

LIFELINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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MISCELLANEOUS MUSINGS

As I write this, we are in the midst of Lent and just a few weeks away from Holy Week and Easter. I look forward to this time of the Church year every year, as it is the greatest festival for Christians, filling us with joy and the hope that because He lives, we too shall live. I also appreciate that it is the end of a time of fasting and penitential prayer. Don't get me wrong, I love Lent too, but "for everything there is a season," and when that season is over, I am always glad.

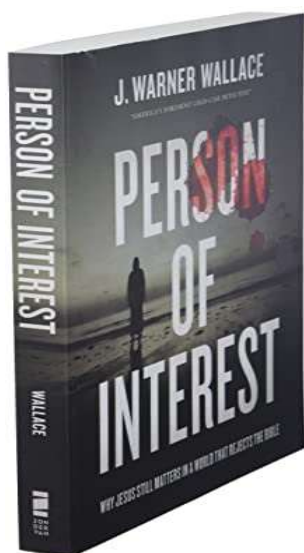
The midweek Lenten services and soup suppers have gone well and been well-attended. I think the series, Witnesses to Christ by Reed Lessing has been helpful and seems to be well-received. I hope those of you who got the devotional booklets have found them useful. There are still a few left in the narthex in case you are interested. Even if you have not been able to attend Wednesday services, do plan to join us for Maundy Thursday (April 14th) and Good Friday (April 15th) as these services truly help prepare us for Easter Sunday.

In other news, I'm happy to report that things are going very well at Lord of Life. We are blessed to have new members join us (2 at the end of March and 6 in April). We also have a number of folks willing to step up and volunteer serving on the Administrative Council and on various boards and positions. Too often churches have older retired folks doing all the heavy lifting, but I am glad to say that many of our younger folks are getting involved and taking a turn. Not every church is so blessed.

The debt reduction plea was also very well-received and the response was wonderful. So far, the extra giving toward the debt reduction has managed to knock out about 10% of our remaining debt. Thank you so much!

Another blessing has been our college group, which just started last fall. We have about 6 regulars and have had several others join in from time to time or whenever they are in town. We meet every Sunday at Noon for lunch and study. Recently, we completed a 10 part apologetics study by J. Warner Wallace called "Person of Interest: Why Jesus still matters in a world that rejects the Bible".

This study took a unique approach to how Jesus has influenced the world unlike any other person, and how this supports the claims of Christians that Jesus is the Son of God. As a former cold-case detective, Wallace wondered what could be deduced about Jesus without using the New Testament. He compares this approach to investigating a no-body homicide where a person has gone missing and is presumed murdered. In such instances where the body has not been found, detectives look at all kinds of surrounding events before and after the disappearance and piece together evidence to come up with the most likely explanation. This technique has resulted in homicide convictions even without a body. In a similar manner, Wallace contends that without the New Testament written by eye-witnesses of Jesus, it is still possible to look at how Jesus has profoundly impacted the culture, education, the arts and sciences, and how much the world seemed to be preparing for Jesus' arrival spiritually and has been so overwhelmingly influenced by him since.



For example, no religion since Christianity has attempted to ignore Jesus. All faiths after him (Islam, Baha'i, New Age, the cults, etc.) have to offer some explanation for who Jesus is. Jesus has even impacted religions that preceded Him (for example, Buddhism and Hinduism) as they too must explain or come up with some way of dealing with Jesus. Christ Himself, however, ignored all false religions before Him. Jesus didn't need to explain how He fit in the framework of Mithraism or Zoroastrianism, for example. In fact, Jesus' largest impact on religion has been to supplant many that ended shortly after the rise of Christianity.

The book gives several other examples of the impact Jesus has had and points out how all of this is from a man who never left a small part of land in the Middle East. Jesus never wrote a book or held a political office or led an army. He had no access to social media or any modern tools used today to broadcast a message. He didn't come from a prominent family, was never formally educated in a fancy school, didn't own a home or have money and possessions. His work lasted only three short years, and for all appearances, ended in complete failure with His own disciple betraying Him and the people calling for Him to be executed. Yet this man has had billions of followers and has changed history unlike anyone else in history and it isn't even close!

If this study sounds interesting to you, can read his book which was published last year by Zondervan. I recommend it. I also can loan you the study if you would like to use it for your small group.

Blessings in Christ,

PrS

prepare for worship in april

April 3: Fifth Sunday in Lent

Texts: Is. 43:16-21; Phil. 3:(4b-7) 8-14; Luke 20:9-20
Hymn of the Day: "My Song Is Love Unknown," 430

April 6: Midweek Lent V, 1:30 PM & 7 PM

April 10: Sunday of the Passion

Texts: Deut. 32:36-39; Phil. 2:5-11; Luke 22:1-23:56 or
Luke 23:1-56 or John 12:20-43
Hymn of the Day: "All Glory, Laud, and Honor," 438

April 14: Maundy Thursday, 1:30 PM & 7 PM

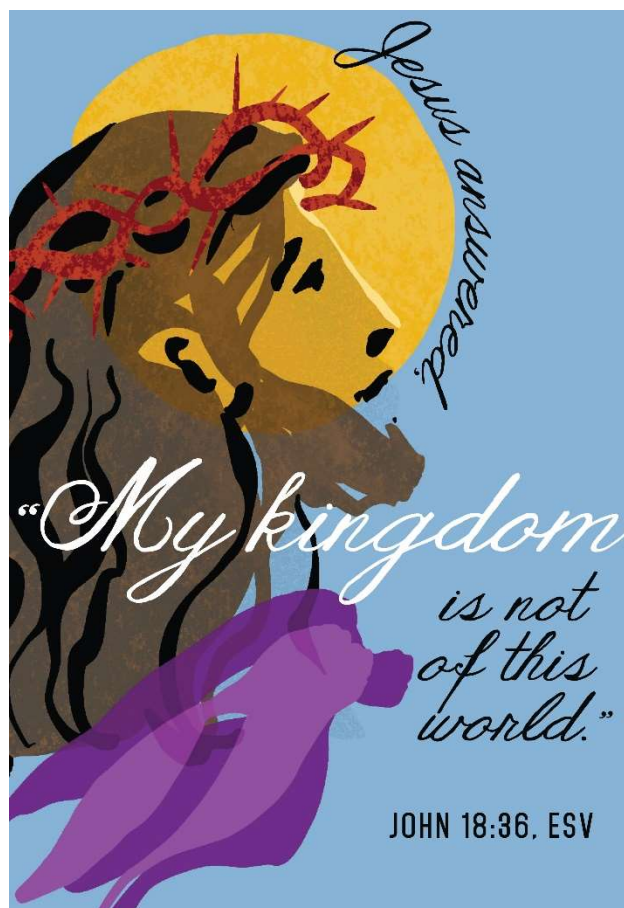
April 15: Good Friday, 7:30 PM

April 17: The Resurrection of Our Lord

Texts: Is. 65:17-25; 1 Cor. 15:19-26; Luke 24:1-12
Hymn of the Day: "Awake, My Heart, with Gladness,"
467

April 24: Second Sunday of Easter

Texts: Acts 5:12-20 (21-32); Rev. 1:4-18; L John 20:19-31
Hymn of the Day: "O Sons and Daughters of the King,"
470 or 471



LORD OF LIFE DEBT REDUCTION - WHY NOW?

Debt reduction/elimination is an invigorating aspiration, for individuals who are financing a home or vehicle and for organizations trying to free up cash flows to utilize for other purposes. Lord of Life Lutheran Church is similarly challenged currently with a very manageable debt burden on our real estate in a potentially rising interest rate economic cycle.

As many of you are aware, our church facilities were constructed and financed over a period of time as successive opportunities for expansion occurred, with debt reaching a peak of \$1,695,000 in 2008. As of February, 2022 the outstanding balance of our debt is \$148,208 and the interest rate on this variable interest rate loan is 3.625%, historically very low. **However, as most of you are aware, economic market forces will cause those interest rates to rise in the near term.**

This is a prime time for us to begin a focus on reducing our loan, as every extra payment will be weighted more heavily to reduce the principal balance, thus saving interest expense and eventually debt elimination and freeing up offerings to be directed to other ministries. A dedicated group of Lord of Life parishioners have made extra principal payments on our loan over those 14 years with significant benefit. This is a great time to concentrate on a common goal. As you know, consistent extra monthly giving counts up over time, even in small amounts.



Prayerfully consider setting a personal challenge to participate in this effort. No written commitment is required on your part, but a personal determination to be intentional and disciplined in execution of this plan. Please use the envelopes in the Narthex to make your extra payment or note on your check the amount you would like to allocate to debt reduction.

Every contribution is significant in this worthy goal.

Yours in Christ,
Pat Greer
Endowment Committee Chair



LWML Texas District 42nd Biennial Convention
June 16–18, 2022
Hyatt Regency Houston West
Houston, Texas

Bible Verse:

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness (Lamentations 3:22-23).

Key Objectives:

In a world of uncertainty, we will:

1. **Know** and **Trust** in God's faithfulness to His promises and to us
2. **Rejoice** in His might through worship and praise
3. **Share** His faithfulness and might with others

Registration

The 42nd Biennial Convention of the LWML Texas District will be held at the Hyatt Regency Houston West, 13210 Katy Freeway, Houston, Texas, on June 16-18, 2022. **Registration is open!** To take advantage of the discounted registration fee, registrations must be submitted or postmarked by May 1. See the Spring 2022 issue of *Linked by Love* or visit lwmltxdist.org for more information.

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 Chris Oltmann at (972) 727-6330 or Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Usually meet the 2nd Sat. of each month at 6:30 PM for Bible study

MIXED BLESSINGS


- † For info contact Fred and Ruth Bernhardt at (972) 398-0771
- † Usually meet the 3rd Sat. 3/19 of each month at 3:00 PM

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

Welcome Griffin Barnes!





APRIL

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 Brandon Lund
- 2 Teresa Strecker
- 3 Kathy Hite
- 8 Jon Chumbley
- 8 Brian Wolf
- 11 Grant Kostrzewa
- 14 Bob Helms
- 15 Dudley Hall
- 15 Louetta Sistek
- 15 Brooks & Joanna Smith (27)
- 16 Karen Lund
- 17 Jeff Berger
- 19 Lynda Abbott
- 22 Charles & Suzanne Gabriel (22)
- 22 Scott & Christine Messinger (27)
- 22 Rhonda Tabor
- 25 Kathy Helms
- 25 Rix Scarth
- 25 Laurie & Tom George (35)
- 26 Bon & Becky Padgett (25)
- 27 Mike & Sandra Paradise (59)
- 28 Katie Short
- 30 Earl & Karen Lund (34)

Born into our world
February 22, 2022

Born into God's family
March 13, 2022

Lord of Life Lutheran Church
Summarized Statement of Activity
2 Months Ending February 28, 2022

	Y-T-D Operating Funds	Y-T-D Budget	Variance	Jan-Dec 2022 Budget
Contributions				
Regular Offerings	\$101,488	\$97,405	\$4,083	\$560,692
Other	\$22	\$0	\$22	\$0
Total Income	\$101,510	\$97,405	\$4,105	\$560,692
Expenses				
Benevolences	\$7,104	\$6,818	\$286	\$39,248
Elders	\$66,201	\$64,384	\$1,817	\$386,297
Education	\$139	\$100	\$39	\$1,000
Outreach	\$36	\$100	(\$64)	\$600
Office Expenses	\$1,735	\$1,440	\$295	\$12,090
Utilities	\$5,227	\$6,065	(\$838)	\$33,415
Property Maintenance	\$1,296	\$3,090	(\$1,794)	\$34,440
Stewardship	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$350
Family Ministries	\$11	\$500	(\$489)	\$5,290
Youth Board	\$120	\$2,300	(\$2,180)	\$6,100
Children's Ministry	\$218	\$900	(\$682)	\$6,700
Admin Council	\$523	\$400	\$123	\$2,600
Total Operating Expense	\$82,611	\$86,097	(\$3,487)	\$528,131
Mortgage Payment	\$9,486	\$5,160	\$4,326	\$30,960
Total Expenses	\$92,097	\$91,257	\$840	\$559,091
Surplus or (Deficit)	\$9,413	\$6,148	\$3,266	\$1,601
Other Information:				
Operating Fund Balance	\$105,887			
Restricted Funds Balance	\$128,939			
Building Loan Balance	\$148,208			

DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES IS THE 20th — lol.newsletter.editor@gmail.com