



January 2016

Sharing
God's
Abundant
Love

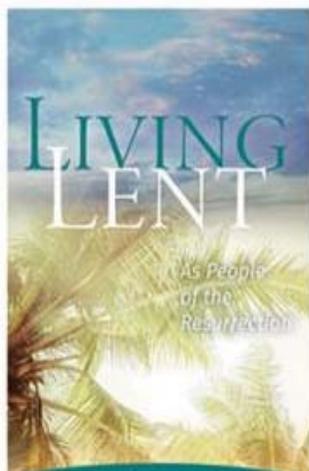
Thank you, God,
for Chocolate!

**Valentine's Day
Chocolate Fest**
Sunday, February 14th

See full details on Last Page



Mid-Week Lenten Celebration



You are invited to celebrate Wednesdays in Lent, beginning February 10th, right here in our church office/fellowship building. Dinner begins at 6:30 and worship at 7:15. Each Wednesday during Lent, I invite you to a mid-week supper and service.

This year's theme is "Living Lent", a series that will help us to focus our lives as People of the Resurrection. "Living Lent" offers a different experience as we retrace Christ's steps to the cross during this holy season, fully aware that Easter has already come to pass.

This year we are going to try something different. For the meal before the service I would like to do a "sandwich swap" instead of soup. I am asking each person to bring sandwiches to feed your family. (If there are two in your family then you need to bring two sandwiches.) Place each of those sandwiches in its own unmarked brown bag to be shared with others who come to the meal and service. If you have special dietary needs, needs, please write that on the bag. Brown lunch bags will be available the Sunday before each mid-week meal. Beverages will be provided along with back up sandwich fixing.

Your Sheepdog,
Pastor Jerry

*Thank
You* Mary
& Bob

Thanks once again to Mary and Bob Milley for opening their home for a Christmas celebration. It was great to see members and friends, enjoy some delicious food, and holiday libations. A good time was had by all! Wasn't it great to see Dan Bodine, who is enjoying "semi" retirement.

Many enjoyed this easy-to-make macaroni and cheese. This is a great dish for those cold winter nights, which we should have sometime this year.

Slow Cooker Mac and Cheese – from Taste of Home

TOTAL TIME: Prep: 25 min. Cook: 2 hours

YIELD: 16 servings

Ingredients

- 3 cups uncooked elbow macaroni (1 16 oz box)
- 1 package (16 oz) process cheese (Velveeta), cubed
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Mexican cheese blend
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded white cheddar cheese
- 1-3/4 cups whole milk
- 1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk
- 3/4 cup butter, melted
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten

Directions

1. Cook macaroni according to package directions for al dente; drain. Transfer to a greased 5-qt. slow cooker. Stir in remaining ingredients.
2. Cook, covered, on low 2 to 2-1/2 hours or until a thermometer reads at least 160°, stirring once.

The Milley's Are On A Mission Trip

We're sending love and prayers with Mary and Sarah Milley as they travel to Dominican Republic on a mission trip with Dream Ministries. This one week life-changing adventure is focused on providing medical needs to those who truly need the attention.

Thanks to those who responded to the request for nightgowns and underwear for those recuperating from surgery.



Are you a PowerPoint Wizard?

If you are and are willing to help create our worship presentations, please see Brad Petersen or Debbie Bradley.

Okay, You're Not a Power- Point Wizard, but....

...you're able to show a PowerPoint presentation? We need more volunteers to operate the laptop during worship. It will be our secret that this mainly involves hitting the "enter" key. On-the-job training is available ANY Sunday from our current volunteers – Brian Coe, Debbie Bradley, Dave Graham or Katherine Milley.

Words of Wisdom

From www.gratefulness.org.....

Gratitude makes us feel bursting with delight, just to remember the gifts we have received. Thus we are doubly blessed when we receive something: for the gift itself and later, in recall, for the miracle of having been given it.

M.J. RYAN

News from the Call Committee and Council

As we reported in the last issue, the Call Committee recommended that an invitation to interview be extended to a pastoral candidate. Unfortunately, circumstances in the candidate's situation have changed. A visit to Oxford is not feasible in the near future.

Council has contacted the synod that we are still actively searching for a pastor. This setback is a disappointment after so many months of hard work. Please continue to keep the call committee in your prayers.

Meet Your New Church Council and New Officers

Dave Graham	President
Tom Plystak	Vice-President
Debbie Bradley	Secretary
Brian Coe	Treasurer
Bob Milley	
Brad Petersen	
Doris Petersen	
Sue Repetz	
Sue Troyan	

Council meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of every month. They begin at 7:00 and are held at the church office or at the Coe Insurance Agency office. The meeting location is always announced the Sunday before the meeting. Church members are welcome to attend.

Birthdays *January & February*

Doris Petersen	01/02	Mary Milley	01/23	Donna Jann	02/18
Robert Schottin	01/04	Lori Craven	01/30	Victoria Craven	02/19
Lili Troyan	01/04	Samantha Pollich	01/30	George Vasques	02/20
Richard Anderson	01/05	William McHugh	01/31	Nancy Kelly	02/22
Krystal Cordivano	01/06	Jessica Repetz	02/02	Lino Santinelli	02/22
Jon Plystak	01/09	Pete Hill	02/09		
Debbie Bradley	01/10	Tom Plystak	02/09		
Loren Luke	01/10	Trish Hill	02/11		
Katherine Milley	01/13	Dan Lohr	02/12		
Donna Hollowniczky	01/17	Rebecca Vasques	02/12		
Kelly Mattson	01/21				

Just say Yes!

In case you missed it, here is the text of a recent Temple Talk by Debbie Bradley on Stewardship.

Stewardship Temple Talk --- January 10, 2016

I volunteered to do a Temple Talk on stewardship. I know what you're thinking – "Oh, no. She's going to ask for money."

Well, I have good news. I'm not going to ask for money – that's the good news and that's for someone else's Temple Talk.

I'm going to talk about something more valuable than money. I'm going to talk about your time and your talents.

I know that all of your lives are very busy. I know mine is. I have two jobs. I'm the church council secretary.

I live in a house that requires more cleaning than I have time (or energy) for. I have a darling granddaughter. I'm in a book club and am an avid reader. Oh, I love watching movies and TV. So I'm busy, you're busy, we're all busy.

But there's a well-known saying "If you want something done, give it to a busy person." I guess my point is everyone is busy. Everyone has basically the same set of excuses for saying "no, I can't. I don't have time."

But have you ever thought about reasons for "Just saying yes."

You are part of a community -- a community of love. You are part of the "little church that could." We fill 50 or more Thanksgiving baskets. We bring cheer and warmth to senior citizens in low-cost housing. We have a VBS program open to all the children in the neighborhood. We help a great youth organization in Oxford – The Lighthouse, as well as sponsor our own youth group. We help each other. I know there are some of you out there who have received money, gift cards, prayer shawls, meals and visits from others in our congregation. Yes, we are a community of love. And we share God's abundant love. And none of these acts of loves happen without people who are willing to help and to serve.

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And if you aren't part of this you are missing out. You are missing out on an important part of being a Christian.

The New Testament is rife with encouragement:

Matthew 5:16 "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

1 Peter 4:10-11 " Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen."

God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies.

In preparing for this talk, I did some research on the Internet. I learned that the key to increasing volunteerism is to ask someone for help. People liked to be asked.

My sister in Christ, Bette Ann Walton, recently lent me a devotional book titled "Jesus is Calling." I thought of this phrase in preparing this talk.

So when you're next asked to join a committee, attend a meeting, read a lesson, serve as an usher, provide refreshments, teach a child, offer advice, remember that you are not just being asked by a fellow worker in the vineyard. Remember that "Jesus is Calling" and please say "yes."

Souper Bowl Sunday, February 7

Once again, your team's not in the playoffs. But you still want Super Bowl Sunday to be a meaningful day. Why not start by attending worship? You are welcome to pray for a better team next season.

After worship, join COL's outreach team and distribute canned soup to our friends at Luther House. Each year, COL gives a can of soup to the residents of the four buildings at Luther House. Campbell's soup cans are just the right size for the plastic bags used to hang on the doorknob. Many hands help this outreach activity to finish quickly.

As we march toward that Sunday, bring in some cans of soup and place in the basket in the narthex.

Our goal this year is to collect 256 cans.

Can we do it? Yes, we can! And yes, some coaches and some teams are "full of soup" as my grandfather used to say.



I am blessed...

To have served a congregation like Community of Love Lutheran Church. Donna and I were overwhelmed by the "farewell and godspeed" at the end of the worship service last Sunday.

We thank you for the "shower" of notes from over twenty members and families. The hand written notes and artwork from the children in Sunday school and those I see every week in worship.

The presentation of the prayer shawl from the Prayer Shawl ministry leaders will warm my heart, my soul, and my body as I recuperate from back surgery in the near future.

A special basket with the notes also contained special coffee (I drink it all the time), the nuts for the nutty times, and the chocolates to sweeten life. The coloring books will ease my minds and soul – that's what they say about adult coloring books.

The gift certificate for Charlie Brown's Restaurant will keep us well fed for many trips. (I like my Prime Rib and Donna likes Parmesan Crusted Chicken!).

Thank you for being who you are. May God bless you as you continue to serve our Lord Jesus Christ in Oxford.

With love,

Paul & Donna



Thanksgiving Baskets



Annual Congregational Meeting February 14, 2016 Following the Service

You are cordially invited and encouraged to attend our annual meeting on Sunday February 14th after worship. Committee reports, the annual budget, the Land, and Constitutional changes will be discussed.



VALENTINE'S DAY CHOCOLATE FEST

On Sunday February 14th, immediately following our Congregational meeting, Refreshment Time will have a chocolate theme. With chocolate treats & activities.

So if you are a baker or candy maker make your best chocolate treat and come and join us for a Chocolate Good Time.

You can even come just to eat chocolate & socialize!

Prizes will be awarded for crowd's top favorites.

Don't forget to mark Sunday February 14th on your calendar. Bring your Sweetie .

