

January
2022



Lord of Life Lutheran

LifeLines

Notes from interim pastor Curt Matz

I have been asked to be - and have agreed to be - the interim pastor at Lord Of Life. Many of you know me since I have been attending worship services for several months and served as the supply pastor in recent weeks. I am an ELCA pastor who served as pastor at New Hope Methodist Presbyterian church for six years until retiring in April of this year. My wife Darlene and I live in Fairbanks. We have two sons and three grandchildren who also live in Fairbanks.

As I approach this position I am awed by the trust Bishop Wickstrom and the congregation have placed in me. It will be a challenging time as we examine the past, carry out ministry in the present, and prepare for the future. I sense the active involvement of God's Holy Spirit and trust that Spirit to guide us and lead us as we seek to discern the direction God is leading this congregation.

While I will be carrying out many of the functions of a called pastor, the role of an interim is not merely to "keep things going" until a new pastor is called. This is a time to look in the corners and brush away the cobwebs to find strengths, weaknesses, needs, and concerns that can be easily overlooked or ignored when we carry on "business as usual." It is a time to look at the past but not be controlled by the past. It is a time to learn from the past and explore ways in which the past informs as well as hinders our present and future ministries. It is even a time to be bold and experiment with different

approaches to ministry. One way that is happening already is through the use of liturgists as part of our worship leadership.

As I have gotten to know Lord of Life during the years I have lived in this area - and yes I did indeed learn things about Lord of Life even while serving at New Hope - I have come to recognize that this congregation has strengths that will serve us well in the weeks and months to come. These weeks are likely to be exciting in many ways but also frustrating and discouraging in others. I am here not to tell you what to do or how to do it but to work together with you. I am here to aid you in your ministry, not to do your ministry for you. We are companions on a journey whose ending is unknown.

I want to conclude with a prayer as we begin a new calendar year and a new stage in the life of this community of faith.

Gracious God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



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Dates to Note

9th: 4pm Confirmation/6pm Youth
13th: 1:30pm School Lunch Prep
23rd: 4pm Confirmation/6pm Youth
30th: Loving Families Host Week begins

"LifeLines"

Youth Events

Youth Group (6th-12th grade)

Jan 9th & 23rd @ 6pm

The Youth Gathering in Minnesota this summer and fundraising for it will be discussed.

Confirmation is 4-5:30pm on those dates to make it convenient for all.

p.s. Lots of kids came to the sleepover at the church Dec. 23rd and had a **great** time!

Say Cheese

A picture is worth a thousand words
— Arthur Brisbane

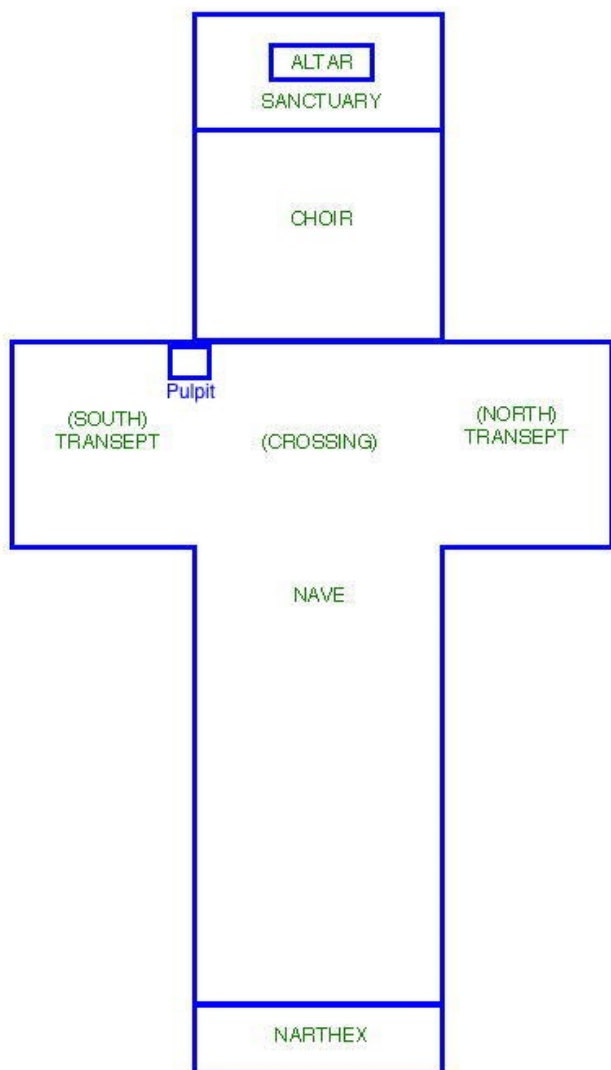
Snapshots tell a story without words, they make us smile, what's not to love? We use as many as we can on our website, and try to change them

out often to keep it fresh.

At Bible Study, fellowship, or any church gathering, grab your phone, fire off a few snapshots, and forward them to us (office@lordoflifeak.com in case you forgot). We'll see what we can use!



Parts of a Traditional Church



From above, a traditional, cruciform church looks like a cross. Its layout has much in common with ancient temples, in which the farther you go into the building, the holier the sections of the building are.

The shape of a cross is clear in this floor plan. Worshippers enter through the **Narthex**, a Greek word meaning “entrance hall”. They sit in the **Nave**. The word “nave” has the same root as the word “navy” and refers to a boat. The church is like Noah’s ark - it rescues us from the flood of sin. At the head of the **Nave** is the **Pulpit**, from which the clergy preach.

Crossing the head of the nave are the two **Transepts**, which form the arms of the cross in the floor plan. Lord of Life has no transepts or crossing, as it was not built in a cruciform style.

Next comes the **Chancel**, where the leaders of worship are. It is separated from the **Nave** by steps. The chancel has **two** sections, the **Choir**, where the choir sits (and where the organ or piano may be), and the **Sanctuary**, where the **Altar** is located. The **Sanctuary** is separated from the **Choir** by the altar rail, where communicants stand or kneel to receive Holy Communion. The **Altar** is on a raised platform, traditionally with three steps.

So these are the primary sections of a traditional, cross-shaped church: **narthex**, **nave**, **transepts** and **crossing**, and **chancel**, which includes the **choir** and the **sanctuary**.

Pathways in Compassion

Four years ago, members of Transfiguration Lutheran Church in Fenton, Michigan created a nursing home visitation ministry. Pathways in Compassion provides companionship to those who never get visitors. 20 parishioners visit residents in two nursing homes, offering a listening ear and an uplifting word. “This ministry directs part of its attention to the caregiving staff too. They are often overworked and underpaid,” says Pastor Mark Fisher.

“750,000 people in American nursing homes have been fundamentally abandoned.”

“[It’s] a way for me to apply my gift of listening to those who desperately need to be listened to.”

Pathways grew out of the awareness that people their parishioners visited in nursing homes simply had no one. It became clear that a need for a visitation ministry existed. Grants supported training for volunteers. As of November 2018, Transfiguration had trained volunteers from 17 churches.

Volunteer Lennie Thurston said, “I feel closer to God when I offer communion to a resident.” —*LivingLutheran.org*

Council Highlights

Bible Study: 6 Truths to Encourage You During Pastoral Transition. 1. God will be with this church at all times. 2. God is in control. God “works all things according to the counsel of His will.” 3. God plans good out of this transition. God has promised that he works all things together for the good of his people 4. It’s okay to weep. 5. Ministry must go on. 6. The church must not scatter.

Treasurer’s report: Undesignated checking: \$10,228.22; Designated Checking: \$5,803.03; Debit Card checking: \$1239.81; Savings: \$17,440.09; Total assets: \$34,711.715.

2021 Goal Check:

- ◆ Discover and tell faith stories. Work to be done on this goal. Consider for a 2022 goal.
- ◆ Research/launch a signup & serve program. Completed. Decided it was not useful at this time for Serving on Sunday Signups. Revisit its use as needed.
- ◆ Complete Gift Inventory for the congregation. Completed. Council and Ministry Teams will use the data to help engage the congregation in church ministry work.
- ◆ Strengthen members’ connection. Desire to bring fellowship back. Still watching cases. What are new ways we can connect?
- ◆ Engage people in worship planning. Ongoing. Teams will meet in 2022 to plan next season.

Ongoing Business:

- ◆ Advent Services will not continue this month due to lack of attendance and interest.
- ◆ Bob and Barb Thoma volunteered to lead the New Member Orientation and are communicating with those interested to set meeting dates.

New Business:

- ◆ Loving Families’ Date Night (to choose host weeks) December 7th. Lord of Life Hosts again the week of January 30th (if there are families in the program).
- ◆ Bishop Wickstrom appointed an Interim Pastor for the council to consider. Motion passed to accept the appointment and work on an Interim Agreement.
- ◆ Looking for members to be on the Site Profile Team.



Lord of Life Lutheran Church

North Pole, Alaska

2022 CHURCH COUNCIL

President: Liz Sandbo
 Vice President: Bob Thoma
 Secretary: Cheryl Park
 Treasurer: Dianna Lindhag

At Large Members: Denise Hradecky
 Kevin Powers
 John Hoffman

Check the directory for our council members' numbers!

Interim Pastor: Curt Matz
 Financial Secretary: Becky Peterson

Lord of Life Lutheran

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 North Pole Alaska, 99705
 Website: www.lordoflifeak.com

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 Pastor Curt's cell: (907) 322-2065

E-mail

Jo: 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/Retreat:
 January ?, date not finalized at publication

Newsletter deadline: 20th of each month.
 Get the latest on our website:
www.lordoflifeak.com/the-latest

or

Follow our Facebook page, worship live Sundays at 10:30am:
www.facebook.com/lordoflifeak

Special Prayers and Concerns

Birthdays

1/7 Katy Castor
 1/9 Ashley Garrison
 1/11 Meg Ojala
 1/23 Riley Maranville
 1/23 Michelle Powers
 1/24 Ty Peterson
 1/30 Liz Sandbo



Prayers for:

~ Tom Bear (friend of Margi U) - healing from surgery
 ~ All those traveling outside for a break from winter weather
 ~ Those with on-going health complications:
 Meg O, heart and mobility
 Anyone suffering from SAD

Contact office@lordoflifeak.com
 to sign up for prayer chain emails

Alaska Synod Prayer Partner for January:

River of Life Lutheran Church, Chugiak, AK

Please pray for:

- Care for each other as Covid spreads through their community
- Continued generosity toward their building fund
- A meeting of the minds at the annual congregational meeting

Anniversaries

None this month!



If your important date is missing, please let us know so we can celebrate with you!

