

# Note From The Pastor



## Whack a Mole

<sup>9</sup>Let love be genuine . . . <sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. <sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. (Romans 12: 9a, 14-18)

On Feb 14<sup>th</sup> we celebrate Valentine's Day. It is a day of sending cards and messages of love. School children decorate boxes with hearts and exchange messages of loving kindness to all the students in the classroom. No one is left out. What a great example for us to follow every day.

Paul urges in his letter to the Romans that they be examples of God's love in Jesus Christ and if it is possible; to live peaceably with all and to live in harmony with one another. The new Christians dealt with a lot of divisiveness over race, religion, and social status.

In these days of instant messaging, we are bombarded with so much information it's hard to discern the truth. We seem to be immersed in a game of "Whack a Mole"! Instead of messages of love we often witness the opposite: "You are stupid-Whack! You are wrong and I am right-Whack! You are a liar-Whack! You are not my friend anymore-Whack! Your religious doctrine doesn't match up with mine-Whack! These character attacks have become exhausting.

Jesus said, "Don't repay evil for evil". Lay down the "Whack a Mole" hammer and live in harmony with your neighbor. Every day, be God's Valentine to all with messages of love and compassionate care.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Jim

# February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship	Lifeworks 1pm  6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	OLES 9am  Boy Scouts 6:00-8:30pm	7 Better Choices 8am  IGNITE 5:15-7pm Worship 6pm HS Youth 7-8pm	8	9	10
11 9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship	12 Lifeworks 1pm Book club 1:30pm  6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	13  Committees 6pm Council Mtg 7pm Boy Scouts 6:00-8:30pm	14 Better Choices 8am  Ash Wednesday Service 6pm No Ignite	15	16	17
18 9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship	19 Lifeworks 1pm  6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	20 OLES 9am  Boy Scouts 6:00-8:30pm	21 Better Choices 8am  IGNITE 5:15-7pm Worship 6pm HS Youth 7-8pm	22 Peace Circle @1:30p	23	24
25 9am Traditional Worship 10am Fellowship Hour 11am Contemporary Worship	26 Lifeworks 1pm  6-7pm AA Meeting Boy Scouts 6:30-8:30pm	27  Boy Scouts 6:00-8:30pm	28 Better Choices 8am  IGNITE 5:15-7pm Worship 6pm HS Youth 7-8pm	29	1	2



# February Birthdays

Jessica Anderson	2/2
Taryn Bennett	2/2
Zachary Anderson	2/3
Finn Cruz	2/3
Landry McKinney	2/3
Lettie Nissen	2/3
Braxtyn Dencklau	2/4
Colin Glesne	2/4
Makenzie Kofoot	2/5
Jolene Hall	2/5
Daymek Ashbrook	2/6
Caden Carr	2/6
Linda Junkman	2/7
Rick Kuhlman	2/7
Jovie Pearson	2/7
Tamela Pattison	2/7
Eric Evans	2/8
Heather Callon	2/9
Dan Fortune	2/9
Evelyn Bygness	2/9
Gary Bygness	2/10
Sean Springer	2/10
Khalani Ruiz	2/11
Sandra Bratland	2/12
Lynsey Froisland	2/14
David Osterberg	2/14

Robert Pecka	2/14
Toryn Pederson	2/14
DeeAnn Otto	2/15
Richard Fevold	2/16
Ashlynn Mills	2/16
Madisyn Mills	2/16
Melissa Nanninga	2/17
Michael Daniel	2/17
Emmaly Durschmidt	2/17
Isabelle Stickrod	2/17
Bruce Stottrup	2/20
Ruth Yoder	2/20
Jace Johnson	2/22
Joseph O'Brion	2/22
Madigan Peimann	2/22
Tyler Glesne	2/23
Heather Liska	2/23
Deborah Ulstad	2/23
Sidney Van Every	2/24
Jaxon Lemon	2/24
Alayne Beshey	2/25
Trisha Carr	2/26
Ashley Kuker	2/28
Angela Trost	2/28
Tammy Kuker	2/29



## BOOK CLUB



The St. Olaf Book Club will meet on Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 in the Gather Room. Our book for this month is *The Lindbergh Nanny* by Mariah Fredericks. This work of historical fiction tells the tragic story of the kidnapping of Charles Lindbergh Jr. in 1932. Books are available at the church to be checked out. Everyone is welcome to attend!

## OLES

OLES meetings are on the first and third Tuesday of the month at 9 a.m. Join them February 6 and 20 for coffee and fellowship.

Please feel free to join them, they only meet twice a month.



## SEW SISTERS



**We need your help and talents cutting and sewing.**

If you are interested, please call Nancy Hamilton

## ALTAR GUILD

**WHO:** Willing servants of the Lord. Some of you may be receiving a phone call!

**WHAT:** Set up/clean up communion, set up for baptisms, and change altar cloths as a member of Altar Guild.

**WHEN:** Serve on a team with one or two other workers one or two months a year. Prepare for all Sunday communion services during your service month, set up for baptisms as needed during your month, and change altar cloths if the church season changes during your month.

**TRAINING PROVIDED**

**BENEFITS:** Serving God and St. Olaf.

For more information contact Claudia Harms or Mary Kuhlman.

**HELP  
WANTED**

## PEACE CIRCLE

The next meeting will be  
**Thursday, February 22 @ 1:30 p.m.**  
Jane Wallestad will be leading Bible Study.

**BIBLE  
STUDY**

## IGNITE & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

Ignite wrapped up 2023 with a celebration of Christmas. Our holiday began with a great Mexican meal served by Joseph (Burrito Mexpress) The tables were all decorated with Christmas packages. Our thanks to Mark and Tammy Oester for providing a beautiful background and setting for family photos. The children presented their program, "Celebrate the Gift." We closed out the evening with a cookie exchange and gifts for the program participants. We are kicking off our 2024 Ignite classes again as we learn about how to "Trust Jesus." We hope to see you all at church each Wednesday evening. - Jill

### OFFICE HOURS

Please note that during the winter, the office follows the schools so if there is a late start/early dismissal/ no school due to inclement weather the office will not be open during that time either.



A text/email will be sent out if the office closes.

### MILITARY VETERANS WALL

We are going to update our veterans wall for those who served Post WWII. If you know a member who has served, please let us know their name, where they served and the years they served and we will have a plaque made for them.

You can email us the information at [office@stolaffd.com](mailto:office@stolaffd.com)



### BAPTISM PLAQUES

If your child was baptized in 2023, please stop in and grab their water droplet during office hours Monday-Thursday 8:30-4:30, during Ignite or on a Sunday before or after service.

## BUSY BAGS

We need donations of small preschool/ elementary books, coloring books (lots) for our busy bags for the littles. We could also use fidget toys (non-choking hazard ones). Please drop items off at the table outside of the office. Thank you!

## FIRST COMMUNION

First Communion is planned for Sunday, February 18<sup>th</sup>.

You are welcome to choose to come to the 9am or 11am service



## LOOKING AHEAD

### March

March 1 - Foundation Scholarship Deadline

March 26 - OWLS Get together @ 1:30pm

March 27 - No Ignite/HS Youth

March 31 - Easter Sunday

### April

April 1 - Office Closed

## OFFERING ENVELOPES

Envelopes will be changing it to pick up next quarter. If you currently give electronically or directly from your bank account and wish to refrain from receiving envelopes altogether, please call the office or let a council member know so we can take your name off the list.

## ST. OLAF PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Here's a great 2024 opportunity to serve St Olaf! Would you like to learn a new skill or refresh your current one? Young or older members of the congregation are welcome to join the St Olaf Prayer Shawl – we will help you to create beautiful shawls to bless others who are going through a difficult time. Don't have much extra time? You are also needed to help create smaller baptismal shawls.

There is always someone to help you get started to knit or crochet. This is the time. We need you! All supplies are provided.

Please reach out to the office if you or someone you know can help and we will get you in contact with Jane Wallestad.

## Happy Valentine's Day from LSI!

*"We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19*

The idea behind Lutheran Services in Iowa's (LSI) mission is centered around love: responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service.

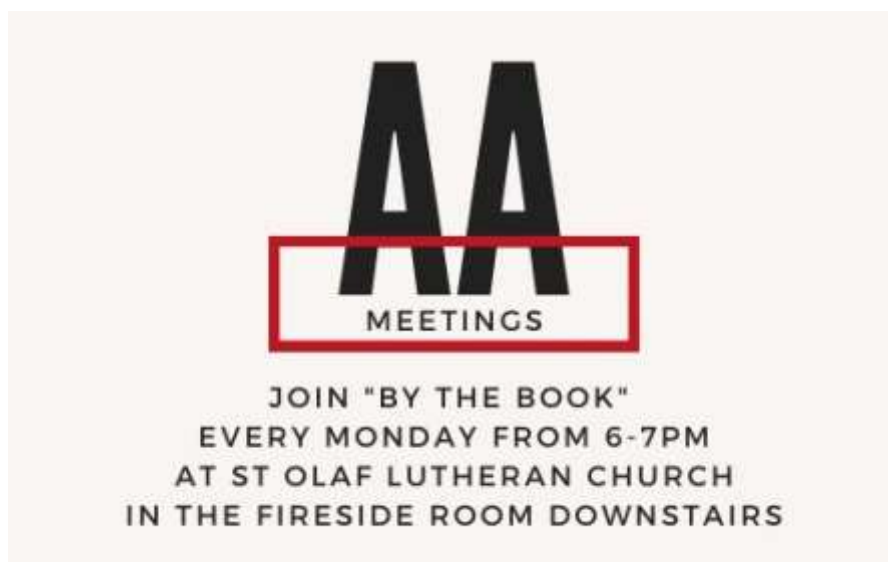
We give thanks to all our ministry partners, both individuals and congregations, who help share this love for Iowa children, adults, and families.

At LSI, we see this love in newly adopted children and their families, in teens who are overcoming years of trauma and building brighter futures, in Iowans with disabilities who are growing their independence and confidence, in new parents who are raising strong and healthy families, and in so many other joyous moments.

You can help carry out LSI's mission of hope and healing by giving a gift and showing love to the Iowa families we serve.

Thank you for the love you share and create through LSI. Happy Valentine's Day!

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at [LSIowa.org](http://LSIowa.org) and [Facebook.com/LSI.iowa](https://www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa).



# ST. OLAF FOUNDATION

Hello, I'm Aaron Peimann, President of our St Olaf foundation. I want to review some of the things we have done in the last year.

The Saint Olaf Foundation exists to nourish Christian growth and outreach. We exist through the generosity of the Saint Olaf Congregation.

The Foundation continues to provide financial assistance for grant request made by our community and members of Saint Olaf. This includes scholarship to members who complete an application and write a one-page essay, telling us what their educational plans are, how they are staying connected to their faith, and how this scholarship will help. In 2023 we contributed to over 16 students as they complete their higher education at various community colleges and universities across the state in both undergraduate and post-graduate programs. We contributed to 3 students in health profession with the Mark Olsen Scholarship, and \$7000 to both Luther and Wartburg Seminary. A total of \$41,500 in education support to our members and faith community!

In the past we have worked hard to secure the block for Saint Olaf. This vision is leading us forward with the use of our facility to help with the much-needed daycare shortage in our Fort Dodge community and affording us the opportunity to share our Christian faith. These are long range goals the foundation had set many years ago.

We have been able to assist St. Olaf with a line a credit to get our Capital Campaign, bids, and construction started. With the help of the contributions from members we have been able to contribute \$400,000 to the Capital Campaign over the next 3 years and still assist our members and community with additional grants.

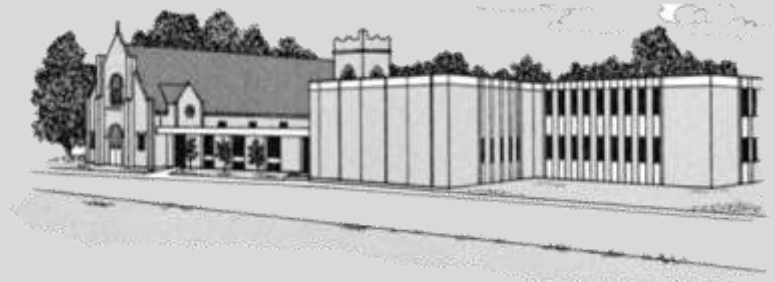
Unfortunately, markets have not always been generous to anyone this past couple of years and the Foundation is no exception. Additionally, the generous gifts have drained some of our investments. We have been asking members to contribute to the St. Olaf Capital Campaign, but if you are looking for another opportunity to contribute, we ask that you consider a gift to the Saint Olaf Foundation. With your contributions we are still able to achieve our mission. We continue to monitor our investments and make adjustments when necessary so we may achieve our goals of benevolence.

I would like to acknowledge the work of fellow Saint Olaf members on our foundation, without their interest and contributions we could not move forward.

We meet quarterly on the 4th Tuesday of January, April, July, and October.

Don't forget college scholarships, including undergraduate and Post -grad students, are due by MARCH 1ST

God's blessing to you!





## HELPING KIDS LEARN STEWARDSHIP

It's one thing to consider your response to God's goodness as an adult, but how do you talk with your children about this?

When my children were 13 and 10, their understanding of our weekly giving could be summarized by the reaction to our end-of-year giving statement from church. It reported that we actually gave more than we had pledged. To that my son said, "Does that mean we get a refund?"

I wanted my children to grow into the joy of giving, and I yearned to have enough faith to trust God to take care of us. Sometimes the best way to learn is to teach what you want to know. If I wanted to be a role model for my children, I needed to improve my understanding of stewardship. Here's what I learned:

- Stewardship is about gratitude, not guilt. God is a generous God and has blessed us richly, beyond anything we deserve. God expects us to be generous, too, through gifts of our time, ourselves and our possessions. Trust God completely, even if you think you won't have enough. To be a good steward, you must practice giving. To be generous, you must practice generosity.
- Stewardship is a response, not a reaction. The Holy Spirit moves us to give – not so that we can get something back. Through baptism God has already promised us eternal life. This I believe: Giving is a spiritual act. When we follow God wholeheartedly, we experience God's grace and freedom to live generously.
- Stewardship is about mission, not about budget. We give as a response to God's love, not because our congregation needs money. Together we can do so much more than we can do alone to further God's work in the world. God is moved not by the amount of our giving but the trust and love that the gifts symbolize.
- Stewardship is an act of worship. One of my stewardship mentors wrote, "On the day of worship, set aside an offering. If we give when we worship, we will give regularly. We cannot give what we have not received, but we can withhold what we have received." ("Generous People," Eugene Grimm, Abingdon Press, 1992).

Nobody said this would be easy. To promise to support God's ministry with our financial resources may take a little courage. Whenever we feel challenged to stretch and grow, remember this from Ephesians 3:20: "Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine," Ask God to ease your fear of giving and give you the courage to act.

As we learn how to steward everything God has given us, my prayer is that we do so with a grateful heart and a joyful spirit. At 10 years old, my daughter showed that she had truly caught on. She insisted her offering envelope get to church even when she couldn't. When I asked her why this was so important to her, she said, "Because it makes me feel good."

# PASTORAL ACTS & STATISTICS

## MONTHLY TREASURER'S REPORT

Operating Balance 11/30/2023 ..... 120,236.19

### Receipts:

Offerings..... \$98,875.25  
Misc. Receipts ..... 1,016.80  
Total Receipts for December.....99,892.05  
Voided Check ..... 373.32

### Disbursements:

Benevolence ..... 10,000.00  
Pastoral Ministry ..... 28,426.77  
Administration.....-1,564.71  
Worship & Music ..... 3,652.50  
Christian Education ..... 2,919.94  
Our Church Home ..... 28,165.49  
Congregational Life ..... 2,853.38  
Youth Ministry- ..... 0.00  
Social Ministry ..... 985.85  
Stewardship ..... 1,315.05  
Previous Year Adjustments..... 0.00  
Daycare..... 0.00  
Building Improvements..... 21,080.00  
Architect ..... 861.51  
Walsh & Assoc ..... 0.00  
Misc Campaign Expenses ..... 7,286.54.  
Loan Repay – Foundation ..... 1,000.00

Total disbursements for November ..... 106,982.32

**Operating Balance 11/30/2023..... 113,519.24**

## WORSHIP

### ATTENDANCE

### Service Times

Day	Date	9:00	11:00	6:00	WEATHER	Totals
Sunday	12/31		69 (10am)		Cold	69
Sunday	1/7	62	72		Snow	134
Wednesday	1/10			68		68
Wednesday	1/14			51		51
Sunday	1/21	58			Cold/Windy	58

### Welcome to the Lord's Family

*Leann Angstrom 1/7/24*

*Marissa Dutcher 1/17/24*

*Mylah Dutcher 1/17/24*

*Ember Fair 1/17/24*

*Marshall Dencklau 1/21/24*

*Avaliegh Dencklau 1/21/24*

*Brandon Dencklau 1/21/24*

### Lord Welcome into Your Kingdom

*Dawn Gehlhausen  
1/5/24*

*Dick Fevold  
1/5/24*



### CHURCH STATISTICS

Weddings: 0  
Baptisms: 7  
Funerals: 1