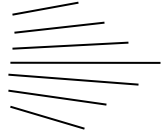




THE

VOICE



The monthly newsletter of Our Savior Lutheran Church
1103 N Broad St., Mankato, MN 56001 **MARCH 2025**

Artwork Dedication

Sunday, March 2nd

9am Divine Service

(One combined service)

Our paintings are done, and it is time to complete our project!

Please join us for a special celebration on March 2nd as we dedicate our paintings and beautify our sanctuary.

To kick things off on that day (and since we are also celebrating our 75th anniversary as a congregation) we are encouraging everyone to dress up for church like our forefathers did in the 1950's. For women we encourage dresses (and hats if you have one you like) and for men we encourage suits and ties. We hope that everyone has fun with this and will likely do it a few more times over the course of the year.

We will dedicate the paintings during a **9:00 Divine Service** that will better fill our pews and ensure that everyone gets to share this special day together. Following the service we will have a reception in the fellowship hall featuring some presentations about the project. We are very excited for the culmination of this project and hope that you will join us to celebrate.

Contact Info:

Church Office: Phone: 507-385-2180
Fax: 507-345-5113
contact@oslcmandato.org
www.oslcmandato.org
www.facebook.com/oslcmandato

Senior Pastor Office phone: 507-385-2183
Rev. Adam Matheny: matheny@oslcmandato.org
Emergency number: 812-449-6866

Associate Pastor Office phone: 507-385-2185
Rev. John Koopman: pastorjohnkoopman@gmail.com
Emergency number: 712-852-6095

Secretary Office phone: 507-385-2180
Sue Hendrickson: sue@oslcmandato.org

Custodian Cell phone: 507-327-2922
Bob Baker rbaker@oslcmandato.org

Music Coordinator Home phone: 507-341-4173
Suzie Gangi suzie@oslcmandato.org

Office hours are Monday through Friday (except holidays) from 8:00 am to noon and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Unless there is an activity or event taking place, please use the Broad Street entrance by the mailbox.

In case of emergency or urgent need, our pastors are available at all hours and all days by calling their cell phone. Please use the office phone for other business. Please also remember that Sunday morning and other worship times are not for bringing church business to other members or staff but for focusing upon the Word and gifts of God. "The seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work." - Exodus 20:10

Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
-Psalm 51:1

Psalm 51 is one of the most heartfelt prayers of repentance in all of Scripture. King David, broken over his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah, pleads for God's mercy. He does not try to justify himself or lessen his guilt. Instead, he throws himself entirely on God's grace, appealing not to his own worthiness but to God's steadfast love and great compassion which we ultimately know is found in Christ.

This verse reminds us that sin is serious, but God's mercy in Jesus is greater. When we come before Him, we do not ask for forgiveness based on our efforts to do better or our attempts to make up for past failures. We ask based on His character—His love, His compassion, and His faithfulness. David knew that if God did not act in mercy, he had no hope. The same is true for us.

True repentance begins with acknowledging our need for grace. We cannot clean ourselves up before coming to God. Instead, we come as we are—broken, ashamed, and in need of His cleansing. And the good news of the gospel is that God delights in showing mercy. Through Christ, He has already provided the way for our sins to be blotted out.

Throughout this season of Lent we focus on repentance. We look our sin straight in the face and recognize just how sinful and unclean we are. The purpose of this season is not merely to think worse of ourselves, but to think more of Christ. Recognizing our sinfulness forces us to turn to Jesus and cry out for mercy recognizing that in Him we have all that we need.

Hear Our Penitential Cry

Savior, When in Dust to Thee is one of the hymns appointed for Ash Wednesday. Given the subject of the hymn its appropriateness for the season of Lent, and Ash Wednesday in particular, is obvious. This season of Lent is a penitential season, by which we mean this is a season in which we reflect upon the depravity of our sins and our immense need for Christ. The imagery of dust and ashes helps us to realize that the consequences of our sin is death, and that just as God formed us out of the dust, so shall we return to dust when we die and are laid in the ground.

This thought is unpleasant. Ash Wednesday is uncomfortable as itchy ashes are smeared on our foreheads reminding us of this stark reality: dust thou art, unto dust thou shalt return. The tradition of ashes is helpful, as is also fasting, to bring us to terms with our own personal sinfulness. But perhaps what is most helpful is attending private confession and absolution, meditating on our own sins, vocalizing them aloud which we and the pastor can hear.

Nevertheless, our meditation in Lent is not merely self-reflective, but is ultimately Christ-centered. The hymn focuses us away from ourselves, and upon the suffering of Christ for us, by which He hears our penitential cry. “O, by all Thy pains and woe suffered once for us below, bending from Thy throne on high, hear our penitential cry!” Indeed, our Lord Jesus suffered all and was laid into the “vault whose dark abode held in vain the rising God. O, from earth to heaven restored, mighty, reascended Lord, bending from Thy throne on high, hear our penitential cry!”

Your Lord Jesus does hear your cries for mercy. The ashes upon your forehead are in the shape of the cross, reminding you that your imminent death has been utterly defeated by Christ who rose from the grave, and shall one day lead you with Him from death to life. When you confess your sins, the pastor stands in the stead and by the command of Christ to forgive all of your sins. New life is yours in Christ Jesus.

During this penitential season of Lent, spend some extra time reflecting on this glorious truth, and forsaking your sins, turn to the Lord in hope and joy.

In the name of Jesus,
Pastor Koopman

Council Meeting
Minutes of Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Mankato
January 14, 2025

Members Present: Dan Gahler, Zak Tess, Valerie Elliott, Rob Hobbs, Chris Anderson, Denise Painter, Nancy Benson, Gene Mensing, and Pastors Adam Matheny and John Koopman.

Members Absent: Joel Maunula, Judd Schultz, Judy Hendley, and Gary Fladland.

1. President Dan Gahler called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.
2. Opening Prayer was lead by Pastor Koopman.
3. Public/congregational Presentation: Rhonda Prince presented the budget for National Youth Gathering, noting the registration is paid. The youth will be having a fundraiser at Pizza Ranch on February 17th. There was discussion about other avenues of support to pursue, if needed.
4. Bible Study: Luke 12 led by Zak Tess. Next month will be Luke 13.
5. Additions/Approval of the Agenda: Motion made and seconded to approve the agenda as presented, motion carried.
6. Council Minutes: Motion made and seconded to approve the December 10, 2024, Council minutes as corrected due to a typo, motion carried.
7. Pastors' Report: Pastor Matheny and Pastor Koopman reported holiday services went well and preparing for Lent.
8. Treasurers Report: Dan Gahler presented the December report, noting significant giving in December. Motion made and seconded to approve the December Treasurer Report as presented, motion carried.
9. Unfinished Business
 - A. Update on upcoming 75th Anniversary of church ideas: President Dan Gahler reported there will be a meeting this week to discuss the ideas.
 - B. Update on Congregational Notification ideas from the group: There was no update.

- C. Update on artwork status: Denise Painter provided an update, noting frames are installed and working on date for installation and dedication.
 - D. Reminder of January Voters' Meeting on the 19th.
10. New Business
- A. Discuss update to our Church Constitution and/or By-Laws: Discussion was tabled until next Council meeting.
 - B. Motion for Appointment of new Trustee: Motion made and seconded to approve Kirk Yungerberg to the Board of Trustees, motion carried.
 - C. Open Board Position: Dan Gahler noted please continue to think and pray about possible individuals for open positions.
 - D. Discuss announcing for Bob Baker's pending open position: Chris Anderson reported Bob Baker will retire at the end of March. The Trustees will place a position announcement in the bulletin and The Voice.
11. Board Sharing: Trustees: All electrical panels are updated and working with insurance on fall protection item.
Endowment: Quarterly meeting next week and have new adopt -a-seminary student, Benjamin Wagner. Deacons: Blood drive May 19th; chili cookoff and Bible trivia after January Voters' Meeting; new coffee carafes purchased through a donation; and kitchen clean up is February 15th. Elders: need structure for benevolent fund and security of offering plates during service.
12. Closing Prayer: Closed with the Lord's Prayer.
13. Meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm. Next meeting is February 11, 2025 at 6:30 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Valerie Elliott, Secretary
OSLC Council

Treasurer's Report Commentary Period Ending January 31, 2025

Income and Expense Summary

	Current Month	Y-T-D
Income	\$61,965.26	\$61,965.26
Operating Expenses	-\$58,243.46	-\$58,243.46
LCEF Mortgage Principal Payment	-\$893.04	-\$893.04
Net for Period[†]	\$2,828.46	\$2,828.46

[†]Positive net value indicates we received more than our expenses, a negative number indicates that we have spent more than we have received for that period (deficit).

Cash Summary

	Amount	Notes
Checking Account	\$49,435.18	Daily checking account Pioneer Bank
Savings Account	\$203,326.74	Interest Savings account Pioneer Bank
Joyful Response	\$4,552.81	Joyful Response deposits and loan payments
Library Fund	\$20,107.12	Certificate of Deposit
Accounts Receivable	\$0.00	
Total Cash Assets	\$277,421.85	
Dedicated Accounts	-\$178,388.81	Amount of our cash balance designated for specific activities
Other Liabilities	\$239.01	Accruals for HSA pmts, youth, etc.
Available Cash Balance	\$99,272.05	\$97,218.42 last month

Long Term Debt (LCEF Mortgage)

Current Balance	\$200,401.44
Monthly Payment	\$1,845.99
Interest Rate (Variable Annually)	5.625% (Aug. 2024-Jul 2025)
Pay-off Date (Pay-off Amount)	7/2036 (\$30,556.92)

Additional Comments:

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Fladland, Treasurer

Voters' Meeting
Our Savior Lutheran Church of Mankato
1103 North Broad St, Mankato, MN 56001
January 19, 2025 Attendance: 41

1. Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 11:55 A.M. by President Dan Gahler.
2. Opening Prayer: Lead by Pastor Adam Matheny.
3. Approval of Agenda: Motion made, seconded to approve the Agenda as presented, motion carried.
4. Approval of November 24, 2024 Voters' Meeting Minutes: Motion made and seconded to approve the November 24, 2024 Voter's Meeting minute as presented, motion carried.
5. Pastors' Report: Pastor Adam Matheny expressed dependence everyday on the grace of Jesus Christ and ask for forgiveness from the congregation. Pastor John Koopman stated it is a joy and privilege to be at Our Savior and looking forward to the year. There were no questions from the congregation.
6. Treasurer's report: President Dan Gahler reviewed the end of the year report, noting the correction of the minor discrepancy, Concordia Classical Academy fund set up and receipt of donations, and significant year end giving. There were no questions from the congregation. Motion made and seconded to approve the Treasurer's report as presented, motion carried.
7. Board Reports and 2025 Goals: President Dan Gahler invited any board members to speak to the congregation. There were no questions from the congregation.
8. Unfinished Business
 - A. Sanctuary Art Discussion Update: President Dan Gahler provided an update, noting paintings are done, framing completed, waiting for the paint to completely dry, and looking at next month for dedication of the art work.
9. New Business
 - A. Nominations for District officers: Motion made and seconded to nominate the incumbents of officers as presented, motion carried.
10. Closing Prayer: Lord's Prayer.
11. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 12:08 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted, Valerie Elliott, Secretary, OSLC Council

Our Savior Lutheran Church Endowment Fund Treasurer's Report December 31, 2024

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Non-Scholar Fund</u>	<u>Scholar Fund</u>
Beginning Principal	\$10,893.79	\$100.00	\$10,793.79
1995 to 2023 Gifts Received	\$611,614.57	\$437,375.42	\$174,239.15
1995 to 2023 Int + Dividend Inc.	\$370,614.84	\$254,974.11	\$115,640.73
1995-2023 Change in Mkt Value	\$11,218.92	(\$4,586.96)	\$15,805.88
1995 to 2003 Disbursements	<u>(\$472,378.91)</u>	<u>(\$324,184.84)</u>	<u>(\$148,194.07)</u>
Fund Balances: 28 Year Totals	\$531,963.21	\$363,677.73	\$168,285.48
2024 OSLC Member Gifts	\$1,704.53	\$852.26	\$852.27
2024 Int. + Dividend Inc.	\$15,445.61	\$7,722.81	\$7,722.80
2024 Change in Mkt Value	\$29,982.62	\$14,991.31	\$14,991.31
2024 Long Term Cap.Gain	\$5,956.24	\$2,978.12	\$2,978.12
2024 Disbursements	(\$24,572.85)	(\$2,972.85)	(\$21,600.00)
Total Fund Balances: 2024	\$560,479.36	\$387,249.38	\$173,229.98
Wells Fargo checking	\$10,348.09		
LCMS Foundation	\$550,131.27		
Total balances: 2024	<u>\$560,479.36</u>		
 2024 Disbursements:			
Concordia Adopt a Student	\$ 3,500.00		
Concordia Classical Academy	\$ 10,600.00		
Together in Mission	\$ -		
Concordia Univ. Chicago	\$ 2,500.00		
Concordia Univ. St. Paul	\$ 2,500.00		
LCMS Colloquy Program	\$ -		
Fees – LCMS	\$ 2,972.85		
Total 2024 Disbursements	<u>\$24,572.85</u>		

IN MEMORIAM

Joan Lil Steck

October 21, 1932 ~ February 8, 2025

Accessions & Losses

Losses:

Naomi Brand, Emmaus Lutheran Church, St. Paul, MN;
LCMS; January 20, 2025

Bridgett Strobel, Hosanna Lutheran Church, Mankato;
LCMS; February 3, 2025

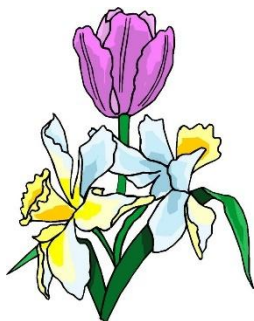
Michael & Pamela Bartelt; Christ the King Lutheran Church,
Mankato; ELCA; February 7, 2025

Brandon Kraemer, Jackson [age 12]; Released by personal
request; February 7, 2025



Articles for the April 2025 VOICE are due by Friday, March 21st at 4pm. You may drop-off submissions in the office, or e-mail to: contact@oslcmandato.org.

Easter Garden



We will have a new supplier for our Easter Garden flowers this year, but do not yet have the price list. As soon as it is received, it will be available in the narthex. More information to follow.

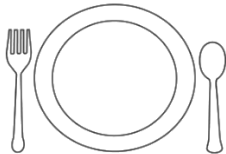


**ASH
WEDNESDAY**

**Divine Service with Holy Communion
and the Imposition of Ashes**
Wednesday, March 5th
1:30pm and 6:30pm

MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES

Wednesdays March 12th, 19th, and 26th, April 2nd
1:30pm and 6:30pm



Wednesday Night Meals

During Lent, beginning March 5th, the Wednesday Night Meal will be served at 5:30pm. Come enjoy a good meal and good fellowship before attending the mid-week Lenten Worship. A free-will donation will be accepted.

Check the sign-up sheet in the Fireplace room to see how you can help with the Wednesday meals – cooking, serving, cleaning up, providing a dessert, etc, or the Sunday morning coffee time.



Bible Study

In March we will begin a new Bible Study! Each Tuesday afternoon at 1:00 we will study God's Word together. One of the pastors will lead the group in discussion and study. For our first book we will be studying Genesis together. We'll hope to see you there!

Our Savior's 75th Anniversary

Update from the 75th Anniversary Committee:

On March 9th you will see a tree in the Narthex with 75 Random Acts of Kindness hanging on it – more information on that will be coming. We are looking into having various guest preachers during the year, and also having some fun with 1950's church attire and customs. We have started looking into getting an updated church directory, chosen a Bible verse theme, and plan on picking a date for a celebration party and inviting past members.

Our two asks for you are this:

- 1) If you have contact information for any past member (full name, current mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address), please forward to dan.gahler@gmail.com so we can invite them. This will take lots of time and we need to keep it efficient, so please include all of the information in one e-mail.
- 2) If you want to help, or are asked to help on any of these activities, please ask how you can help. Every little bit will be helpful and appreciated.



Open Gym / Game Night Sunday, March 2nd

We will have an open gym and game night the first Sunday of each month from 6 – 8pm. This is for all ages.

Please bring games (board games/card games) to play. Use the back parking lot/door. Please note: this is not a drop off event, children 6th grade and younger must be accompanied by an adult.

YOUTH news

The Mankato Curling Club is reserved for our Youth Event March 23rd from 12-3pm. We will have lunch and a curling lesson and then have some time to play. A release must be signed, pick up a copy on the Youth Bulletin Board.



Bible Study Circles

~ Lenten Season ~

Our Bible Studies are theme studies from the LWML *Quarterly*. A *Quarterly* is furnished for your

study. Your copy is in the narthex. The theme for winter quarter 2025 is “Tell Your Story”. The editor asks you to share your story at editor@lwml.org. Welcoming participants

Ruth/Lydia Bible Study gathers Thursday, March 6th at 10:10 for fellowship with Bible Study at 10:25 (note time). Lesson on pages 20 and 21, God’s Story for You! Hymn LSB 825 “Rise, Shine You People”. Note: February lesson will be reviewed (pages 18-19).

Mary Circle Bible Study will meet Friday, March 21st at 1:30pm in the Fireplace Room. Our study will be on pages 18-19 from the Winter *Quarterly*, “God Sees Oure Story, Therefore Rejoice”. Hostess: Sharon Anderson, phone 507-779-1727



PRAYER SHAWLS

This past month four prayer shawls were given out. A prayer shawl lets people know we care and are praying for them. If you, or know someone who would like one, call Marcella 507-317-4127.



QUILTING

Mondays, March 10th and 24th

Quilting meets the 2nd and 4th Mondays each month, September through May. Join us in the Quilting Room #124/126 from 9am to noon to sew tops, middles, and backs together and then tie. No experience is necessary. Come enjoy good fellowship while we work.

If you would like to donate cotton material or sheets, please bring them to the Mission Center.



BOOK CLUB

Sundays, March 9th & 23rd

The Our Savior's book club meets from 4:30-6 in the fireplace room on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. We read good books and then discuss them together from our shared Lutheran perspective. In March we will begin a new book! Stay tuned to the bulletin for more information about our schedule.



“It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, O Most High” Psalm 92:1

Special Music Schedule for March:

March 9: Handbells

March 12: Brass

March 16: Intro Bells

March 23: Vocal Choir

March 26: Intro Choir

Lent Rehearsal Schedule Begins March 5:

Intro Choir: 4:45-5:05

Intro Bells: 5:05-5:25

Bells: 5:25-5:50

Brass: 6:05

Vocal Choir: 7:20 after the service

Blessings,

Suzie Gangi

suzie@oslcmankato.org

507-341-4173



Time to
Spring Ahead

Daylight Saving time begins Sunday, March 9th. Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed Saturday night.

Women's Retreat

March 14-15

In the Beauty of Holiness

with guest speaker Dr. Kristen Einertson
of
All the Household

What does it mean to “live liturgically”? Isn't the liturgy just for Sunday morning? What is the role of Christian women in bringing the beauty of our historic Lutheran traditions into our homes? Join us and guest speaker Kristen Einertson as we dive into these ideas at our Spring Women's Retreat.

Kristen is a wife, mother, professor of rhetoric, and sister in Christ with a passion for the historic practices of the Lutheran Church. She resides in Farmington, MN with her husband and two children (third on the way!). She is the co-creator of the blog All the Household which focuses on liturgical living: www.allthehousehold.com

Complete the registration form on the adjacent page and return to the church office: 1103 North Broad Street, Mankato, MN 56001

Come and spend the day with your sisters in Christ being inspired, refreshed, and fulfilled. We look forward to seeing you there!

Women's Retreat Registration

March 14 – 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Ages 21+ social event

March 15 – 9:00a.m.-2:30p.m.

lunch will be provided

Registration fee \$25

Name _____

Email _____

Home Church _____

Food Sensitivities _____

I plan to attend:

___ Friday night

___ Saturday

___ I am able to pay my own registration fee

___ I need assistance with my registration fee

___ I am willing to sponsor someone else's registration

Amount enclosed _____



Ladies of Our Savior *Lutheran Women in Mission*

www.mnslwml.org

~ Ready to Serve ~

Stay connected with LWML Winter Quarterly and WOM E-News from both National and District. www.mnslwml.org and www.lwml.org.

LWML 41st Biennial Convention “Growing in God’s Grace” in Omaha, Nebraska, June 26-29. There is a 15 page insert in the *Winter Quarterly*. Registration on-line begins March 1st. Regular registration continues through April 30th. Late Registration May 1st to June 1st. Hotel registrations are separate. The LWML has blocked almost 1500 rooms within one mile of the CHI Health Center and more about 5 miles away.

There is child care available and youth activities. Ways to attend and participate from home. Convention sessions live, Gifts from the Heart, Ingathering online with shipping (page I insert) for three recipients.

District: www.mnsdistrict.org **Church:** www.oslcmankato.org, www.facebook.com/oslcmankato, www.youtube.com **LWML:** www.lwml.org, www.mnslwml.org

Young at Heart / S.A.G.E.S.

Young at Heart is Our Savior older adult ministry and

Saints Alive Growing Ever Serving

(S.A.G.E.S.) is the District older adult ministry (50+)

LHM Lutheran Hour Ministries

LLL Lutheran Layman's League



S.A.G.E.S.



(S.A.G.E.S. = Saints Alive, Growing, Ever Serving)

Sagacity – S.A.G.E.S. quarterly newsletter, Sagacity is available at the district website: www.mnsdistrict.org. January – March issue includes The Gathering information

Still a Great Need! Volunteer from each congregation to be a contact for S.A.G.E.S. Is it I Lord? Also needed – a representative for several Circuit vacancies. Volunteer by contacting President James Vehling.

One Voice for Public Policy: Get your copy at www.mnsdistrict.org

Public Policy Advocates: Rev. Fred Hinz

(fred.hinz@mnsdistrict.org) and Rev. Scot Missling

(pastorstpaulcms@gmail.com)

Reminder for LHM Mobile App. Access Lutheran Hour Ministries' Daily Devotions and sermons from The Lutheran Hour, season-themed devotions during Advent and Lent. Inspirational Scripture-based messages at your fingertips every day. Available everywhere you download the app!

www.lhm.org ● www.mnsdistrict.org/sages



S.A.G.E.S. Gathering XXXV

Overcoming Life's Sorrows

(noon) May 5 and 6, 2025 (afternoon)

Country Inn & Suites, 1900 Premier Drive, Mankato

Keynote Speaker: Rev. Dr. R. Reed Lessing

Banquet Entertainment: Gracenotes

Closing Devotion: Mr. Sean Martens, Assistant to the District President, Education & Commissioned Ministers

Fine more info at www.mnsdistrict.org, including cost, hotel rates, and keynote biography

Watch Our Savior's Sunday Worship

Our Savior's Sunday 8am and 10:30am worship is livestreamed. Go to: www.oslcmankato.org and click on the "Livestreaming & Videos" menu item. From there you can go directly to YouTube to watch the service. You can also view the Order of Service, and keep up with church activities in the Bulletin Announcements from our website.

Mission Service

Mission Service will meet on Wednesday, March 19th at 4pm in the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome to come and help with the projects.





Mites

Lutheran Women in Mission LWML Mites for Missions

Small Mite Boxes for children and adults are available in the narthex to save change used for mission projects. Each 3rd Sunday, the 16th in March, this change can be added to others change in the Big Mite Box in the narthex.

Mission Grants are voted on at the National and District Conventions.

The featured grant for March is #30, Showering Love on the Least of These, Mercy Holistic Ministry - \$100,000. Mercy Holistic Ministry (MHM) in Sacramento will increase the frequency of mobile hot shower services and haircuts from two to three days per week and serve 2,000 more people annually. A mobile clothing trailer will be purchased and operated to give away clean clothing and hygiene kits. God's word will be shared by distributing 10 to 15 Bibles and prayer books every week.

In the last several years the homeless population in Sacramento has about doubled to 10,000. These services will enhance the feeling of worth, provide hope in Jesus, and give counseling to aid the homeless in applying for jobs or securing an apartment. All people are created in God's image, loved by God in Jesus Christ, and need to experience that love every day in a multitude of ways. To learn more, visit: www.lwml.org/2023-2025-mission-grant-30.

The Minnesota South District LWML goal for the 2024-2026 Biennium is \$270,000. Go to: [LWML Minnesota South District - Mission Grants](http://www.lwml.org/2023-2025-mission-grant-30) to see the grant recipients and the progress.



“Our Lord dwelt among us for quite some time without anyone seeing or meeting Him. Yet in this span, He consecrated and sanctified every human life from its very beginning at the moment of fertilization. And He demonstrated that neither age nor appearance nor ability – nor any lack thereof – improves or impairs anyone’s worth. God creates, redeems, and calls each one as His own to start with.”

Pastor Michael Salemink
Lutherans for Life

A Life Quote from Lutherans for Life ~ www.lutheransforlife.org

Minnesota
**STATE
BIBLE
BOWL
2025**

**Concordia University
1282 Concordia Ave
St. Paul, MN**

**Saturday, April 5th
Registration 8:30 – 9am
Opening Devotion 9am**

**The Life of David
1 Samuel 16 – 1 Kings 2
(ESV)**

Students in grade 7 – 12 who attend an LCMS church in school in the MN South or MN North districts.

Team competition, 3-4 players is a verbal, fast-paced quiz format with a double elimination. The individual competition is a written 50 question, multiple-choice test. Only \$40 per team. Send check and names of each participant to Rev. Rudy Maurer, PO Box 113, New Richland, MN 56072 by March 17.

For more information, contact Pastor Maurer at 507-381-5394, RudyMaurer@aol.com, or visit the MN Bible Bowl website: www.mnbiblebowl.org.

Endowment Board News

Our Endowment Fund has been participating in the “Adopt-A-Student” program with Concordia Seminary in St Louis, MO, in the amount of \$3,500 per year. Our student for the 24-25 school year is Benjamin Wagner from southern California. We are excited to support his education and correspond with him frequently as he prepares to become a Pastor. Here is a letter from Benjamin:

Greetings to all those at Our Savior Lutheran Church!

I was recently informed through the “Adopt a Student” program that you volunteered to help me on my journey through seminary. I wanted to reach out and personally thank you for your generosity; it is kindness such as yours that has made this journey of mine to seminary possible. I thought in this initial letter I would introduce myself.

First off, hello! My name is Benjamin Wagner. I am from Southern California (yes, I know it’s hard to believe there are Christians out there). I was born and raised Christian, though not Lutheran. I grew up in a Quaker church and even began preaching there when I was sixteen.¹ The story of how I became a Quaker preacher at a young age has a long backstory, so I won’t spare you many details.

I joke that I was genetically bred to become a pastor; my dad has served as a preacher, my grandfather likewise has, and I have many relatives who are clergy in various denominations. Hence, the many positive examples of ministry that surrounded me indubitably had a strong influence on my notion of becoming a pastor.

That journey to ministry started at a very young age for me. When I was eleven, I began competing in a Bible trivia contest called Junior Bible Quiz (JBQ for short). In total, I memorized a couple hundred or so Bible passages/references/verses/facts to perform in the league that I did. However, if I were to take credit for the cultivation of biblical knowledge, I would be lying to myself. It was my parents that did the work for me. Every day, they would drill me on my Bible verses, ensuring I retained huge swaths of Scripture to help me compete. Ultimately, this helped lay a solid foundation for my knowledge of the Bible.

Once I graduated from JBQ, I moved on to another form of competitive Bible knowledge. Starting my freshman year of high school, I competed in an apologetics league. We were asked a question about the Bible or theology or to compare Christianity with other religions. Then, we would provide a six-minute speech to answer the question. There, I expanded my knowledge of the Scriptures and different faiths so that I might learn to evangelize to people of different backgrounds.

Eventually, the church I grew up in perceived that both my knowledge of the Scriptures and my speaking abilities were sufficient for teaching by their standards. So, I did an internship under my pastor, which lasted a summer, and by the end of it, I was giving sermons. Thus, I began preaching at my church around the end of my sophomore year in high school. At the same time, I got a position at an apologetics radio station, which I still co-host occasionally.

However, I eventually came to reexamine specific passages (primarily concerning the sacraments), which led me to questions the Quaker beliefs I'd held my entire life. After reading passages such as 1 Peter 3 and 1 Corinthians 11 with fresh eyes, I realized that I could not remain with the Quaker church (particularly their views on the sacraments) and thus parted ways to join the LCMS. Soon following, I joined the pre-seminary program at Concordia University Irvine, got my degree in theology, and now I'm here.

All that is to say, the Lord is faithful. Over the course of my life, he's guided me towards Himself. He's provided for me every step of the way, and I am blessed that you are part of that. May God bless you and your continued ministry.

*Blessings!
Ben Wagner*

¹For those curious about the differences between Lutherans and Quakers, I'll explain briefly here. Quakers hold to a memorial view of the sacraments, place a higher emphasis on the work of the spirit, and are historically pacifists.

The Endowment Board wishes to thank all of you for your donations to the Endowment Fund here at Our Savior Lutheran Church.

From the Stewardship Committee:

God's Instruments, God's Stewards

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Eph. 2:10)

Some pastors refer to these words as “the most forgotten words in the Scriptures.” They are forgotten because they follow the familiar and critical words before it. The preceding two verses that overshadow Ephesians 2:10 are words of justification: “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph. 2:8–9). These are words preached regularly. They are assigned as confirmation verses. They carry with them the very heart of what it means to be a redeemed child of God!

Precisely because the previous verses are so central to salvation, they often overpower our practice of stewardship! We have been saved by grace. This is certain and sure because of Jesus. Works play no role in our salvation. No credit taking for us! Grace is freely given. Faith is miraculously created by the Spirit and joyously received. This truth is so wonderful and so encompassing that we often miss out on WHY we are redeemed.

The grace of God revealed in Jesus calls us to faith. But St. Paul doesn't stop with grace and faith. He continues to the logical conclusion. Just like the creation declares the handiwork of God, the redemption of sinners like you and me declares His greatest handiwork! Redeemed stewards are created to reflect the grace and mercy God showers on us to others.

As Lutherans, we understand that good works flow from faith in Jesus Christ. They are the fruit of the tree of salvation into which we have been grafted by grace. Sanctification and stewardship are both on-going and active confessions of what the Lord has done in us. These works are not always spectacular. Many times, they are simply parents showing Jesus to their children. They are compassionate actions that live out the truth of

the Gospel to co-workers and even complete strangers. While they can be grand endeavors, more likely they are simple, beautiful works which highlight what Jesus has done in us.

These works aren't random either. They have been planned by God. God planned to use you as a faithful steward as you walk the road that leads you through your daily life. There are no chance encounters or coincidences. They have been planned by the Lord of the universe for the benefit of His creation. Good works are what point to God's greatest work: Jesus!

He calls you and me to walk in this faith, which flows from this grace, which has been poured out on us in Jesus. But even this is not to our credit. We are simply called to be faithful stewards of God's grace so that we may share it with those who need it as much as we do. God's Spirit carries us along in this. We are just the steward — the instrument in His hand to accomplish His plan and glorify Him!

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Remember, you have until the end of March to direct your 2024 Thrivent Choice monies to a charity of your choosing. We hope you will consider directing your monies to Our Savior Lutheran Church. Please talk with your Thrivent Representative to see how you can direct your available Thrivent Choice Dollars, or visit <https://www.thrivent.com/about-us/membership/thrivent-choice> to get started.

Lutheran Hour Ministries

Lenten Devotion

In Jesus Christ, God Himself enters our human condition. In “Servant of the Lord”, we see Jesus as God’s Son and our Redeemer. He has made the Heavenly Father known to us. Proclaiming the kingdom of God, Jesus served us – lovingly, patiently, compassionately – as He died for our sins and rose three days later in Easter victory.

Go to: www.lhm.org/lent to read devotions, subscribe to have the daily devotion delivered right to your inbox, or listen with the free app, or with Spotify, iHeart Radio, Alexa, or Google Home. Printed copies will be available in the Narthex by Ash Wednesday.

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- **Give+ Online** Go to the church web-site, www.oslcmankato.org, on the home page click on the “Contribute Online” button.
- **Give+ Mobile** Download “GivePlus Church” at the App Store or Google Play Store on your smart phone or tablet to get started.

The Voice
Our Savior Lutheran Church
1103 N Broad Street
Mankato, MN 56001

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THANK YOU ALL CONTRIBUTORS

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Address Service Requested

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March 2025

Our Savior Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minnesota

March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 9:00 Divine Service – Art Work Dedication 10:00 Reception 6:00 Open Gym/Game Night	3	4 8:30 Circuit Pastors 1:00 Tuesday Bible Study 5:15 Board of Education 5:30 Board of Trustees 6:00 Board of Elders 6:30 Board of Deacons	Ash Wednesday 5 1:30 Ash Wednesday Worship 5:30 Meal 6:30 Ash Wednesday Worship	6 9:00 Private Confession 9:30 Ruth/Lydia Circle 10:00 Bulletin Deadline	7	8
9 <i>Daylight Saving Time Begins</i> 8:00 Divine Service 9:00 Coffee Time 9:25 Sunday School 9:25 Bible Class 10:30 Divine Service 4:30 Book Club	10 9:00 Quilting	11 10:00 Staff Meeting 1:00 Tuesday Bible Study 6:30 Planning Council	12 1:30 Midweek Lenten Svc 4:45 Introductory Choir 5:05 Introductory Bells 5:25 Handbell Choir 5:30 Meal 6:05 Brass 6:30 Midweek Lenten Svc 7:30 Jr. Confirmation 7:30 Vocal Choir	13 9:00 Private Confession 10:00 Bulletin Deadline	14 6:30 Women's Retreat Fellowship/Reception	15 9:30 Women's Retreat
16 <i>Mite Sunday</i> 8:00 Divine Service 9:00 Coffee Time 9:25 Sunday School 9:25 Bible Class 10:30 Divine Service	17	18 10:00 Staff Meeting 1:00 Tuesday Bible Study	19 1:30 Midweek Lenten Svc 4:00 Mission Service 4:45 Introductory Choir 5:05 Introductory Bells 5:25 Handbell Choir 5:30 Meal 6:05 Brass 6:30 Midweek Lenten Svc 7:30 Jr. Confirmation 7:30 Vocal Choir	20 9:00 Private Confession 10:00 Bulletin Deadline	21 4:00 The Voice Deadline	22
23 8:00 Divine Service 9:00 Coffee Time 9:25 Sunday School 9:25 Bible Class 10:30 Divine Service 12:00 Youth @ Mankato Curling Club 4:30 Book Club	24 9:00 Quilting	25 10:00 Staff Meeting 1:00 Tuesday Bible Study	26 1:30 Midweek Lenten Svc 4:45 Introductory Choir 5:05 Introductory Bells 5:25 Handbell Choir 5:30 Meal 6:05 Brass 6:30 Midweek Lenten Svc 7:30 Jr. Confirmation 7:30 Vocal Choir	27 9:00 Private Confession 10:00 Bulletin Deadline	28	29
30 8:00 Divine Service 9:00 Coffee Time 9:25 Sunday School 9:25 Bible Class 10:30 Divine Service	31					

Staff

Senior Pastor Rev. Adam M. Matheny Office: 507-385-2183 Cell: 812-449-6866	Associate Pastor Rev. John H. Koopman Office: 507-385-2185 Cell: 712-852-6095	Music Coordinator Suzie Gangi Home: 507-341-4173	Secretary Sue Hendrickson Office: 507-385-2180 Home: 507-388-3557	Custodian Bob Baker 507-327-2922
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