

May
2023



Lord of Life Lutheran

Lifelines

Notes from Curt Matz

"Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope."

I Thessalonians 4:13

This month I will be very personal. In more than twenty years as a pastor I have had the privilege of accompanying many families as they faced the approaching death of a loved one. In recent days, I accompanied my wife of 52 years on that journey. During those days I often had to remind myself of Bible verses read, prayers said, and conversations carried out with those facing the reality of death and then apply what I had said to others to myself. I had to believe that God was working in and through the presence of death to bring ultimate healing to my loved one. Despite Darlene's physical struggles during her last days and my own wild emotional swings I felt the strong presence of God in ways I never experienced before. I felt God saying "All will be well both for you and for her." I experienced in a deeper way the meaning and the power of the kind of love that seeks the welfare of another rather than seeking that which might benefit me most. I also experienced the strong presence of the community of faith as others - friends, relatives, hospital chaplains, people from Lord of Life and New

Hope, fellow pastors and many others - stood by me to support me, to encourage me, and to pray with me and for me and for Darlene and the medical people who cared for her.

The two rooms Darlene occupied at Providence had great views of the Chugach Mountains. One early morning as I was looking at those mountains and reflecting, I remembered Darlene's favorite Psalm, Psalm 121. It begins, "I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where will my help come?" It ends with the promise that "The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore." I was also reminded of this Psalm as I returned to Fairbanks and experienced one of the clearest and most spectacular views of Denali that I have ever had. I trust that promise - and all of God's other promises - to sustain me in the days, weeks, and years ahead as my life continues without my partner and friend beside me. I trust that the risen Jesus is with me to guide me and lead me as he walks beside me through the valley of the shadow of death and on into whatever the future may bring. I trust that Jesus is also with you and with Lord of Life and will accompany you and bless you in all that you do.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Volunteer for VBS

Darlene Matz Ministry	2
VBS Grant	
Council Highlights	3
Special Dates & Prayers	4

Dates to Note

1st: 6pm Book Club Dinner
8th: 7pm Council Meeting
11th: 12:30pm School Lunch Prep
29th: OFFICE CLOSED

Ministry of Darlene Matz

Darlene Matz grew up in Bena, MN on the Leech Lake Indian Reservation. She attended college at Concordia St. Paul, where she acquired a DCE (Director of Christian Education) and met her future husband, Curt. Although she graduated in one of the first classes of DCEs, she never took a call as a Director of Christian Education.

Darlene was especially talented with crafts; Vacation Bible Schools and Sunday School had crafts better than those suggested by the curriculum. Darlene facilitated thousands of activities and crafts, from simple crafts for toddlers up to complex crafts that high school VBS volunteers asked to do. When Curt went to seminary, Darlene took up knitting hats. She donated her hats wherever kids were in need of them. Thousands of kids in the North were blessed to have one of Darlene's hats.

Although Curt was the face of the mission, Darlene was critical to operations. Curt would lead services and preach. Darlene played hymns on an electronic keyboard. Ministry in Trapper Creek evolved to include a children's activity similar to Vacation Bible School, named "Super Sunday" with crafts and snacks provided by Darlene. She loved children, and provided the blessing of mothering love that some of the kids just didn't have. She managed the chaos and provided community, fellowship, and resources to help them grow in faith.

Darlene came to Alaska in 2013 to care for a grandchild while his mother finished a degree. Their son heard about the need for a pastor at New Hope so connected Curt with the call committee and the rest is history!

She served as a lay minister for the Presbyterian congregation in Kaktovik from January of 2016 through February 2020. Her last visit was in 2021 for the funeral where she was able to provide comfort and hope for the extended family and village.

VBS Grant

Reggie Swedberg from KJNP (King Jesus North Pole) radio station contacted Lord of Life recently to advise us that they had ministries grant money available. He said that our Vacation Bible School would qualify for the grant. The only thing needed was a short statement about the use of funds from us within the week. Kaylee Lindhag followed up the same day (thank you, Kaylee!). We were notified the next day that we had been awarded a \$250 grant and that a check was ready for pick up. The money should be in the bank by the time this publishes.

Mr. Swedberg invited LoL to "send them something" closer to VBS week and they would be happy to promote it for us. He further suggested that someone stop by, perhaps on a Saturday morning, to chat on the radio about VBS in order to generate additional interest. This is a generous offer, and we should definitely take advantage :)

Vacation Bible School will be July 10-14 this year. Evening hours (times not yet available). The theme is expected to be Superheroes—fun!!



Council Highlights

Bible Study: Led by Allen Griswold.

Treasurer's report: Dianna has learned that she can set up tithing for individuals.

Balances through March 31, 2023

Total Revenue	\$ 11,286.70
Expenditures	\$ 12,159.59
Net Operating Revenue	\$ - 872.89
Net Revenue	\$ - 856.27

Balances on March 31, 2023

Undesignated checking 0026:	\$ 20,931.07
Designated Checking 3594:	\$ 7,177.32
Debit Card Checking 3607:	\$ 1,548.90
Savings 0862:	\$ 29,330.46

Total Assets \$ 58,987.75



Pastor's report: Maundy Thursday had a good turnout. Good Friday had 20 people. Easter Service had 72 people. Easter Brunch had 78 people. A graveside service for Russell Sandbo will be performed June 17. Pastor Curt has been asked to do 2 baptisms this summer. Revelations (evening bible study) has 2 more sessions to go. Pastor Curt's wife, Darlene, was airlifted to Anchorage following a minor stroke April 10.

Ongoing Business:

- ◆ Collaborative Learning Program. The Synod congress approved hiring Seminary student David Ingram. There was a revision of the contract and there will be a Compensation Package for David; he is signing papers. Rev. Stacey Nalean-Carlson, Wartburg Theological Seminary, had concerns about the amount of money that would be needed for David's CLP trips to Iowa twice a year. The synod and/or Fairbanks Lutheran church might help monetarily.
- ◆ Annual review of office manager. Not done yet. Jo would prefer more time off than a salary raise.
- ◆ Electronic sign. Bob Thoma asked how much NP Gravel paid for their sign: \$50,000. He asked for another quote from Bright Electric.
- ◆ Other. Bob and Pastor Curt will check how much substitute pastors were paid in 2021. Communion will be blessed by Bishop Shelley.

New Business:

- ◆ Membership transfers. Done by office staff, not council.



Lord of Life Lutheran Church North Pole, Alaska

2023 CHURCH COUNCIL

President: Bob Thoma
 Vice President: Allen Griswold
 Secretary: Chris Blais
 Treasurer: Dianna Lindhag

At Large: Evan Keil
 Members: John Dart
 Kevin Powers

Interim Pastor: Curt Matz
 Financial Secretary: Becky Peterson

Lord of Life Lutheran

1005 Saint Nicholas Drive
 North Pole Alaska, 99705
 Website: www.lordoflifeak.com

Office Phone: (907) 488-6720
 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:
May 8 @ 7pm

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

- 5/3 Cody Kowalski
- 5/4 Lars Peterson
- 5/11 Carol Hughes
- 5/15 Curt Renner
- 5/15 Cliff Sandbo
- 5/18 James Aleshire
- 5/19 Brenda Kowalski
- 5/21 Kevin Marshall
- 5/23 Lynne Skjefte
- 5/24 Karen Kuhnert
- 5/26 Barbara Thoma
- 5/28 Julie Tanguay



Is your important date missing? please let us know so we can celebrate with you!

Prayers for:

- ~ Matz family, grieving loss of wife & mother Darlene
- ~ Todd (friend of Eileen D), terminal cancer
- ~ Those with on-going health issues:
 Meg O, on hospice
 Tanya A's son Bryan, jaw cancer

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

Alaska Synod Prayer Partner for May:

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church, Anchorage, AK

Please pray for:

- ~ Pastor Anna and congregation as they begin ministry together
- ~ Blessings on community garden project
- ~ Outreach to children in community
- ~ Care of the earth recycling ministry

Anniversaries

- 5/9 Denise & Fran Hradecky
- 5/23 Loretta & Er Pananen
- 5/30 Michelle & Kevin Powers
- 5/31 Vanessa & Josh Knutson

