



LifeLines

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF
LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

July/August 2024

*Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it.
For there is still a vision for the appointed time;
it speaks of the end and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it;
it will surely come; it will not delay. Habakkuk 2:2-3*

A Word from Pastor Wolfgang: Help us vision and dream this summer ...”

Beloved of God:

The prophet Habakkuk lived in the 6th century BCE during a time of great distress and worry. The small kingdom of Judah was sandwiched between two rising superpowers, Babylon and Egypt, and the people lived in great fear. It is in this time of desperation that the prophet brings a word of hope: There’s still a vision. There’s still a God. There’s still hope.

This summer in the year 2024 CE is such a time of hope and vision. For us here at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, it is a time of listening and planning as we move from fear to hope. After years of decline, we know that God has a vision for our congregation to grow, to thrive, to be a beacon of hope in a broken world.

Led by our Visions & Dreams Team, made up of LOL members and supporters from our partner church, Christ the King in Cary, we are using these summer months to do some deep listening: to God, to one another, to the larger community. A first step is to assess our strengths and

weaknesses through the ELCA Vitality Survey. I encourage you to take this survey now by clicking on this link and answering a few quick questions:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdfYXi6Ly6BrEiWQP7maQh2iYZeTWc5eNmrhryWlqO_wVe18A/viewform

The team will also conduct many one-on-one conversations and offer two listening opportunities (“Mission Conversations”) during the fellowship hour on July 28 and August 29.

We need to hear from all of you! What is the vision you have for our church?

Where do you see our ministry three years, five years, ten years from now? How is God leading us into the future?

Please pray, dream and vision with us this summer! I promise God will show the way if only we listen.

Peace+Blessings,
Pastor Wolfgang





The LOL Outreach Team unveiled our church's new logo and brand during the June 23 special congregational meeting. Picture are, from left, team members Sarah Watkins (chair), Pastor Wolfgang, Sharyl Eggert, Becky Von St. Paul, Enid Weatherwax, Bob DeVito. Not pictured is Steve Brantley.

**Greetings
from
Social
Concerns**



"Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹ If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! ¹² So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets."

Matthew 7: 9-12, NIV

The Social Concerns committee provided fellowship on Sunday, June 23rd, with a little help from Nick Vietri. We got to celebrate Nick's 97th birthday a few days early! His birthday is actually June 27th!

Our Garner Area Ministry Food Pantry collections continue to go well. Thank you for your faithful donations! Our July collection theme is "Ants in your Pants" with a focus on picnic foods and things you need for a picnic. But as always, everything is needed.

And the Garner Morning Rotary continues to go well. New officers have been elected.

Lord of Life will have a combined July 3rd picnic with Able to Serve. We will again be parking cars and the Social Concerns team will be passing out ring flyers until we give them all away. Hope you can join in the festivities! Remember that you need a parking pass this year if you want to park in the parking lot. And Aversboro Road will be closed around 7 pm. Plan accordingly!

We had one camp application and have sent the check to Camp Agape for Antonio Smith to attend Night Owls Camp later this month.

Blessings,
Alecia Harrison
Social Concerns Committee

A Prayer for Independence Day

*Holy Trinity, one God, you show us the splendor of diversity and the beauty of unity in your own divine life. Make us who came from many nations with many languages, a united people that delights in our many different gifts. Defend our liberties and give those whom we have entrusted with authority the spirit of wisdom, that there might be justice and peace in our land. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our sovereign and Savior.
Amen.*

(Evangelical Lutheran Worship, page 77).



From the Desk of Your Council President

It's exciting to see new changes and improvements to Lord of Life! The year 2024 is only halfway through and we've been blessed with a new Pastor, a new

Minister of Music, a new Ministry (Outreach Team) and about 15 new members (and more on the way). We're making changes to updating our website and we have a new logo and brand.

This morning, we completed the Library/Lobby renovation for new vinyl flooring and new carpet. The improvements which came out of the Memorial Fund give our entrance to our facility a new, welcoming look! We are still in the process of getting new table(s) and chairs



for the conference room.

Our Property Committee are facilitating improvements to the kitchen storage area with new shelving. The Property Committee does a great deal of work that is often behind the scenes to keep things functioning at our facility. THANK YOU!

Other groups and individuals also perform many duties which often go unnoticed, but all weigh in on making up the success we experience as a small church that does a lot!

- Parish Committee – THANK YOU!
- Social Concerns – THANK YOU!
- Worship & Music – THANK YOU!
- Altar Guild – THANK YOU!
- Men's Group – THANK YOU!
- Christian Education – THANK YOU!
- Visions & Dreams Team – THANK YOU!
- Church Council – THANK YOU!
- Readers, Assisting Ministers, Gail and Pastor Wolfgang – THANK YOU!

God's Peace,
Terry Barnes, Council President



According to [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com), Pop-up is defined as: to appear or occur suddenly. During August, we will have Pop-Up Choir. Show up early on Sundays in August and practice a simple song to sing that morning.

We will gather in the sanctuary at 9 am beginning on August 4th. We would love to have you join us! It is a no-commitment way to try out the choir.

See Gail Hrobuchak if you have any questions.

All are welcome!
Gail Hrobuchak

LOL/CTK COVENANT TO BE SIGNED JULY 10

Our ministry partners at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 600 Walnut Street in Cary, invite Lord of Life members and friends to join them for dinner on Wednesday, July 10, 5:45 pm. It is the first of their "Wine & Word" summer series, and participants are invited to bring their favorite wine to share. During dinner, the pastors and council presidents of our two churches will ceremoniously sign the "Covenant of Collaboration" which spells out the relationship between LOL and CTK during the three-year process of ministry revitalization.



Here is the text of the Covenant:

In thanksgiving to God and the conviction that the Holy Spirit is calling us into a season of growth and mission advancement together, Christ the King Lutheran Church (CTK) and Lord of Life Lutheran Church (LOL) enter into this three-year COVENANT OF COLLABORATION in which CTK will come alongside LOL, providing resources and guidance.

As part of this COLLABORATION, we will

1. Pray for one another regularly and publicly;

2. Encourage members of both congregations to join Pastor Wolfgang's Prayer Partners Network;
3. Develop a "Dreams & Visions Team" (Joel 28:2) consisting of three persons each from CTK and LOL which will guide the development and implementation of the missional plan;
4. Plan for a joint meeting/social gathering for LOL and CTK Congregational Councils at least annually;
5. Encourage CTK members who live in or near Garner and others who wish to do so to become LOL associate members for a period of time (1-3 years), providing human and financial resources in addition to their commitments to CTK;
6. Invite the CTK senior pastor to preach at LOL at least annually;
7. Open specific programs at CTK to LOL members (examples may include: baptism and communion classes, specific confirmation classes, online bible studies, affinity groups such as Men's Pub Ministry and Sewing Sisters, etc.);
8. Provide financial support from CTK for three years at \$10K/year
9. Provide consultation and support in all areas of ministry, especially vision casting, evangelism, worship, stewardship, technology, and facilities management through sharing expertise by CTK staff, leadership and volunteers;
10. Coordinate ELCA support through the NC Synod office.

Part of the covenant is financial support from the ministry partners which has now been approved: \$25,000 from the Church-Wide offices of the ELCA; \$20,000 from the Casey-Peeler Fund of the North Carolina Synod; \$10,000 from CTK, and an additional \$5,000 through the office of Pastor Danielle DeNise, director for evangelical mission and assistant to the bishop in the NC Synod.



Rev. Dr. Philip Hirsch, who directs the Christian Community and Leadership offices of our national denomination, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (left, here with Pastor Wolfgang) visited with the Congregation Council of Lord of Life last January in the run-up to the three-year revitalization process. Through his office, the ELCA is providing funding of \$25,000 per year for two years.



**Transition on the Organ Bench:
Thanks to Marsha, Hello to Gail!**

Lord of Life welcomed its new organist and director of music, Gail Hrobuchak, on June 23. Gail, left, recently moved to our area after serving many years as the organist and choir director of a Lutheran church in Harrisburg, Pa. LOL said goodbye and thank you to Marsha Vanderwerff, a member of Christ the King in Cary, who filled in as interim music director since April.



Bishop Smith to Visit LOL

Rev. Dr. Timothy Marcus Smith (left), bishop of our North Carolina Synod, will visit Lord of Life Lutheran Church on Reformation Sunday, October 27. He will preach and preside at the Confirmation of several young people. After worship, the bishop will attend our fellowship hour and answer questions from our members.



LOL in the Community

Since he began his ministry at LOL on March 1, Pastor Wolfgang Herz-Lane has been visiting churches, connecting with other pastors, and attending community events as part of his orientation to Garner. To date, he's been to Garner United Methodist Church, First Presbyterian Church, First Baptist Church, Community of Hope, Garner Area Ministries, Faith Community Church, South Garner High School, and Aversboro Road Baptist Church. In this picture, he is shown during the Town of Garner's Juneteenth Celebration with his wife, Pastor Margaret Herz-Lane, son Josef, and Garner Mayor Buddy Gupton. In May, Pastor Wolfgang led the invocation at the monthly meeting of the Town Council at Garner Town Hall.



Please join the Synod-wide Bible Study, Genesis Generations II beginning on Sunday, July 7th. Last year, we studied the first half of Genesis. This year, we will finish the book of Genesis. Go to the NCLutheran.org website and register at the bottom of the webpage for the "newsletter" and the registration for the Bible Study is at the bottom of the list.

ALSO, there is a Synod-wide book study for Lay Leaders on the "Agile Church". This book study is sponsored by the NC Synod Vitality Team and begins on ZOOM Thursday, June 27th at 7pm. Anyone can register to "attend".

Have you read Bishop Eaton's message on the War in Gaza? It is also available on the Lutheran ELCA website.

There is an online discernment discussion starting on Monday, July 1st sponsored by the ELCA Seminaries. If you have considered church leadership and attending Seminary, then this discussion is for you. There are MANY ways to serve in the church. Options will be discussed.

Lutheran Disaster Relief Carolinas Coordinators are focusing on three projects: York County, SC - severe weather and hailstorm; Charlotte, NC - police shooting; and Lincoln County, NC - replacement bridge project. Read their monthly newsletter at their LDR Carolinas website or participate in the quarterly Zoom meetings.

Hello JULY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Jerry Hart B-Day	2 Matt Himmeger B-Day	3 NO Rotary Breakfast NO Choir Practice In July		5 NO Men's Meeting	6
7 Social Concerns Meeting	8	9 Alice Austin & Helen Holderman B-Days	10 7 am Rotary Breakfast NO Choir Practice	11	12	13 Joyce Havenstein B-Day
14 Council Meeting After Worship	15	16	17 7 am Rotary Breakfast NO Choir Practice	18	19	20 Dave Hash B-Day
21 NO W & M Meeting Kieran King B-Day	22	23	24 7 am Rotary Breakfast NO Choir Practice	25	26	27
28	29	30 Kathi Tichansky B-Day	31 7 am Rotary Breakfast CHOIR PRACTICE RESUMES	<u>Sundays</u> 9 am Bible Study 10 am Worship 11 am Fellowship		



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><u>Sundays</u></p> <p>9 am Bible Study 10 am Worship 11 am Fellowship</p>				1 Aiden Johnson B-Day	2  Men's Group	3
4 Social Concerns Meeting	5 Stacie Johnson B-Day	6	7 7 am Rotary Breakfast 6:30 Choir Practice	8	9	10
11 Pastor John Petry Supplying This Week & Next.	12 Edie Craig B-Day	13	14 7 am Rotary Breakfast Sarah Watkins B-Day 6:30 Choir Practice	15 Clyde Bogle B-Day	16	17
18 Pastor John Petry Supplying W & M Meeting	19 Sheryll Albert B-Day	20 Alisa Hart B-Day	21 7 am Rotary Breakfast 6:30 Choir Practice	22	23	24 Linda Hash B-Day
25 Pastor John Petry Supplying	26	27	28 7 am Rotary Breakfast Sage Weatherwax B-Day 6:30 Choir Practice	29	30 Don Craig, Kathy Hart, Chip Kyles, & Joe Ann Wilder B-Days	31 Don Wilhelm B-Day



Dear Friends,

When I was in Connecticut, I belonged to a Prayer Shawl ministry that made knitted and crocheted items that were needed in the area.

Prayer shawl ministries are groups that knit or crochet shawls and other garments to provide comfort and support to people in need. The shawls can be given to people who are grieving, ill, or in despair, or to celebrate life events. The makers often pray before, during, and after working on the shawls, and may also include a note with the shawl. The shawls can symbolize God's love and care, and can be a way to wrap someone in prayer.

I just wanted to gauge the interest here at Lord of Life. If you are interested, please email me at bob.devito@gmail.com or leave a note in my mail slot at church. Or let me know when you see me.

- Bob DeVito

Lord of Life Member Attends Garner Citizens Police Academy

Lord of Life member Bob DeVito attended the Garner Citizens Police Academy from March through early June 2024 and recently graduated from the academy.

The academy aims to familiarize residents with the workings of the local police department. It provides an opportunity to meet community officers and gain insight into the role of a police officer in Garner today. The academy also

seeks to strengthen the bond between officers and the community by fostering a better understanding of police duties and functions. It serves as a platform for sharing feedback and suggestions for improvement. Each week, members of the department lead discussions on various topics.

Upon graduation, attendees have the option to apply to be volunteers with the CAPT Team, which assists the police at special events.

Bob's next endeavor is with the Garner Citizens Fire Academy, with graduation set for July 29th.

For those interested in joining the Fall 2024 Garner Citizens Police Academy, contact Officer Abigail Cruz at acruz@garnernc.gov.



From Left to Right, Garner Police Chief Lorie Smith, Bob DeVito, Office Abigail Cruz, and Sargent Kevin Pena



The Spring 2024 graduating class of the Garner Citizens Police Academy.

Third Time Is A Charm!

Several years ago, the NC Synod voted to alternate Synod Assembly with Synod Gatherings. The first one was canceled due to Covid. The second one was a hybrid- virtual and in person. This year, ALL in person. It is always a joy to meet new Lutheran across the state and catch up with old friends. I wish everyone could have been there!

We had 2 keynote speakers – one on Thursday and one on Friday. Both gave very moving speeches; inviting us to DO something! Both encouraged us to look at the world around us and quit trying to conform the world to our worship space. We need to find a way to engage those who are searching for "something."

Many young adults admit that "Life" is harder than expected. The United States has a generation of young people that were not brought up in the church. So the thought of finding your purpose or a meaningful relationship or any kind of connection at church does not cross their mind! Our main message to these searching people is that God loves you, just as you are, right now! And you matter! Pastor Wolfgang reminds us that we need radical hospitality. Invite them to church and then be kind to them. Ask follow up questions, like how is work? Did you find a dentist? A doctor that you like? How was your vacation? How was your move? How can we help you?

The church is a resource for help and relationships. This is a well-kept secret. What can you do to spread this message. How can we make a better connection with members within our church and visitors? What are we trying to learn and who do we hope to learn from? All of these questions and actions start with Empathy.

There will be a relook at our Human Sexuality Social Statement in the coming

year. There is a draft currently available on the ELCA website. Congregations are encouraged to have discussion groups and readings of this document. Phase 1 is currently underway, where the language has been reviewed and updated. The new Social Statement will be voted on at the 2025 Church-Wide Assembly.

The Theme for the Synod Gathering is "We are More". We are better together and are a pretty strong group when we come together. Bishop Tim gave his annual reflections. This lecture is recorded on the NC Lutheran website. He actually posts a monthly reflection, that you can also find on the website. His focus for the NC Synod has been:

- Faith Formation
- Mission and Outreach
- Leadership Development
- Congregational Vitality
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Stewardship
- Collaboration and partnership.

Bishop Tim has three more years to serve as the NC Bishop. Then we will choose a new Bishop. 2027 Synod Assembly will be very exciting!!!!

Synod means to "walk together". And that is what we are doing. Walking through this life together, trying to pool our resources and address as many community needs as possible.

The Bishop's Challenge last year at Synod Assembly was for 70% of our North Carolina congregations to actively engage in refugee resettlement over the next 18 months. Currently we have 138 of the 197 congregations engage in refugees. The average refugee spends 6-9 years in a refugee camp before making it to the United States.

The 2024 Youth Gathering will be in New Orleans this year. North Carolina has 282 youth registered to attend this Gathering next month.

We have over 500 vacancies for ELCA Pastors or Deacons in the US. There will be 173 Seminary graduates in the US this year. Not enough to fill all the vacancies! So the program to increase the responsibility of Lay Preachers has taken off. SAMs or Synodical Authorized Ministers are called to a specific place for a specific time. The SAMs have special training through the NC ELCA Lutheran office that lasts around 18 months. They are trained to provide Word and Sacrament.

Bishop Tim taught us that everyone in Palestine is a Semite. A Semite is someone that speaks Arabic or Hebrew. The word Semite has been misused in our current vocabulary. The NC Synod has an Arabic speaking mission congregation in Charlotte... St Francis Lutheran Church. They currently meet in the chapel at Morning Star Lutheran Church.

And Lutheran Seminary is moving from Columbia, South Carolina to Hickory, North Carolina. It will officially be joined with Lenoir Rhyne University. Currently, many professors teach at both schools. LTSS and LRU merged 12 years ago to reduce costs for both campuses. But current times see that 80% of seminary students are online nationally. There are only 6 seminary students living on campus in Columbia. They just don't need the housing and those costs are high.

The Church-wide Assembly will be held in Phoenix, Arizona from July 28-August 3rd. A Presiding Bishop and Secretary will be selected. The Civic Life and Faith Social Statement will be voted on at this Assembly.

There is a Commission of the Renewed Lutheran Church. More to come on this. It considers three expressions of the church: congregation, synod and church wide.

I attended a workshop called the Scrappy Church. The Pastor leading this

session didn't like the title. It was given to her. She was called to a failing congregation and was told by her governing body to close the congregation. She found many reasons to keep the congregation going when she arrived and adopted two other nearby congregations near Ocala, Florida eight years ago. All three congregations are now thriving. And that is what she wanted to talk about. To find something that makes your congregation unique and build on that. Small congregations are essential to spread the Word. Large church game plans do not work for small congregations. Isaiah 43:19 says that God is doing a new thing! Lord of Life is currently in the midst of a new thing. And Hallelujah! Isn't it wonderful!



Small churches have to remember that God gives you everything that you need. If only one person volunteers for a project or committee, thank God that one person volunteered. Instead of complaining that few people are at worship each week, thank God for the ones that are there. Celebrate them! Love on them! God will always give us enough. When you have a

fear of working out of your scarcity, then you WILL decline! God has a purpose for everything. And the Holy Spirit is in charge of growing the church. Can't you feel the Holy Spirit when you come to church on Sunday?!! Focus on meeting the community instead of worrying about paying the bills. And it is okay for people to have more than one church. Jerry Hart has two churches; has for years. Thank you for your faithfulness to both congregations! Listen to where the Holy Spirit is leading you. God's ideas never fail! When WE fail, we learn from that failure and get up and go again. Go to the community and ask what they need. This is what we are doing at LOL with the Three Great Listenings... listen to God, listen to each other, listen to the community. A need or a problem leads to an opportunity for LOL to serve!

The 2025 NC Synod Assembly will be held May 29-31st. Location TBD, but probably not Lenoir Rhyne. The University is not big enough to house everyone. We will be sending voting delegates from Lord of Life. So be thinking NOW if you would like to be one of those people!!! I've been a delegate several times and would be glad to answer any questions you might have.

Parting words – Be authentic.

God will meet us where we are.

God created me and you in profound love.

God knows me better than I know myself.

Live in God's love.

God makes us diverse and unique.

Can you hear the Holy Spirit calling you? Leading you in a new direction?

Blessings,
Alecia Harrison




WORSHIP

SCHEDULE

***Sundays:** 9 am Adult Bible Study
10 am – In-Person Worship
& Virtual Worship via YouTube
(search for Lord of Life Lutheran
Church ELCA)*

***Eucharist:** Every Sunday*

Pastor Wolfgang Herz-Lane
Minister of Music Gail Hrobuchak
Office Manager/Web Master Laura Raun

Congregational Council

President..... Terry Barnes
Vice President..... Shannon Thomsen
Secretary..... Tim Clark
Treasurer..... Lindsay Crocker
Deputy Treasurer Tess Andrews
Financial Secretary Terry Barnes
Neil Brennecke, Sharyl Eggert, Linda Hash,
Matt Himmeger, Sylvia Lambert and
Enid Weatherwax

Office Phone (919) 772-9044

Website: www.LOLGarner.com

Office Email: LordofLife2100@gmail.com

Pastor's Email:

WolfgangHerzLane@gmail.com