

LIFE LINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Vol. 30, No. 2

Plano, Texas

February 2016

“Why don’t we have Communion more often at Lord of Life?” This question has been put to me several times over the past three years by various members of the congregation. It has also been raised with elders, and recently it was discussed in adult Bible class. So, after some discussion at our recent elders’ meeting, we have decided to try increasing the frequency of Holy Communion at Lord of Life. Throughout the season of Lent, we will offer the sacrament at both early and late service, every Sunday.

At this point in time, this is just an experiment to learn about what weekly Communion involves. We assume there will be some unforeseen logistical concerns with this change. For example: the altar guild will have more work on their hands, as will the elders since more men are needed to assist with the distribution. Our goal is to try this for a limited time and learn from it before committing to a new policy. We ask for your patience with this and encourage you to share your feedback.

What are the reasons for frequent reception of the sacrament?

In my conversations with people about this, their view of how often we should commune is most often formed by their own experience. Some people were raised receiving communion four times a year, others once a month; many of us were brought up communing every other week and still others received communion every Sunday. Why the difference? It makes sense that all Baptists do it one way and all Roman Catholics do it another, but why is there such a variety among Missouri Synod Lutherans? What is the “correct” Lutheran way? (Or, is there one?)

The first Lutherans modeled their practice after what had usually been done throughout the history of the Church, they communed every Sunday and on every festival. They clearly articulated this position when accused by Catholics of “abolishing the Mass.”

“At the outset we must again make the preliminary statement that we do not abolish the Mass, but religiously maintain and defend it. For among us masses are celebrated every Lord's Day and on the other festivals, in which the Sacrament is offered to those who wish to use it, after they have been examined and absolved. And the usual public ceremonies are observed, the series of lessons, of prayers, vestments, and other like things.”

Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article XXIV, 1. Philip Melancthon, 1531.

The frequent celebration of Holy Communion flows naturally from our theology that in the sacrament, we receive the true body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins. After all, who could argue that we do not need this as often as we can get it? How could you say we have “enough” of Christ or “enough” forgiveness? As repentant sinners, our Christian life is characterized as continuously abiding in Him and receiving from Him. We never have “enough” but always remain needful of Christ’s gifts –His Word and His sacraments to renew and strengthen us - and so we happily receive them from Him on a regular basis.

But one cannot make a law of this. You cannot say, “A Christian must receive Communion every week.” We cannot say this because Christ did not say this and such an approach only makes a law out of a gift we are free in Christ to receive. Christ

said, "Do this in remembrance of me." So, we understand from this that we are to "do this" (continually) but the frequency (weekly? monthly?) is not mandated.

Thus, we are free to differ in our practice of how often we choose to commune. So the question is not "What do I have to do?" but, "What is best?" When the discussion is framed this way, many Lutherans have come to the conclusion that what is best is regular frequent reception of the Sacrament. "Every Lord's Day and on other festivals..." as the first Lutherans concluded.

When and why did this change? I do not know for sure, but I suspect that theological considerations were overruled by practical ones.

Not too long ago, (just a few generations,) it was still common for Lutherans to "announce" before Communion. This meant going to the pastor the night before the service and declaring your intention to receive Communion the next day. Notice the Apology speaks of receiving the Supper after the communicants are "examined" and "absolved". Obviously, thoroughly examining (as in private confession and absolution) every single communicant the night before the sacrament was offered would involve a lot of time and effort. Undertaking such an effort every single week would be very difficult for a larger congregation to say the least. So perhaps it was this practice of "announcing" which led people toward less frequent Communion in Lutheran circles? But I suspect another influence as well.

In other Protestant churches, the sacrament is typically offered with much less frequency. This flows from their widely held but erroneous view that the main thing in the sacrament is not our receiving but rather, our remembering. For many Protestants, the sacrament is merely a meal of remembrance. It simply is something we do to help us remember what Christ did. They do not believe that Christ's true body and blood are given in, with, and under the bread and wine. With this approach, you could say that the one who communes is active because he does the act of remembering. The Lutheran view is exactly the opposite.

While Lutherans do not deny that we are indeed remembering what Christ has done, the greater thing that is happening is that Christ is coming to us. In the Lutheran (Biblical and historical) view, God is active and we are passive. He gives His

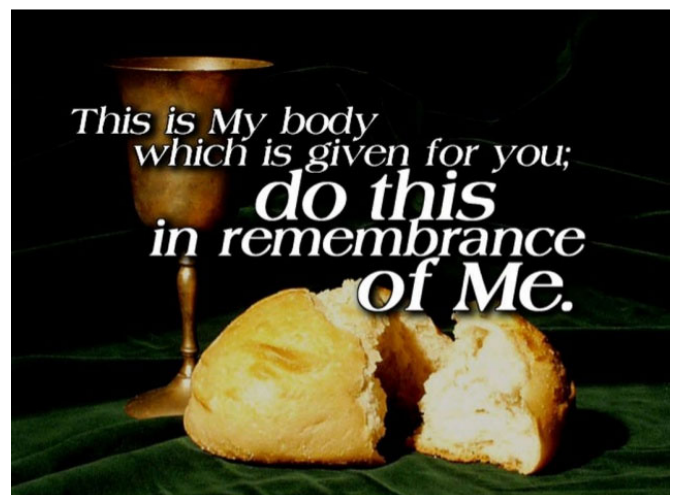
body and blood in the bread and wine and along with it we receive the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of faith. I suspect that part of the reason that so many Lutherans moved to communing less frequently was because they modeled their practice after those other Christian churches who offered the sacrament less often.

I know I have not answered every question that can be raised about this issue; that was not my intent. Rather, my hope is that by raising this issue, you will begin to ponder some important questions about the Lord's Supper and in light of them, consider how frequently you would like to receive it. For example: What is it you receive when you commune? How often do you need what is offered? Can you ever have enough of what Christ gives in the sacrament (His body and blood for the forgiveness of your sins)? Do the practical issues of more frequent communion outweigh the theological ones?

As I said, we are going to try weekly Communion as an experiment at Lord of Life. This is not the new policy set in stone, but it is an attempt to honor those members of the congregation who have brought the issue to us and to be consistent with our beliefs about what is received in the sacrament. We will try receiving Holy Communion more frequently, and then, we'll talk about it.

I look forward to the conversations,

Pr S



Music at Midday Concert

The Music at Midday Organ Concert for February will be on Wednesday, 3 February at 1.05pm. Benjamin Kolodziej will play music of Bach, Alcock, and others. This is a short, 35-40 minute and entertaining concert meant to be a diversion in the middle of the day. You are invited to partake in this musical fellowship! The complete schedule of dates for the spring term can be found on <http://planolutheran.com/musicatmidday/>.

Sacred Music Scholarship Competition Final Rounds

Join us for the final, live round of the Sacred Music Scholarship Competition for High School Students on Sunday, 21 February at 4.30pm. This second annual event, established by the music, youth, and outreach ministries at Lord of Life, seeks to encourage young musicians in their pursuit of music either as a vocation or avocation. Six young musicians, grades 10-12, playing piano, violin, or singing, will perform for three independent judges: Derrick Brookins, Director of Choral Activities at Plano Senior High School; Enric Madriguera, a concert classical guitarist and Professor of Music at Collin College and UTD, and Sam Eatherton, Minister of Music at Zion Lutheran Church in Dallas. After hearing the performances, the judges will adjourn and then return to announce the first (\$1500), second (\$1000), and third (\$500) prizes. Refreshments will be served during the judges' adjudication. Please come and support these young students! Visit www.planolutheran.com/scholarship for details.

Handbell Players Needed

We are in need of handbell players currently. If you have a basic knowledge of music reading and rhythms, we could use you. You don't have to be an expert music reader, but mostly just to be able to count to three and four! Rehearsals are Wednesdays at 6pm. If you would be willing to serve this way, please contact Benjamin Kolodziej (bkolodziej@planolutheran.com) or Susan Williams (rainboltsusan@yahoo.com).



prepare for worship in february

7 February: The Transfiguration of Our Lord

Texts: Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Hebrews 3:1-6;
Luke 9:28-36

Hymn of the Day: "O Wondrous Type, O Vision Fair," 413

14 February: The First Sunday in Lent

Texts: Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Romans 10:8b-13;
Luke 4:1-13

Hymn of the Day: "A Mighty Fortress," 656

21 February: The Second Sunday in Lent

Texts: Jeremiah 26:8-15; Philippians 3:17-4:1;
Luke 13:31-35

Hymn of the Day: "Lord, Thee I Love with all my Heart," 708

28 February: The Third Sunday in Lent

Texts: Ezekiel 33:7-20; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13;
Luke 13:1-9

Hymn of the Day: "God Moves in a Mysterious Way," 756



Potluck Luncheon

February 7, noon



Look for details in the bulletin.



Lutheran World Relief (LWR) Personal Care Kits

It's not too early to start collecting items for the Lutheran World Relief (LWR) Personal Care Kits, which will be assembled and shipped in April. Kits include:

- One light or medium weight bath-size towel (between 20"x 40" and 52" x 27"), dark color recommended
- Two bath-size bars of soap (4 to 5 oz) in original wrapping
- One adult size toothbrush in its original packaging (multi-pack toothbrushes may be used by sealing an individual toothbrush in a business-size envelope)
- One sturdy comb
- One pair of metal nail clippers

Items will be collected starting February 7th. Please leave all items in the LWR collection box in the narthex. Please help us meet our goal this year of 50 care kits.



Lutheran World Relief
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. LASTING PROMISE.



Teen Times

The time has come once again to participate in the Lord of Life Youth Ministry fundraisers in 2016! But first, I need to express gratitude on behalf of all those involved in our youth ministry to the members at Lord of Life. You see, on top of the normal contributions you make that keep our congregation financially sound, our youth ministry is additionally blessed by you from the donations we receive that make our summer youth trips and other activities possible. The kids who participate in fundraisers like the Valentine's Dinner and the car wash are amazed by the donation amounts. I will say it many times over next several months, but I really can't say it enough. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

So what are the youth raising funds for this year? There will be 11 Sr. IMPACT youth and 3 adults traveling to Nashville, Tennessee to attend the Higher Things Youth Conference on the campus of Vanderbilt University June 28 – July 1. Last summer we traveled to Seward, Nebraska and joined over 1000 fellow Lutherans in worship, Bible study, catechism instruction, and fun activities on the campus of Concordia University, Nebraska. It is predicted that 2016 will equal and possibly surpass it. The Higher Things conference is gaining recognition and popularity every year. The theme for this summer's conference is Bread of Life and you can learn more about it at www.higherthings.org

February will feature our annual Valentine's dinner on Saturday, Feb. 13 from 6 – 8pm. Reservations can be made on the list in the church narthex or emailing me at speters@planolutheran.org. Come enjoy an evening of great food, fellowship, and a few laughs. The event will be supported by Thrivent Financial.

There is also a Spirit Night for Lord of Life at Scotty P's Hamburgers located at the intersection of Parker and Custer in Plano on Sunday, Feb. 28 from 3 – 7pm. Bring the entire family and as many friends as you can and before you order, tell the cashier that you are from Lord of Life. At the end of the evening, Scotty P's will donate 15% of the total sales from Lord of Life guests back to the youth ministry. How great is that! March will bring another restaurant fundraiser at Dickey's BBQ located at 15th St. and Coit. The date is TBD but keep your lunch plans open on March 20 (Palm Sunday). The weekend after Easter, April 2, a garage sale is scheduled at the church pavilion. As in the past, you may bring your donations to the church beginning on the Monday after Easter Sunday (March 28).

Little Caesars Pizza Kits return this year starting the first Sunday in May. More details will be announced as this fundraiser draws closer. We also hope to have one more restaurant fundraiser in May as well. Sunday, June 5 will showcase the IMPACT youth ministry car wash. The kids work very hard, have some fun at the same time, and you get to drive home from church in a clean car! What a deal!

So, let the FUN-draisers begin!

Until next time, God's blessings!
Scott Peters

Valentine's Dinner



February 13, 2016

6:00 - 8:00 PM

Sponsored by Sr. High Youth

The Evening Menu:

Caesar salad

Lasagna and ravioli with pesto sauce

Garlic bread

Dessert: ice cream

Supported by Thrivent Financial

LOL CARE GROUPS

CAREERS IN CHRIST

- † For info contact Heidi Pittson at (214) 315-0302 or Carrie Sanford (903) 388-3081

COLLEGE CONNECTIONS

- † For info contact Pastor Shaltanis at PastorShaltanis@yahoo.com
 † Usually meet Sundays after the late service

EMPTY NESTERS' CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Mike and Sandra Paradise at (972) 424-2951 or itsparadise.inplano@verizon.net
 † Will meet on a Sat., Feb. 20 at 6:30 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. of each month at 6:30 PM

MOMS' GROUP

- † For info contact Kris Crabtree at (214) 705-0710 or crabtreefive@sbcglobal.net



- 1 Bette Martin
- 3 John Clark
- 3 Julz Cruz
- 4 Cheryl Scaglione
- 5 Susan Smith
- 6 Sal Cruz
- 6 Dee Peters
- 6 Tom Womack
- 7 Dorothy Meyer
- 8 Marty Buckmeier
- 8 Vi Krohn
- 9 Wendy Acker
- 9 John Chappelle
- 11 Wayne Massie
- 11 April Schutz
- 12 Al & Linda McVicker [34]
- 13 Stephen Belcher
- 14 Tom & Karen Ashburn [51]
- 14 Jerry & Winina Parish [10]
- 19 Charles Hacker
- 19 Rebecca Short
- 20 Reuben Martin
- 20 Adriana Stein
- 23 Sarah Loewecke
- 25 Jackie Barnes
- 26 Michael Hawkins
- 27 Kelsey Crabtree
- 27 Ernie Gromatzky
- 27 Bailey Lund
- 28 Kris Crabtree
- 28 Kate Lutek
- 28 Susan Pittson



Lauren Howe - February 12, 2006
 Abigail Beaudreau - February 20, 2011



Serving in Worship in February

	February 7		February 14		February 21		February 28	
	8:00 AM	10:45 AM	8:00 AM	10:45 AM	8:00 AM	10:45 AM	8:00 AM	10:45 AM
Elder	Peters		Lutek		Kunschke		Womack	
Common Cup	Carper	Hite	Acker	Hite	Acker	Lutek	Acker	Kunschke
Altar	Lynda Abbott, Carol Nance and Carrie Sanford							
Alcolyte	Messinger	S Loewecke	Adcox	L Gibson	Hawkins	W Gibson	E Hacker	Ozowski
Crucifer	A Shaltanis	C. Loewecke			Tabor	Belcher	G Hacker	
Greeter	Vess	Manning	Schrank	Abbott/McVicke	Sparks	Dorak	Martin	McVicker
Sound	Botello	Selveraj	Wilkerson	Pittson	Wolf	Hite	Botello	Raj
Usher	Parrent Martin Scarth	Ziegelbein Kostrzewa Dolginoff	Frinsko Paradise Read	Cruz Moudy Dolginoff	Hawkins Klausing Cinquepalmi	McVicker Oltman Berger	Hacker Kun Schrank	Short Crabtree Buckmeier

Midweek

	February 10	February 17	February 24
	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM
Elder	Kunschke	Hite	Peters
Common Cup	Womack		
Sound	Hite	Botello	Wilkerson
Usher	Oltman Moudy Cinquepalmi		

FINANCIAL REPORT

January - December, 2015

		ACTUAL	BUDGET	VARIANCE
RECEIPTS:	Regular Offerings	\$672,868	\$677,093	(\$4,225)
	Other	\$6,762	\$200	\$6,562
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$679,630	\$677,293	\$2,337
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$699,859	\$681,681	\$18,178
	RECEIPTS OVER EXPENSES	(\$20,229)	(\$4,388)	(\$15,841)

OTHER INFORMATION

1. General Operating Fund Balance	\$80,335
2. Dedicated Funds Balance	\$161,254
3. Building Note Balance	\$723,192