

LIFELINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Phone: (972) 867-5588

Fax: (972) 985-5588

Internet Home Page: <http://planolutheran.com>

Vol. 37, No. 2

Plano, Texas

February 2023

Some updates for February:

Valentine's COOKIE Craze

Youth Cookie Fundraiser

On Sunday, February 12, the youth are planning a new kind of fundraiser. In the past we have had sweetheart dinners, but this time they are going to bake cookies and have them available at church on the 12th for you to take as Valentine's Day presents. A freewill donation to the youth group is appreciated in return. Please support this cause as it will help to offset the price of our youth trip this summer to the Higher

Things conference in San Antonio. These conferences are a great experience for the youth and something they look forward to every year. And just to ensure that the cookies are of the highest quality, I hereby pledge to be at church on Saturday the 11th when the cookies are being baked to enforce strict quality control measures.

Lent

Ash Wednesday is February 22nd. Please plan to attend this service and take advantage of all the Wednesday midweek services, and especially Holy Week services in March. Lent is such an important season of the Church Year, where we break from the routine and focus on repentance and fasting. There is wisdom to celebrating while the bridegroom is present (Mark 2:19) but also in setting aside good things for a time to focus our attention and then to increase our joy when the fast is over.

This year our Lenten theme is: Honest Repentance. It is a series of doctrinal sermons on the nature of repentance. "The sermons employ themes and imagery of biblical texts to elucidate doctrinal topics." They are written by seminary professor, Rev. Dr. David Maxwell. David was studying at the sem when I was there and I got to know him a little then, but he went on to get a PhD from Notre Dame in patristics (you get extra credit if you know what this means without having to look it up!) Professor Maxwell was also the main presenter at last year's Theological Symposium at which he gave the opening presentation and the concluding sermon. He spoke about the early church and their way of reading the Bible—a topic that could have easily been, let's say, a little dry. But Dave absolutely crushed it! He had us hanging on his every word. I was thoroughly impressed and so I am looking forward to going through this sermon series with you.

We
love
because
He first
loved us.

1 John 4:19



Lutheran High School of Kansas City, Concert and Visit

On Sunday March 12, we are privileged to host the traveling band, choir, and bell choir from Lutheran High School in Kansas City. More details will be forthcoming, but mark your calendars and if you have a spare bedroom, please consider opening your homes to host a few high school students that night. As both a high school and college student, I went on choir tours and stayed in a lot of homes. I really enjoyed the experience of getting to meet a lot of Lutherans at different churches all across the country. I hope we can

provide a great experience for these youth and that it will in turn be a blessing for us as well.

Another thing to consider is that this (opening your home to guests) is a chance to practice hospitality. Scripture speaks of the love of strangers this way: "Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality" (Romans 12:13) In Greek the word here is philoxenia -the literal opposite of a xenophobe! The word is used one other time in this strange and memorable passage: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." (Hebrews 13:2)

If you would like the chance to practice a little philoxenia to some young saints (that is, you want to volunteer to open your home and host these Lutheran youth,) you can sign up here www.planolutheran.com/host.

Debt Retirement

This is great news. This is the year we are going to retire our debt. In fact, the Administrative Council believes we are so close that one last push will put us over the top and that we can do it fairly soon. We think we can be done, not by December, but by the end of May in time for our Memorial Day weekend picnic on May 28, which is also the feast of Pentecost this year. -We will have many things to celebrate that day!

You will be hearing more about this in the coming days. But for now, if you are one of the many people who have made extra offerings toward this, then with all sincerity: thank you very much. If you have been meaning to get in on this and want to help retire the debt, then the time is at hand. There are special offering envelopes in the narthex and you can specify on any offering that you want to designate it for the "Building Fund" or "debt reduction" and we will see that it goes where it needs to. Don't hold me to this, but I think we currently owe just a little over \$50k. Not bad considering when I started here 10 years ago, we owed \$1.2 million. God has certainly blessed us with many people who are willing and able to support generously.

PrS

Reducing Our Debt

UPDATE



Note Balance 2/20/2022	\$148,208
Principal Paid since 2/20/2022	\$96,229
Note Balance 1/31/2022	\$51,979

God's
love
endures
FOREVER.

Psalms 136:1

prepare for worship in february

Feb. 5: Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

Texts: Is. 58:3-9a; 1 Cor. 2:1-12 (13-16); Matt. 5:13-20

Hymn of the Day: "Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love,"
900

Feb. 12: Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

Texts: Deut. 30:15-20; 1 Cor. 3:1-9; Matt. 5:21-37

Hymn of the Day: "To Jordan Came the Christ, Our
Lord," 407

Feb. 19: The Transfiguration of Our Lord

Texts Ex. 24:8-18; 2 Pet. 1:16-21; Matt. 17:1-9

Hymn of the Day: "The Only Son from Heaven," 402

Feb. 22: Ash Wednesday

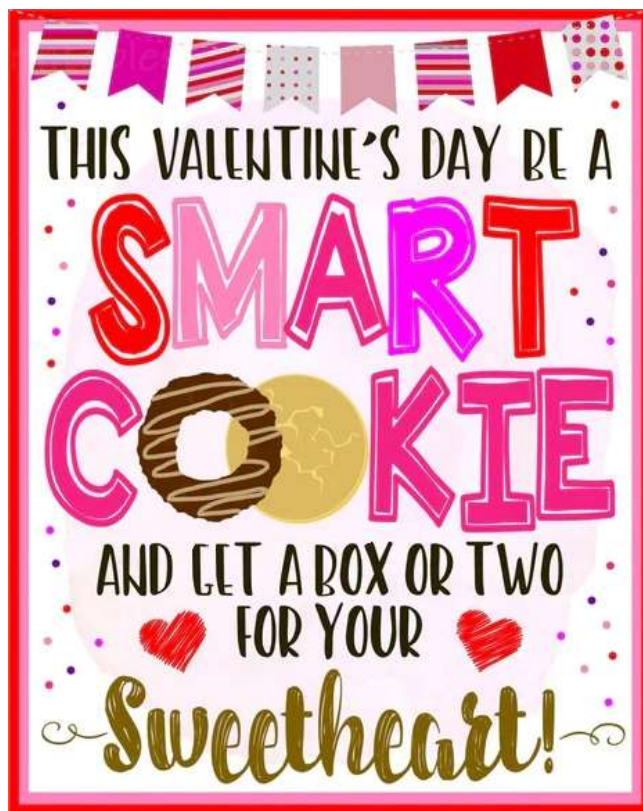
Law [Creation: Gen. 1:1-10 (1:11-2:3)]

Feb. 26: First Sunday in Lent

Texts: Gen. 3:1-21; Rom. 5:12-19; Matt. 4:1-11

Hymn of the Day: "O Christ, Our True and Only
Light," 839

Lord of Life IMPACT Presents a *Valentine's Day Cookie Craze*



on Sunday, February 12

This is a great opportunity to prepare for Valentine's Day – come and get *sweets* for your *sweetie*! After Sunday school and both services, you may fill special containers full of fun treats in the education hallway. Free-will donations will help fund our youth program.

The Blessing of God

As we continue moving into 2023 I thought I would share a devotional from Tom Groelsema that I found online. I have been reflecting on God's blessings to me and thought it also applies to all of us.

Numbers 6:22-27

²² The LORD said to Moses, ²³ "Tell Aaron and his sons, 'This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them:

²⁴ ""The LORD bless you
and keep you;

²⁵ the LORD make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;

²⁶ the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you peace."

²⁷ "So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them."

Today Christians all over the world will gather to worship God. Many will receive a closing blessing in worship through the words that Aaron and his sons spoke over Israel: "The Lord bless you and keep you..."

What is this blessing that God puts on us? First, we receive the blessing of God's protection and keeping. This is something we need in the wilderness of life. Life is full of trials, heat, hunger, and death. How good it is to hear God say that he will keep us! Second, we receive the blessing of God's pardon. Another way of saying that God's face shines on us is to say that his face lights up with delight. This is true because of Jesus. His face shines on us in grace. Third, we receive the blessing of God's peace. When our face is turned away from someone else, it is often a sign of tension. But when our face is turned toward another, it is a sign of peace. God's blessing on us is that his face will be turned in our direction so that we will know peace with him.

We must remember that these are not wishes but *blessings*. In other words, they are true for us because of Christ. In Jesus Christ, we are kept, forgiven, and restored to peace with God.

Receive and believe his blessings today!

Luke 6:38

Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

Along this same line, we as a congregation have a historic moment before us. Last year, your church leaders challenged all of us in a concentrated push to retire our mortgage. You have stepped up and our cup runneth over. We have reduced almost \$100,000 of the debt and are very close to being mortgage free. We have been blessed by God and we are able to pass these blessings on to others. I am truly grateful to be a part of such a kind, caring and generous congregation.

Philippians 4:7

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Dear Father, we thank you that as we make our way through life's ups and downs, we have your blessings through Christ. Help us to believe it. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

Your brother in Christ
Tim Ozlowski

Love
never fails.

1 Corinthians 13:8

Teen Times

As I write this article for the February issue of Lifelines, the latest winter storm to invade the Lone Star State has just moved into our neck o' the woods in the last 24 hours. Below freezing temps with a wintry mix of freezing rain and sleet combined with a flurry or two of snow are just enough to coat the roads with a thin layer of ice which paralyzes most of North Texas. Schools are closed for the day and the neighborhood kids are making the best use of sloped driveways and icy sidewalks to glide around using a large piece of cardboard or some type of homemade sled. Yes, it's that time of the year again; winter in Texas. You will recall the past two winters bestowed some nasty weather upon us about this same time; at the end of January or beginning of February. Turns out, this is the time of year for many other annual events to take place. Every other TV commercial lets us know that it's tax season (oh boy!). The pro football season will come to an end soon with the "big game" in a few days, and then there are days observed in February that happen each year. Groundhog Day, President's Day, Valentine's Day, "Fat Tuesday", and Ash Wednesday are all on the calendar over the course of the next month. However, this time of the year also brings about the most important annual events in the history of mankind! The IMPACT Youth Ministry Fundraising season! OK, I might have exaggerated just a little, but it is that time. So, what fundraising are we doing and why? I'll start with the "why" question first.

This summer, the Sr IMPACT youth will travel to San Antonio for the Higher Things youth conference in July on the campus of Trinity University. This one event is where the majority of our fundraising proceeds are directed. You may recall that in 2022 we traveled to Bozeman, Montana which to date was the farthest distance our youth have traveled for Higher Things. Subsequently, the entire youth ministry benefits from our fundraising efforts. There are other local retreats and short conferences that all of our youth, both Jr and Sr High, attend throughout the year. So, what are our fundraising plans this year?

First, there will be a Valentine Cookie Craze on Sunday, Feb. 12. Youth and parents will come together to cook and create sweets for your sweethearts. You can see our ad earlier in the newsletter or in the bulletin for more information about that. Second, our youth ministry will host and serve a St. Patrick's Day themed dinner at the church on Saturday, March 18. It's actually the day after the official St. Patrick's Day (March 17), but we can keep the "luck o' the Irish" going for an additional 24 hours. More info on this event will also be shared in future bulletin and newsletter announcements. As in the past, our fundraisers will be supported with free will donations. God has always blessed our youth ministry in this manner, and we have the most generous and gracious members at Lord of Life to thank him for as well. So, mark your calendars with the Youth Ministry Valentine Cookie Craze and St. Patrick's Day dinner because it's that time of the year again!

Until next time,
Scott Peters

A friend
loves
at all times.

Proverbs 17:17

Lord of Life Small Groups

EPIC PARENTING

- † For 30ish couples with kids
- † For info contact Ben Scarth
BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com
- † Usually meet one Sunday a month in the afternoon or evening

FRUITS OF THE VINE CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Scott Peters at 972-898-3351 cell or speters@planolutheran.com
- † Usually meet one Sun. a month at 5:30 PM

GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Will meet Sat., February 11 at 6:30 PM for Bible study

COLLEGE GROUP

- † For students in college or recent grads
- † For info contact Pastor Shaltanis at PastorShaltanis@yahoo.com
- † Usually meet after the late service for lunch and Bible study

God is
love.

1 John 4:8



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Bette Martin
- 3 Julz Cruz
- 4 Cheryl Scaglione
- 5 Becky Armstrong
- 6 Sal Cruz
- 6 Dee Peters
- 6 Tom Womack
- 8 Marty Buckmeier
- 11 Clarice Lundquist
- 13 Stephen Belcher
- 14 Tom & Karen Ashburn [58]
- 14 Jerry & Winona Parish [17]
- 15 Kevin Doughtie
- 19 Paul Grabow
- 19 Charles Hacker
- 19 Rebecca Short
- 20 Catharine Borck
- 23 Sarah Loewecke
- 27 Ernie Gromatzky
- 27 Bailey Lund

CELEBRATE THE LORD OF THE NATIONS WITH LWML IN MILWAUKEE — June 22–25, 2023. Come to the 40th Biennial LWML Convention in June, and take the opportunity to participate in servant activities. By participating you will fulfill one of the convention's objectives, to “Honor God by serving our neighbors.” On Thursday, June 22, from 9 a.m.–3 p.m., attendees will have opportunities



Celebrate the
Lord of the Nations
Psalm 33:12-13

to assemble meal packs for Food for Kidz through Orphan Grain Train; assemble school backpacks for Orphan Grain Train; make no-sew fleece blankets for Phil's Friends; color and write cards of hope for Phil's Friends; make witness bracelets and puppets for MOST Ministries; assemble Braille books and calendars for Lutheran Braille Workers; create encouragement cards for Refuge for Women; and create and write cards for mission workers.

Come and serve the Lord with gladness!

Lord of Life Lutheran Church
Summarized Statement of Activity
12 Months Ending December 31, 2022

	Y-T-D Operating Funds	Y-T-D Budget	Variance	Jan-Dec 2022 Budget
Contributions				
Regular Offerings	\$594,163	\$560,692	\$33,471	\$560,692
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Income	\$594,163	\$560,692	\$33,471	\$560,692
Expenses				
Benevolences	\$39,460	\$39,248	\$212	\$39,248
Elders	\$379,819	\$386,297	-\$6,478	\$386,297
Education	\$446	\$1,000	-\$554	\$1,000
Outreach	\$191	\$600	-\$409	\$600
Office Expenses	\$11,709	\$12,090	-\$381	\$12,090
Utilities	\$37,533	\$33,415	\$4,118	\$33,415
Property Maintenance	\$31,542	\$34,440	-\$2,898	\$34,440
Stewardship	\$0	\$350	-\$350	\$350
Family Ministries	\$1,705	\$5,290	-\$3,585	\$5,290
Youth Board	\$2,831	\$6,100	-\$3,269	\$6,100
Children's Ministry	\$911	\$6,700	-\$5,789	\$6,700
Admin Council	\$2,643	\$2,600	\$43	\$2,600
Total Operating Expense	\$508,790	\$528,131	-\$19,341	\$528,131
Mortgage Payment	\$30,960	\$30,960	\$0	\$30,960
Total Expenses	\$539,750	\$559,091	-\$19,341	\$559,091
Surplus or (Deficit)	\$54,413	\$1,601	\$52,812	\$1,601
Other Information:				
Operating Fund Balance	\$153,978			
Restricted Funds Balance	\$122,826			
Building Loan Balance	\$62,317			