch

Summer Stretch is a program for those participating in Confirmation in the upcoming school year. This program ties in with Lord of Life's mission statement extremely well.

Summer Stretch will run Thursdays in June & July

**Dates:** June 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th, July 1st (Tuesday), & 10th (Twins Game)

**Time:** 9am - 4pm

**Price:** \$100 dollars which includes programming each week, the ticket to the twins game, All fun activities cost and Summer Stretch T-shirt!



It is an opportunity for young people to Connect with Christ (short study), to Connect with the Community (doing service work), and to Connect to Each Other (fun summer activities).

Some of the past service recipients have been, Operation Sandwich, The Arbor-etum, Habitat ReStore, The Outreach Program of BLA.

Some of the fun places and things we've done include the waterpark, mini-golf, go-cart racing, bowling, the beach, and a Twins game.

Registration Deadline: **May 18th, 2025.**

You can register by scanning the QR Code with your camera, or go to lolbaxter.org.

## ServeCAMP

ServeCAMP, an at home middle school "Mission Trip" experience. It is for students who will be entering 5th-8th grade in the upcoming school year. Kids will be building trust, helping others, growing in faith and having fun with the help of camp counselors from Camp Onomia.

**Time:** A typical daily schedule in the past has been 9 am-3 pm with optional 7 pm-10 pm and/or overnight at church.

**Price:** \$175

Camp cost includes: camp activities, servant activities, transportation (With the help of adult volunteers), meals and t-shirt



There will be activities and service projects during the day, a break in the afternoon, then an option to come back in the evening for night games and campfire at Lord of Life.

**Dates:** Sunday July 27th (Evening) - Thursday, July 31st

Registration Deadline Sunday, **May 18th, 2025**

You can register by scanning the QR Code with your camera, or go to lolbaxter.org.

## Senior Recognition

Join us in celebrating this year's high school graduating seniors the class of 2025!

pictures and future plans.

We will be having our senior recognition during our weekly worship services on Sunday, May 11th and Wednesday May, 14th.

We will be presenting each senior with a hand-made quilt from the Lord of Life Quilters. These special one-of-a-kind quilts will be a blessing as these seniors begin their next journey in life following high school graduation! We hope you can join us in celebrating the class of 2025!

Our high school seniors from Lord of Life will be recognized, there will be a slide show including



# Recent Baptisms

**(Pictured Right)** On Sunday, March 30th, Calvin and Emmett, children of Bill and Shaylyn Lange, were brought into the Body of Christ through the sacrament of Holy Baptism.



**(Pictured Left)** On Sunday, April 20th, Caden Ehlert, son of Emily Ehlert, was brought into the Body of Christ through the sacrament of Holy Baptism.





**Congratulations to our 5th Graders**, who on Maundy Thursday, April 17th, received First Communion! This year's First Communion Class consisted of: Tucker Binsfeld, Emma Campbell, Brynlee Coonfield, Everett Grams, Maren Hall, Greta King, Hannah Larson, Emmett Loisel, Kinsley Malchow, Xander Norquist, Kasey Pape, McKenna Parks, Lily Roeder, Adeline Ryan, Paige Selisker, Avery Skwira, and Kara Swanson.



**As our 9th Grade Confirmation students**, approach their Affirmation of Baptism Service on Sunday, May 18th, at 9:30 am, they were given new Study Bibles to carry with them throughout their lifelong Faith Journey. This year's Confirmation Class consists of: Wyatt Binsfeld, Avery Coonfield, Crewe Dahlheimer, Andrew Dorn, Elsie Haakonson, Kai Halbersma, Nolan Jendro, Joseph Jentsch, Landon Lofstrom, Beckett Miller, Raegan Norquist, Rhett Sjostrom, Makayla Stoen, and Rylie Strus.



# March Council Minutes

**Lord of Life  
Council Meeting  
03/27/2025 @ 6 pm**

**Present:**

Pr. Erika Nilsen  
Eric Davidge  
Matt Delaney  
Andy Isackson  
Greg Bennett  
Jane Peterson  
Landen Stoen  
Guy Kelm

**Absent:**

Erica Dolven-Kolle

**Guests:**

Anne Laechel  
Steve Jones

Pastor Erika led devotions

Steve Jones from the Property Team gave a presentation regarding our electric/power usage and the possibility of decreasing our electricity use significantly. Replacing fluorescent lights with LED's has saved us quite a lot of money over the past 2-3 years

Motion to approve the proposal to switch to Crow Wing Power's Non-Demand Rate 25 by Greg Bennett, Second by Guy Kelm. All approved.

Columbarium has arrived at Little Falls Granite and will be delivered in the next couple of months as road conditions improve.

March Financials are looking good. Motion to approve the financial report by Eric Davidge, Second by Jane Peterson, All Approved

**Barrett Estate Report –**

The property is still for sale, no movement yet.

Current Capital Campaign pledges received as of March 27th total \$378,670.00

Nominating Committee is beginning their work. The President and Ministry Outward positions will need to be filled, and Jessamyn is willing to serve as Secretary again.

Discussion of using Zeffy for sale of tickets for the Peter Mayer concert on May 22. Approved.

We have received budget requests from some of the staff and some other adjustments have been made. The executive committee will review the budget and make adjustments prior to the Annual meeting in June.

**Discovery Team –**

Proposal from GSB received for their assistance during this interim period following Pr. Steven's departure. Quote is for \$19,700 all inclusive. Discussion. Andy Isackson will contact them about negotiating a lower price and will request references.

Landen Stoen is working on his Eagle Scout project and plans to build 6 outdoor benches to be placed in Lord of Life's backyard later this summer.

Club 34 is going well and

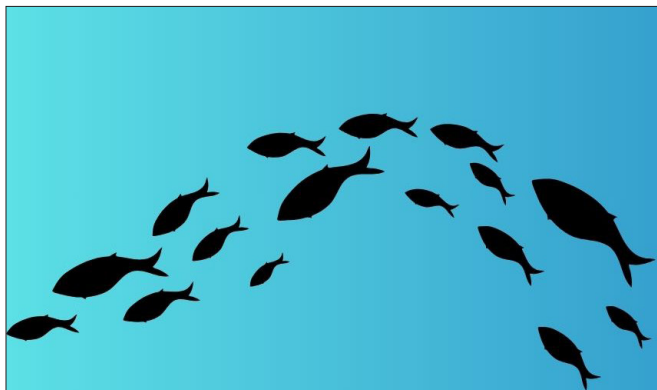
will continue to meet this summer/fall.

The Rummage Sale will need lots of extra volunteers because this year's mission trip group is so small. Discussion regarding re-organizing the leadership of the Rummage Sale to have the sale lead by a Rummage Sale team instead of by the Youth Director, and to potentially have the proceeds support other areas of our youth ministry. Guy Kelm will work on recruiting committee members.

Discussion about recruiting additional sound booth volunteers to run slides, so that Tyler would run video and Tim can interact with congregation members.

Discussion about recruiting volunteers to lead Kid's Time on Sunday, with a request for training teachers.

Meeting adjourned at 7:44pm



**Save The Date**  
**VBS 2025 - SCUBA**  
**August 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**6 - 8 pm**

# Upcoming Events



**Senior Recognition  
and Quilt Blessings**  
**May 11th at 9:30 am**  
**May 14th at 6:30 pm**



**Spring Property  
Work Day**  
**Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
**at 8 am**

**Sign up in the  
Commons**

**Affirmation of  
Baptism Service**  
**Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>**  
**at 9:30 am**

**Annual Meeting and  
New Member Sunday**  
**June 1<sup>st</sup> during and  
after our 9:30 am  
worship**



# Peter Mayer Concert

On Thursday, May 22nd at 7 pm, come hear some familiar music and see some familiar faces!

Minnesota Singer-Songwriter Peter Mayer, who has written six songs our EveryDaySonDay Band performs regularly, is performing a concert right here at the Lord of Life Sanctuary! And speaking of the EveryDaySonDay Band, they'll be the opening act.

Tickets are on sale now at [https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/peter-mayer-](https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/peter-mayer-fundraising-concert)

er-fundraising-concert.

Members of the EveryDaySonDay Band will also be selling tickets after worship on May 4th, 11th, and 18th.

All proceeds from the concert above the cost of having Mayer attend will go to Lord of Life. The EveryDaySonDay Band hopes to raise funds through the event to begin making improvements to the sound experience in worship.

