

## March 2023



**Lord of Life  
Lutheran Church**  
2100 Buffaloe Road  
Garner, NC 27529

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Website: [www.lordoflifechurchgarnernc.org](http://www.lordoflifechurchgarnernc.org)  
Office (919) 772-9044

Interim Pastor ..... John Petry  
Minister of Music ..... Dr. Brad Hunnicutt  
Office Manager ..... Laura Raun  
Web Master ..... Gray Anthony

### **Congregational Council**

Shannon Thomsen ..... President  
Terry Barnes ..... Vice President  
Tim Clark ..... Secretary  
Lindsay Crocker ..... Treasurer  
Tess Andrews ..... Deputy Treasurer  
Terry Barnes ..... Financial Secretary  
Neil Brennecke, Steven Brantley, Alecia  
Harrison, Sylvia Lambert, Sarah Watkins



## **WORSHIP** SCHEDULE

**Sundays:** 10 am – In-Person  
Worship

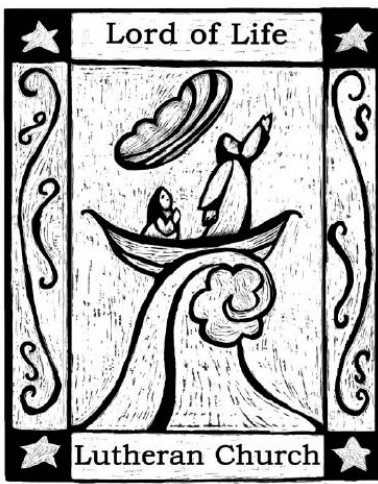
10 am - Virtual Worship via  
YouTube (search for Lord of Life  
Lutheran Church ELCA)

**Eucharist:** Every Sunday

Count your blessings,  
not your problems.



SCHULZ © 1975



# Life-Lines

March 2023



## A FEW THOUGHTS ...

Many folks feel overly guilty when they focus on the word “repent”. For many years at summer Confirmation Camp I represented the prophet *John the Baptist* for Sunday night’s *Messiah Search*. A lot of folks have thought that his mission was to frighten folks. I admit that he didn’t have many fans probably because he labeled people *a brood of vipers*. I believe repent rightly & simply best means ...go a different (healthy) direction, or to turn around, to change. The first word that comes out of Jesus’ mouth is *change* - be willing to change.

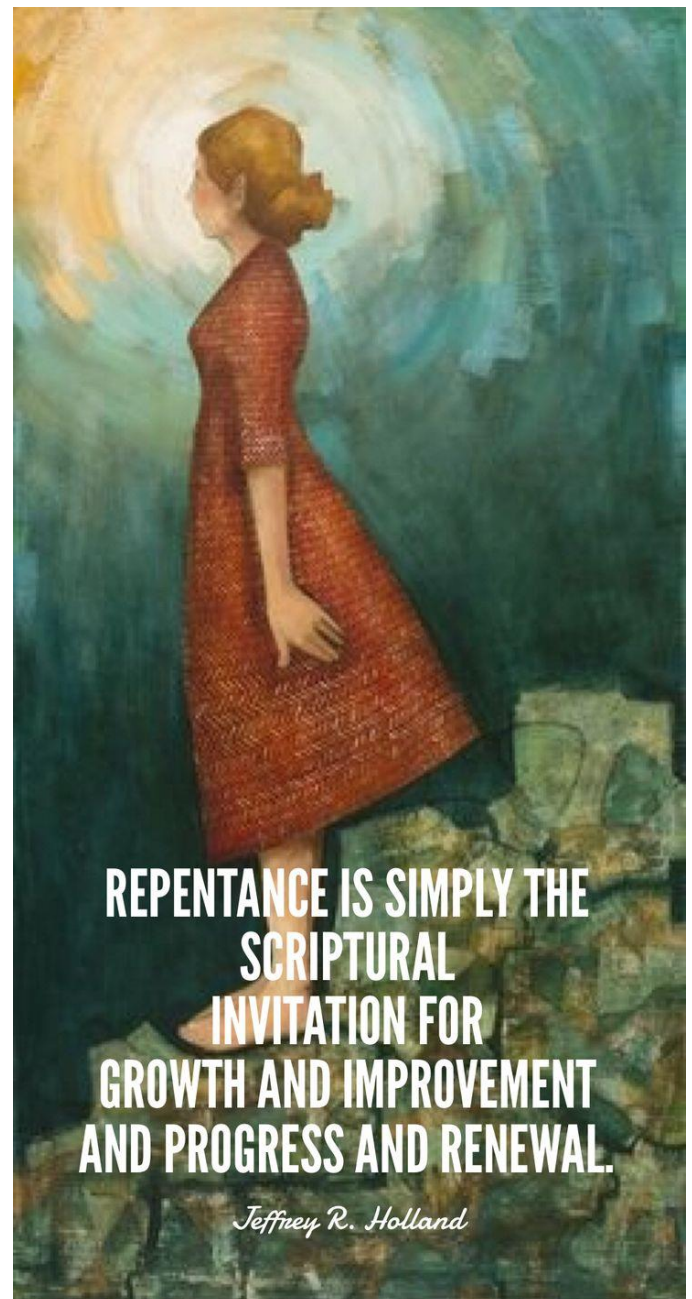
Immediately after the temptation in the desert, Jesus goes out to Galilee and there he begins to preach. His initial preaching is best summed up in the verse, “*Repent (change), for the kingdom of God is at hand*” (Matthew 3.2; Mark 1.15) First of all, repent doesn’t mean to beat ourselves up or to feel bad about ourselves.

People who are not willing to change are not willing to turn away from themselves. What we’re in love with usually is not God. We’re in love with our way of thinking, our way of explaining, our way of doing.

Scripture and great traditions always call people on a journey of faith to keep changing. Jesus said something to the change, “Hey, I’m into something. Do you want to be a part of it? Let’s go.”

What is God asking us to do? Where is God asking us to go?

+ John Petry,  
Interim Pastor





## From the Desk of Your Congregational Council

Back to basics... this will be our focus for 2023.

On February 11<sup>th</sup>, members of the congregation met in the fellowship hall to conduct the annual Lord of Life Leadership retreat.



Before the start of the retreat, each participant provided feedback to the following questions:

1. What are we doing well?
2. What are we sort of doing but could do better?
3. What still needs improvement?
4. What should our 2023 goals be?
5. What do you expect from your Church Council?
6. What do you expect from the Congregation?

Call to Action: Please provide me, or any of your council representatives, with your responses to these six questions via email. We are very interested in what you are all thinking as we start this year of change. Communication is a two-way street.

**Call to Action!**



After devotion, led by Pastor John Petry, and an ice breaker exercise, 2023 Council Officers were nominated and elected. Your 2023 Council Officers are:

- President: Shannon Thomsen
- Vice President: Terry Barnes
- Secretary: Tim Clark
- Treasurer: Lindsay Crocker

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank **Alecia Harrison** for her service and leadership over the past three years. She led us through a very challenging time and deserves to step back and relax. I invite each one of you to personally reach out and thank her.

In addition to Council Officers being elected, 2023 Council ministry liaisons were identified as follows:

- Social Concerns (Alecia Harrison)
- Men's Group (Steve Brantley)
- Property (Tim Clark)
- Worship & Music (Shannon Thomsen)
- Christian Ed. (Lind Hash & Sylvia Lambert)
- Parish (Terry Barnes)
- Technology (Tess Andrews)
- Finance (Lindsay Crocker)
- Able to Serve (Neil Brennecke)
- Iglesia LaVos de Dois (Terry Barnes)
- Iglesia Abundantie Garcia COGO (Alecia Harrison)

A lot of our discussion was around "Getting back to basics" and scaling our efforts to meet the makeup of our congregation.

From a metrics perspective, we all agreed that we wanted to raise our weekly average attendance from in the 30's to in the 40's before June 1, 2023. This may seem like a very simple goal, but it is an example of simplifying and getting back to basics. *(February 26<sup>th</sup> Update: Last Sunday February 19<sup>th</sup> we had 48 in attendance and today we had 43. In addition, we had 25 - 30 attending the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and the Ash Wednesday Worship Service!)*

I am humbled to serve as Lord of Life's Council President once again. I recognize that 2023 is a pivotal year but am energized by the challenge in front of us and the 2023 Council members we have in place. Of the nine council members, four are past Lord of Life Council Presidents. With this type of leadership experience, I trust we are in a strong position to accomplish great things this upcoming year.

Peace be with you all,

Shannon J. Thomsen  
on behalf of your Church Council

Tess Andrews  
Terry Barnes  
Steve Brantley  
Neil Brennecke  
Tim Clark  
Alecia Harrison  
Linda Hash  
Sylvia Lambert





## **BACKPACK BUDDIES— Partnering at Its Best!!**

Hopefully, most of you are aware of Lord of Life's partnership with the Garner Morning Rotary Club, which has been meeting in our fellowship hall every Wednesday morning for over twenty years. Here club members are served a delicious breakfast by some of LOL's hardest workers (currently led by Helen Holderman). The proceeds from this endeavor help fund many of our Social Concerns projects; in addition, the club frequently helps out when needs arise, whether replacing a dishwasher, painting the fellowship hall, or contributing to our Christmas "Giving Tree". (The list is endless, really!)

You might not be aware, however, of another Rotary partnership with which we are involved. The Garner Mid-Day Rotary Club also used to meet at LOL (during the lunch hour), where Connie Fortmeyer, and Pat and Paula Pickler (among other stalwarts!) would serve hearty meals and scrumptious desserts. Eventually, two meals per week became more than our folks could handle, and the Mid-Day club began meeting at Logan's Restaurant on Tuesdays at noon. But the project that we started with them all those years ago is still going strong: Backpack Buddies of Garner.

For those of you not familiar with Backpack Buddies, this is a program which provides nourishment for food-insecure children on the

weekends, when they do not have access to the free and reduced-priced meals they receive at school. School social-workers identify those in most need, and each Friday send a bag of supplemental food (canned fruits and vegetables, protein entrees, shelf-stable milk, breakfast items, and snacks) home in students' bookbags. The program here at Lord of Life began around 2010, when Garner Mid-Day Rotary Club offered to fund it, and our Social Concerns Committee (led by Mary Jo Albert) organized and coordinated the effort. Initially, we were serving approximately 30 students at four area schools. The program gradually grew, and in 2016, Carlton McDaniel and Able to Serve entered the picture, eager to become involved. They took over the job of packing the bags, as well as much of the shopping. In addition to the weekly food bags, the program has, at various times, provided summer food distributions, as well as classroom snacks for students who were not able to bring them from home.

Today, Garner Backpack Buddies has grown to serve 145 students at all nine Garner-area elementary schools! Rotarians now pick up (and pay for!!) two truckloads of groceries from BJ's and Aldi every-other-week; Able to Serve packs all 145 bags each week; and fifteen community volunteers deliver the bags to the schools. These volunteers include LOL members (Barbara Kyles, Tess Andrews, Julia Lochra, and me), a number of retired WCPSS teachers, and members of Delta Sigma Theta sorority. It's an amazing partnership!

Small congregations such as Lord of Life might struggle to accomplish "great things" on their own. But look what can happen when we link arms and partner with others!! Look at the fruits of seeds that were sown over twenty years ago!! God is truly good!!

Mary Cook



By working together, pooling our resources and building on our strengths, we can accomplish great things.

— Ronald Reagan —

Thanks to all who bought and brought in books for Wake Up and Read. We delivered a whopping 111 books. We also were able to donate food, as we do every month, to Garner Area Ministries. The last month we stocked their shelves from our "Souper Bowl" initiative. Social Concerns considers GAM so important that we donate to them financially every month, and as you read on in this article, you will see how.



As you will read in Mary Cook's article regarding Rotary, we have been the beneficiary of a partnership since 2001. When former LOL Pastor Talent, who was a member of Garner Morning Rotary, asked Connie Fortmeyer and Paula Picker for a three week breakfast stint until another venue could be found, they agreed. Here we are, still cooking! That's a long three weeks!! Not too long after, Alecia Harrison joined the crew, and Alecia is STILL part of the team! In 2015 when Connie and Paula "retired" Rita Clark and Helen Holderman took over the reins. In September of 2016 when Alecia HAD to go to Hawaii for National Guard service, Don Craig stepped up. Don was and still is the best scrambled egg chef ever. When Don "retired" last summer, Julia Lochra became our third member until she took on a new job. Currently you will find Alecia Harrison, Linda Hash, Becky Roof, Clyde and Rena Bogle, Rita Clark, Kathi Tichansky and Helen Holderman cooking with clean up support from Ginny King and Sylvia Lambert.

Why so many people? Well, we shop all week, set up on Tuesday afternoons for about an hour, arrive at church every Wednesday between 5:00am and 6:00am, we cook, serve and clean until about 9:00 am. As Connie instructed us back in 2015, all meals will be first class and we are following Connie's orders. Yes ma'am. Three weeks every month we serve fresh fruit, scrambled eggs, bacon, ham or sausage for a meat, grits, pancakes or potatoes for a starch, yogurts, coffee and juice.



To top this off, Kathi Tichansky bakes and delivers for us a special treat of muffins, cookies or cakes ON HER WAY TO WORK. WOW!! The fourth Wednesday we serve casseroles made by YOU our generous contributors. It's like Groundhog Day but in a good way.



So where does our funding come from? Garner Morning Rotary gives us a healthy donation each month, we buy the food and supplies and 100% of the difference goes in Social Concerns for allocation.

Recently we changed our meeting day and time to the first Sunday of the month right after church in the library. We did this to make it easier to get together and decide how best to meet the needs of the people and organizations in need of assistance with an emphasis on local organizations and especially to the youth. Stop by and sit in a meeting, you might even choose to join us...please!!

Blessings,  
Helen Holderman



## Bishop Tim Smith

on the process of calling a rostered minister

"Call process is one of the primary reasons synods exist. While our process seems a bit daunting with four booklets and 130+ pages, it's really not that complicated if you follow the instructions. We're glad to have lowered the average call process length from 17 to 11 months compared to five years ago. Sure, there's a lot of humanity involved on the part of candidates, congregations, and synod staff, but we firmly believe that the Holy Spirit guides this process!"

# One-Day Retreat

## Becoming a Butterfly



**Saturday**  
**March 18, 2023**  
Snow Date: 3/25/23

Butterflies are free! It's time to spread our wings and free ourselves from what is holding us back. A butterfly is a symbol of transformation, joy, and hope. Come join us as we transform and "Become A Butterfly"!

The women of Lord of Life will be hosting the 2023 NC SWO One-Day Retreat. The program will be presented by Heidi Gibson, NC ELCA Lutheran Women Board Member. Registration forms are on the table in the Narthex. Please see Alecia Harrison for further information.

**March 18, 2023**

Snow Date: 3/25/23

**Check-in/Fellowship – 9:00am**

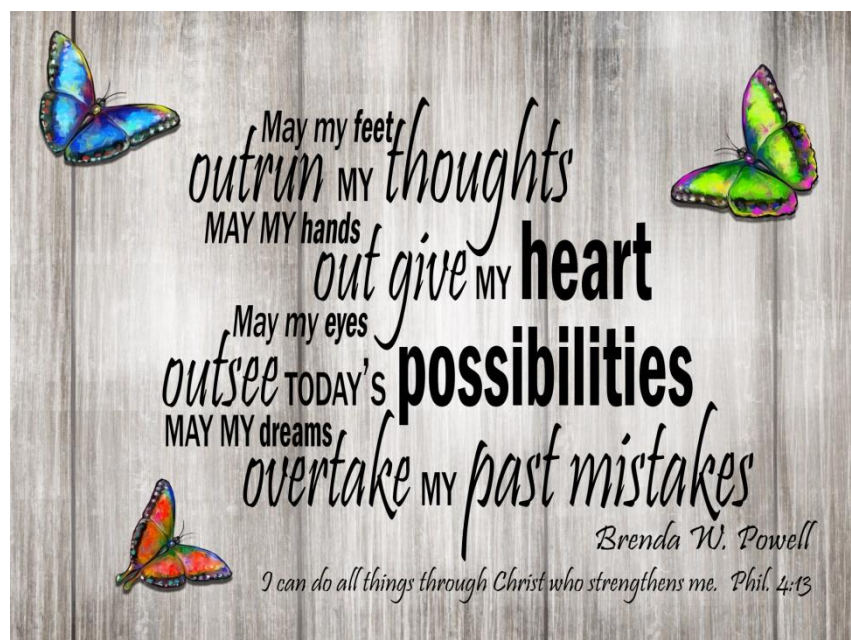
**Program - 9:30 am until around 2:30 pm.**

**\$10 Registration Fee - Includes:**  
Continental breakfast, lunch, and the program materials

*Women do not have to be Lutheran to enjoy this retreat, so bring friends, family, and neighbors. Encourage teens and young women too.*

**Please bring your Bible!**

**Registration Deadline:**  
**March 8, 2023**





SUNDAY,  
March 26, 2023



Several members of the Social Concerns committee have asked me year after year to PLEASE have the RFL fundraiser on a Sunday after church instead of another day, since they are already here at church. We have tried Friday and Saturday in the past; neither day set any records.

I am a little concerned about having a FUNDRAISER during the Fellowship hour. But IF you can contribute to the LOL Relay for Life team, GREAT! If you can't, please enjoy the refreshments anyway! We will have grace and mercy for the order of the day! SO! If you have some silent auction items that you could donate, that would be great too! Practically anything will do!

I am late getting the raffle tickets out so there will probably be MANY available to purchase at the fundraiser. Raffle tickets are \$5 each. Only 75 tickets will be sold. The second place winner will receive \$10 and the first place winner will receive \$50. This is a reverse raffle where the tickets are pulled off the board in reverse order... first loser until the first place winner, each of the 75 tickets, one at a time.

We will have barbecue and fixins from Ole Time Barbecue. Donations of desserts will be welcomed!

The Main Event -- the actual Relay -- will be on Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup> from 1-9 pm at Lake Benson Park. I will need walkers and campsite sitters. I plan to make French press coffee like I have in years past, but last year we only made \$7 at the Relay. A lot of work for a little return! Any suggestions are welcomed!

I will also need at least 2 people to help me set up the campsite and tear it down. Please let me know if this is something you can help with!

Relay for Life is a national fundraiser for the American Cancer Society. You probably know someone that has been affected by cancer, either personally or a family member. And as always, you may purchase a luminary bag for \$10 to honor your loved ones who have experienced cancer.

Blessings,  
Alecia



For **2023** we are offering an abbreviated process to obtain a scholarship to Camp Agapé for Summer Camp!... all you have to do is:

- 1) go online to Camp Agapé, choose your summer camp, and register directly on their site
- 2) Write a **letter** to Social Concerns and **(A)** tell why you want to go to camp; **(B)** request a scholarship award to help you get there.

That's it! "no sweat" 2023

REQUEST (LETTER) DEADLINE is **Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup>**



My church friends ask me this question every year right before Mardi Gras, or Shrove Tuesday. My Baptist friends think it's very funny and tell me that they aren't Catholic. I tell them I may be catholic but NOT Catholic either! Then they are very confused! So fasting and spiritual discipline is assigned by society to be only part of the Catholic faith. Well I disagree! We all have an opportunity to spend more intentional time with God during Lent. I actually look forward to the extra time that I spend with God and am excited to see what God reveals to me.

And I confuse my non-religious friends even more when I tell them that I'm not giving up anything. I choose to ADD during Lent. This year, I am reading an extra chapter in the Bible each day, random readings, spend 15 minutes outside each day (getting my Vitamin D) and participating in an additional Bible Study. My Lutheran Sisters at Christus Victor, Durham, sent me a Lenten Devotional called "Unburdened". I have loved reading the daily scripture and reflections.

Lent can be a dark time, especially if you let it. We are preparing to receive the JOY of Easter and the Risen Christ! So I don't see it as dark but a time to spend quality time with God. I do try to spend quality time with God EVERY day, but give a little extra during Lent. Lent is a time to walk closer with God by deepening our prayer life and studying scripture. Ancient Christians prepared for Easter through prayer, fasting and charitable giving. I personally have not done this but there was a family of 4 in our church that would give up eating out during Lent and donate all the money not spent to ELCA World Hunger. What a creative way to maintain your budget AND increase your walk with God!

Lent is a great time to think about HOW we live our lives. This is NOT the time to beat yourself up for any shortcomings. But

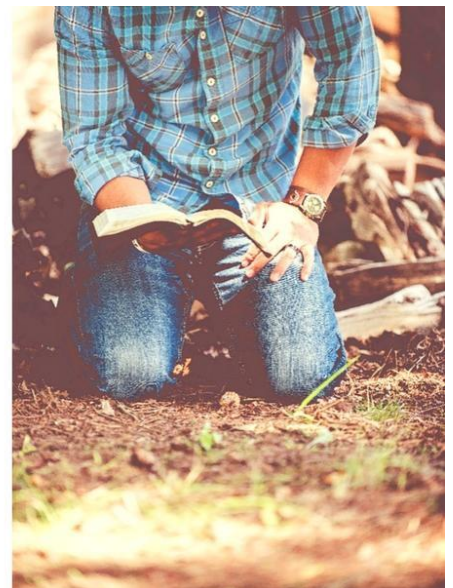
we can ALL do BETTER! Where can you improve your life to be more like Christ? Because that is the ultimate goal, be more like Christ. Jesus came as a baby, became a great teacher and showed us that we need a Savior. He did NOT come to enforce the Law (Ten Commandments) but to show us that we cannot keep God's law perfectly by ourselves. We need a LOT of help to live like Christ. God sent the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, to help you. Allow His spirit to work in you! We do not have to be fearful of our mistakes because we have a Heavenly Father that loves us SO MUCH that He allows us to continue to make mistakes day after day AND allows us to return to HIM when we repent and ask for forgiveness. Thank you LORD, that we serve a God of second, third, etc. chances! He wants ALL of us to return to Him. What are you waiting for?

*"The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you." Matthew 28: 5-7, NIV*

So instead of thinking about what you are giving up, consider how you can deepen your relationship with God during Lent. I promise the joy of Easter morning will be even better than before! And don't think of Lent as a dark time but a time of self-reflection. We are walking toward the light which is a wonderful life with our Savior, Jesus. I am glad that we are on this journey together!!!

Blessings,  
Alecia Harrison

Carve out some quality time with God every day by praying, reading the Bible and talking to Him and you will find your love for Him growing.







Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>Sundays</b> 9 am Coffee & Bible Study 10 am Worship 11 am Fellowship			<b>1</b> 7 am Rotary Breakfast  6 pm Supper 7 pm Worship 7:30 pm Choir	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>  Men's Group Meeting	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>   11 am	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 7 am Rotary Breakfast  6 pm Supper 7 pm Worship 7:30 pm Choir	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b>  Council Meeting after Worship	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 7 am Rotary Breakfast  6 pm Supper 7 pm Worship 7:30 pm Choir	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>  	<b>18</b> 9 am – 2:30 pm <i>Becoming a            Butterfly</i> Ladies One-Day Retreat
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 7 am Rotary Breakfast  6 pm Supper 7 pm Worship 7:30 pm Choir	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>Saint Patrick's Day History –</b> St. Patrick's Day is a celebration of Irish pride and heritage. Saint Patrick was a British-born priest and former slave. He is known for converting the Irish to Christianity. He died on March 17, 461 C.E and was mostly forgotten. As time passed, stories started to spread around St. Patrick and centuries later, he was honored with the title of Patron Saint of Ireland. St. Patrick's Day is celebrated annually on March 17 <sup>th</sup> . Big parties and celebrations have become increasingly popular all over the world. Some themes include shamrocks, leprechauns, and lots of green.			



We pray for our world  
and those in it with hope for  
our future.

Family of John Nalepa;  
Family of Susie Lowe; Monna  
Stamm; Judy Stewart –  
multiple health issues;  
Carolyn Watkin's neighbor,  
Mr. Smith; Richard Suriano.  
Julia Lochra's Father in Law,  
Richard Suriano; Julia

Lochra's cousin, Lester Salmon; Julia Lochra's friend  
Betty – coping with husband's rehab from a stroke;  
Clyde Bogle's sister-in-law, Wanda – cancer; Father of  
Julya Mirro (Gale's friend); Gale's friend, Ermin  
Patterson – massive stroke; Tim & Rita Clarks sister-in-  
law, Jane Clark – breast cancer has returned; Paul &  
Geri's son, Luke Savolainen – battling cancer; Jim  
Powers; Sharon Vietri; Linda Hash's brother, Charles  
Barlow, and sister-in-law, Beth Hash Lennon; Kathi  
Tichansky's neighbor, Ms. Frances – broken hip and  
shoulder; Sylvia Lambert's niece, Lori Wise – cancer;  
Sylvia Lambert's daughter-in-law – major surgeries;  
Jonathan McCoy; Rebecca Swanson's sister in PA – Post  
Polio Syndrome; her nephew, Dr. David Shaefer, and  
her great niece, Hope Emmaline; Lora Clark's friend,  
Rebecca Bowman, recovering; Peg Stamp, myeloma;  
Tess Andrews brother, David Van Benschoten; Pam  
Klawiter's co-worker, Carolyn Harbertson - breast  
cancer; Holly Hans' sister, Heather House and her  
family; Holly Hans' mother, Carol Hardy.



## March

March 4	Holly Niemann Sophie Nora Clark
March 5	Daniel Klawiter
March 6	Patricia Elder
March 7	Steven Babel
March 8	Larry Langworthy
March 14	Bryce Douglas Lowe
March 15	Gale Isaacs
March 20	Brandi Bredell
March 22	Lora Clark
March 24	Harry Albert
March 27	Wes Roscoe
March 28	Michael Hayduk
March 28	Heather King
March 29	Rob Weisenburn
March 30	Camille Morris

## April

April 7	Gray Anthony Trent Ryden
April 15	Andrew Green Shari Rebbeor Enid Weatherwax
April 19	Arthur Kyles Roland Kyles
April 21	Jeannie Stang
April 26	Sara Melanie Bollinger
April 29	Alecia Harrison Chris Thomsen
April 30	Sarah Rebbeor

*If your name is missing from our  
Birthday list, please let Laura  
know! Thanks!!!*