

February  
2021



Lord of Life Lutheran

Lifelines

## A Note from Pastor Amanda

It feels like we don't need Lent right now. Anybody with me? In all honesty, we've pretty much been living in Lent since last year: remembering and facing our own mortality, giving stuff up, praying a *whole* lot more, and giving when we have nothing left to give. We "get Lent" in a way we may have piously glossed over in the past.

And yet ... maybe this year Lent will truly guide us back into life. While it encompasses all the things listed above, it's also a chance to reframe them. Death isn't the end and it doesn't have the final word in our lives. We have given up some of the junk that clouded what was important to us. We learned the value of listening and just "be"-ing rather than producing. And we've seen how giving opens us up to receive God's blessings and strength.

At its core, Lent is about returning to God and finding that God is faithful. And this year in the lectionary (the cycle of Scriptures we read on Sundays), we get to hear the consistent promises of the loving God of the Hebrew Bible (our Old Testament). We will trace the promises God makes to folks like Noah, Abram and Sarai, to the people freed from Egypt, and to us, and how those promises shape

us... and the God who makes them.

Our theme, "Promise Us", will carry us through from February 17 through Good Friday on April 2. We will also reflect on those promises – and how they point to Christ – together in evening prayer on Wednesdays at 7pm. I will be using resources created by 5 pastors posted at [barneeseworship.com](http://barneeseworship.com) – so if you're interested, you can find more information and resources for your own spiritual practices there.

I am looking forward to digging deep into these promises God makes, finding our hope for the future rooted in our past, and moving forward into life knowing God claims us and carries us through whatever we may face.

Tied up in God's promises,  
~Pastor Amanda



Join in Lenten Worship Wednesdays at 7pm!

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### Dates to note:

Mondays: 10am Bible Study  
8th: 7pm Council Meeting  
14th & 28th: 6pm Youth Group  
17th: Ash Wednesday Worship  
24th: Lent Wednesday Worship  
25th: 5pm Storytelling Workshop!

# Returning to Worship

We've been watching the case rate count and are getting close to returning to in-person worship! Remember to check Alaska's Covid reports at <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/COVID-19/alertlevels.aspx> We go by the rate posted on Thursday afternoon and will announce in Friday's bulletin email if the sanctuary is open on Sunday. **If you are feeling ill or are waiting for a result from a Covid test, please do not come to worship.** Do not risk exposing others—even if you think it's a cold.

If you plan on worshipping in the building, please keep the following in mind:

11-20 case rate: worship will be in person, masks required upon entry and during worship

5-10 case rate: worship will be in person, masks required upon entry, may be removed in worship

<5 case rate: worship will be in person, masks are optional

We will sit physically distanced, use the pre-packaged Communion cups, and if we sing, we will do so with masks on. A few things will shift from what we're used to: we're not handing out a full-size bulletin or hymnals or Bibles for now. There will be a basket near the stairs for offering. Bring your own coffee, our machines are unplugged. Hang your coats on your chair instead of the coatrack. Simple, little things.

We will need extra hands to Serve on Sunday as ushers and guides into worship and a clean-up/wipe-down crew of 2-3 people. Please contact the church office to sign up. There will be a brief training or run-through of your duties in these unique roles. Thank you for serving!

**\* We will still be live on Facebook! \*** (and later posted on our website via Youtube) You may continue worshipping God with us from home until you are comfortable being in person.

Since we need to prepare for all possibilities, **Wednesday worship in Lent** (Feb 17 thru Mar 24) has a Zoom link ready: <https://luthersem.zoom.us/j/94496768288?pwd=Qk11cmFvUWtyU0s5cFQ3akNNYnZSQTo9>

You may also call in at 253-215-8782 and use the Meeting ID 944 9676 8288 and passcode: 791592

## Youth Events



We meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>  
Sunday of each month:

**February 14 and 28!**

**CONFIRMATION RESUMED!**

Meeting before youth group those Sundays  
from 4:30pm—6:00pm!

We are finishing our study of the Bible with  
the New Testament: life of Jesus, letters of  
faith, and how to read Revelation.

**YOUTH GROUP** from 6:00pm—7:30pm

We're talking how we build community in a  
different way because of Jesus. Where is your  
place? What about someone else's place?

## Storytelling Workshop

*"After nourishment, shelter and companionship, stories  
are the thing we need most in the world."* -Philip Pullman

Storytelling is an art. What makes a good story? How to  
tell it best? On **Thursday, February 25, 5 PM**, a synod-  
wide workshop on storytelling will be held. We will  
explore how to identify stories of God at work and how  
to tell those stories for impact. We will also discuss  
practical ways to share stories.

This event is free, but please [register on the synod  
website](#) to receive the Zoom link and workshop-related  
documents. A second workshop will discuss digital  
storytelling tips.

We tell stories for ourselves, but we also tell them for  
others. Telling stories is a way to invite others into the  
story of God, and to partner in what God is doing in this  
world. Everyone loves a good story!

# RIP Medical Debt



A Twin Cities congregation has used a powerful financial lever to improve the lives of hundreds of families while spotlighting a societal problem: the crushing weight of medical bills.

Every day 79M Americans choose between paying medical bills and basic needs like food and shelter

A partnership between Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Maple Grove, Minnesota and a New York nonprofit has resulted in **the forgiveness of medical debts in excess of \$1.5 million.** How? \$15,000 in donations from Lord of Life worshippers means **each dollar collected wiped out more than \$100 in debt.** “The math is what drives this story,” said Pastor Joel Wight Hoogheem. A church member researched the nonprofit, RIP Medical Debt; after confirming that RIP was rock solid and legitimate, a partnership was proposed to the congregation.

Every \$100 you donate forgives \$10,000 in Medical Debt

RIP Medical Debt buys debt in bulk from medical debt buyers at less than 1% of face value. Since 2014, **\$2.6 BILLION** in medical debt has been retired and **1.7 million families** have had their debt forgiven. **\$32.87 can abolish the medical debt of an entire family**, allowing them to invest in a home, further education, or retirement.

**Why donate to RIP?** Lots of reasons!

- ◇ Your dollar goes a long way. 100% of your donation goes towards abolishing medical debt.
- ◇ Donations are tax-deductible.
- ◇ There are specific programs for veterans and active service members.
- ◇ There are no tax consequences for those whose medical debts are forgiven.

Two thirds of bankruptcies are driven by medical bills

**FAQs:** Can you have an individual debt forgiven? No. But you can keep it local. Two groups have partnered with RIP Medical Debt to raise funds to erase the qualifying medical debt for the entire state of Alaska! Go to <https://secure.qgiv.com/event/ak/> to donate or choose another campaign at <https://ripmedicaldebt.org>. — LivingLutheran.org May 2020 & <https://ripmedicaldebt.org>

**A personal note:** My sister and her husband had a premature baby; he spent months in a neonatal ICU. After insurance paid, they still owed the equivalent of several years’ income. Eventually, they had to declare bankruptcy, which ruined their credit for decades. –Jo Schackman

## Mask Thank You

Dear Mask Makers –

Thank you for the masks! Our soup kitchen feeds the highest number of people in the county and we rely on masks for folks to receive food and keep our volunteers safe and healthy. Your work and partnership allows us to continue to do that and use donated funds for food rather than Personal Protective (PP) gear.

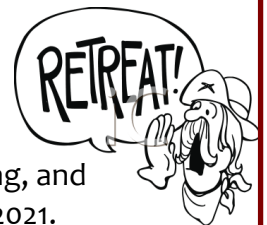
Keep up the good work, good and faithful servants!

In Christ, Pastor Julie Kelly (Evie Freeman’s daughter)  
Episcopal Church of the Saviour, Hanford, CA

## Council Retreat

Hey, where did the minutes go...?

Instead of a monthly meeting, the church council met at the end of January for an annual retreat. They reviewed our purpose and ministry, worked on restructuring passed in our November meeting, and brainstormed goals for 2021.





Lord of Life Lutheran Church

North Pole, Alaska

## 2021 CHURCH COUNCIL

President:	Liz Sandbo	687-1918
Vice President:	Sean Garrison	888-2052
Secretary:	Cheryl Park	488-4167
Treasurer:	Sam Aleshire	488-4692
Worship & Music:	Curt Renner	488-4405
Youth:	Kaylee Lindhag	388-5273
Stewardship:	Julie Tanguay	906-290-9456
Financial Secretary:	Becky Peterson	385-9581
Pastor:	Amanda Kempthorne	322-2065 (cell)

**\*\* We are beginning our transition into our new structure for council! Keep your council in prayer as we meet at the end of January and set goals and plans for the new year! \*\***

## Lord of Life Lutheran

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North Pole Alaska, 99705  
Website: [www.lordoflifeak.com](http://www.lordoflifeak.com)

Phone: 488-6720  
Pastor Amanda's cell: 322-2065

### E-mail:

Pastor Amanda: [pastor@lordoflifeak.com](mailto:pastor@lordoflifeak.com)  
Jo: [office@lordoflifeak.com](mailto:office@lordoflifeak.com)

### Office Hours:

Monday - Friday 9am to 1pm

### Mission Statement

"God's word moves us to make connections by welcoming all, strengthening and serving the healthy and hurting."

**Next Church Council Meeting: February 8 @ 7:00 pm**

Newsletter deadline: 20th of each month.

Get the latest on our website:

[www.lordoflifeak.com](http://www.lordoflifeak.com)

or

Follow our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/lordoflifeak](http://www.facebook.com/lordoflifeak)  
(even if you don't have a Facebook page!)

## Special Prayers and Concerns

### Birthdays

- 2/1 Mary Ash
- 2/6 Christine Lindquist
- 2/7 John Hoffmann
- 2/12 Kristi Boatman
- 2/15 Caleb Boatman
- 2/19 Riley Nassuk
- 2/22 John Warnke
- 2/24 Nancy Uptgraft



### Anniversaries

- 2/22 Donna & Steve Heideman



*If your important date is missing,  
please let us know!  
We don't want to miss  
celebrating with you!*

### Prayers for:

- \* Beverly, sister of Marilyn W— healing from fractures
- \* Helen D, Eileen D's mother-in-law, tested positive for Covid
- \* Gary and Evie F - waiting to move to a TN care facility
- \* Tony F—recent heart attack and surgery recovery
- \* Knutsons as they settle in MI
- \* Those with on-going health complications:
  - Steve H battling cancer
  - Meg O hip pain
  - Brenda S healing a broken leg
  - Gary O general health

*Contact [office@lordoflifeak.com](mailto:office@lordoflifeak.com)  
to sign up for prayer chain email!*

### February Prayer Partner:

Specialized Ministries and leaders connected to Alaska

Please pray for:

- The Reverend Susan Halvor, Providence Chaplain
- The Reverend Christina Mauntel, U.S. Navy Chaplain in VA
- The Reverend Doctor Moses Pneumaka, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary
- The Reverend Marcia Wakeland, "The Listening Post"
- Alan Budahl, Lutheran Social Services of Alaska
- The Reverend Jeremie Vore, U.S. Army Chaplain at Fort Wainwright