



## Our Savior's VOICE February 2023

A community transformed by Christ, to be Christ in the world.

### ***Money... and the Joy of Jesus***

*You work for money. You save money. You spend money.  
You tithe money (sometimes using online giving!) You stress over money.*

*A significant portion of your life will revolve around earning, saving, giving, and spending money. So, your relationship with money isn't something you can just brush aside as unspiritual or unnecessary... Money is a wonderful servant, just so, it is a terrible master. (Tithe.ly.com)*

The above quotes were captured from one of many online stewardship resources that I will be consulting in the weeks and months ahead. These words articulate much of angst we all have over money. And as I write this February *VOICE* newsletter article to you, it is with great **concern, joy**, and an **open heart** that I speak to you about our financial stewardship.

First, my *concern* is that as of the close of 2022 our church operating budget is **\$9,425.70 in the red**. But my *joy* is that I know of your generosity, and that WE WILL meet this present financial challenge. But there is an even greater *joy*, that which is found in knowing Jesus Christ regardless of how the financial ledger looks at the end of the month!

Any stressful situation is a reminder of how much we need to trust in Christ Jesus. As I write these words to you today, I am driven to my knees trusting that God will provide, not only for the church budget, but for all the "shortfalls" that keep us up at night.

There is no shortage of reasons as to why a financial crunch is impinging upon our church operating budget. It is as obvious as the inflation that takes a huge bite out of our grocery bill every week. Candidly, many of our "best givers" are no longer with us, and it behooves our congregation to cultivate a new generation of commitment to the mission and ministry of our church. And of course, COVID has disrupted the habit of worship attendance for which it might take a while to recover. But still, it is in this context, with an *open heart*, I ask that you look to God not only FIRST, but ONLY, and to hear these challenging, but yet comforting words from scripture:

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*  
(Philippians 4:6-7)

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."*  
(Proverbs 3:5-6)

*"Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* (Matthew 6:34)

*"Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* (Luke 12:33-34)

It is very difficult to articulate, as Christians WE DO NOT GIVE of our financial resources to meet a church budget (*even though I have informed you of our financial short fall!*). No, we give NOT to *meet a budget*, we give because God – in Christ Jesus – has already *met and given to us*.

I get it, and totally understand, that many of you who are reading this VOICE article give very generously to our mission and ministry at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, and we thank you for that! Moreover, as a "recovering people pleaser" it is with great fear and trepidation that I write this article to you in the first place. I can almost see some rolling their eyes and saying: *"That's all the Preacher ever does is talk about money!"*

But I would be less than responsible as your Pastor if I did not remind you that God is the greatest of Givers, and in return God has created you to Give. All of us need to be reminded – those who give a weekly offering, as well as those who have not given for quite some time – that Christian stewardship is always premised on *the need of the giver to give, and not the need to meet a church budget*.

For just a moment take the anxiety of a budget shortfall off the table. Regardless of whether the church budget is being met, or not, have you challenged yourself to give a proportion of your income to the church? The biblical standard is to give a tithe, 10% of your income. Obviously for many of us this is a HUGE step, particularly if you are not in the practice of budgeting for that in the first place. But if not 10% of your income, how about 5%, or 3%, or 1%? I guess the point is to start somewhere with an estimate of giving which "disciplines the disciple" to see financial giving as an act of worship.

The season of Lent is just around the corner (*Ash Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>*); and it has been a while since we have had an intentional conversation on our financial stewardship as a part of our worship. The last time that we as a congregation had an intentional stewardship drive and invited our membership to pledge (an estimate of giving for the year) was between April of 2018 and March of 2019 (*Shortly after that COVID hit shutting down many functions of our ministry*). When the Church Council reconvenes after this year's Annual Meeting (*Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup>*) financial stewardship will be a major topic of conversation, and I propose the working title of...  
***Money... and the Joy of Jesus.***

God bless and be well!  
Pastor Kevin

***Ash Wednesday Begins the Season of Lent***  
***Wednesday, February 22nd at 6:30 p.m.***

Ash Wednesday is so named because of the tradition of imposing an ash on the forehead of worshippers with the phrase – *"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."* Why ashes? The Bible tells us that ashes were a symbol of:

- a) *Repentance* or turning away from sin (Jonah 3:6; Job 24:6; Matthew 11:21; Luke 10:13)
- b) *Cleansing* (Hebrews 9:13)
- c) *Our human mortality* (Genesis 3:19)
- d) *Mourning* (Isaiah 61:3)

Beginning with the ash on Ash Wednesday, the season of Lent is meant for us to take a more intentional look at our relationship with God, and how God has blessed us with the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Part of the discipline of Lent is a reminder that as Christ died for us, he now asks us to live for him in the service that we render to the world.

**This year, as a part of our Ash Wednesday worship experience - at the end of the service - families are encouraged to bring their dried out palm branches from last year's Palm Sunday worship and they will be symbolically burned outside; yet another means to highlight the significance of Ash Wednesday.** It has also been a tradition at Our Savior's to have a simple potato bake dinner before the Ash Wednesday Service that will begin at 5:30 p.m. (*See the adjoining article*)



***Happy Birthday***

February	4	Bob Moe
	10	Kenneth Hocking
	14	John Lund
	24	Roy Hobbs
	27	Ruth Kampsula



Best wishes to Ray & Charlene Norman who will be celebrating their 61<sup>st</sup> Wedding Anniversary on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Best wishes to Conrad & Bonnie Mangseth who will be celebrating their 62<sup>nd</sup> Wedding Anniversary on February 4<sup>th</sup>.



## *Musical Notes*

We are already looking to the second month in the New Year. I have to let the calendar regulate my life but the calendar and I are not always on friendly terms. What I mean by that is that it gets difficult to plan things very far ahead. This is where faith comes into play. Can I expect a full choir, will all of the singers be healthy, will the weather rear its ugly head and I could go on forever with this speculation. So my disclaimer is, "barring any unforeseen events this is what will take place this February."

On February the 5<sup>th</sup>, I am pleased to share a 'new' anthem with you. It is called "Light of Christ, Burn Bright" - music by Orin Johnson and text by John T. Kyler. What is unique about this music is that it is written in 5/4 time. Why is this so different you ask? Most of the music you experience in church, whether choral or in the hymnal, is in 2, 3 or 4 beats per measure. The text flows beautifully in this time signature so the piece feels quite natural. Just don't try to dance to it! As the music develops you will discover that it is a Communion hymn.

Next, on the 12<sup>th</sup> we will feature two selections with the handbells. Because of Lenten mid-week services, we will not have practices until after Lent. So, we will go out with a bang, so to speak. Our first selection will be a Spiritual called "Give Me Jesus." We will follow that with a wonderful arrangement of "Brother James Air." This particular arrangement keeps all of the players busy and demonstrates why we have so much fun playing three octave bell selections this year.

And for the final Sunday the choir sings in February we offer "Praise the Lord, Alleluia." The music is by William Boyce in an arrangement by Douglas Wagner. I wanted to get one last 'Alleluia' in before we retire the word for Lent. This is an anthem where each voice has its turn at singing the melody. A sort of 'equal opportunity' anthem.

The choir will sing at Ash Wednesday service on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. I have not yet made my choice for that service, so, come and be surprised!

*Roy*



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Would you like our congregation to pray for any issues, problems, or health concerns you have? We believe in the power of prayer and know that our petitions are heard and answered. Please call the church office at 218-263-7422 and we will pass your request on to the Prayer Chain.

## **2022 Missionary for a Day Calendar**

2023 Missionary for a Day Calendar has received \$70 to date.

During January gifts were received:

From Sharon & Mitch Cook in celebration of the birthdays of grandchildren,  
Samantha, Piper, Vera, and Grayson

From Os & Sue Schock in memory of Gaynard Kjos and in memory of Cecelia Nass, a  
friend and missionary to the Cameroons.

Thanks to your generosity we met our \$4,000 commitment for 2022.

Any time is a great time to contribute to our missionary Dr. Friberg serving in  
Tanzania. A \$10 gift helps support his work for one day. Thanking you in advance

## ***Confirmation News:***

**3rd grade** - Hope you are enjoying reading your Bible.

**4th grade** - Anyone interested in straightening the pew racks please leave  
Cindy a message at the church office, 218-263-7422. Your service is  
appreciated.

**5th grade** - Looking ahead, plan to meet with Pastor Kevin during Lent for  
First Communion instruction. First Communion will be Maundy Thursday,  
April 6th. Details will be upcoming.

**6th grade** - If you have had Communion instruction and would like to serve  
as an acolyte during Sunday service please let Cindy, 218-263-7422.  
If you haven't had Communion instruction and wish to attend classes please  
let Cindy know and we'll get you the details.

**7th - 9th grade** - Wednesday classes meet at 7 p.m.

Class dates are Feb. 1, 8, 15

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, Feb. 22.

All confirmands are expected to attend Midweek Lenten Worship  
Wednesdays during March at 6:30 and meet with Pastor Kevin after service for  
discussion and rehearsal.

**10th grade** - Participation: sermon notes and service hours (10 each per  
year for 7th - 10th gr.)

Be considering who you would like to ask to be your mentor.

Our next Bible Study is on Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup> at 10am.  
All are welcome. We will be looking forward to seeing you!!!



## ***BABY SHOWER 2023***



Babies continue to be born and our gifts are still needed. Items will be collected from February 1<sup>st</sup> until February 28<sup>th</sup>. Please leave your gifts in the laundry basket by the church office. These gifts will be given to Fairview Range Medical Center in Hibbing.

Many of you make beautiful handmade hats, sweaters, afghans, blankets, etc. These are always appreciated. Preemie and small sleepers are especially needed, onesies, outfits and other items should be new and the smallest sizes are preferred. You may also donate disposable diapers (Newborn or size 1). If you prefer, you may make a monetary donation through the church office. This money will be used to purchase additional items.

Thank You and Stay Well,  
Pam Rundell for OSLCW

### **Daily Prayer**

Father, please restore to me the joy of Your salvation. Remove the spirit of heaviness from me, and refresh me with a spirit of hope. Please grant me joy and peace, and renew my strength. Protect me and my family from trouble, Lord. And give us a song of praise for You. Amen.



We would like to Thank our outgoing members of the Church Council: Al Lipke, Melissa Schwarze, Renee Warwas and Ryan Rice, Youth Representative. They have put in countless hours serving our congregation in the many different ways that are unseen.

*God bless.*

## OSLCW

On Sunday, January 15<sup>th</sup> we met in the Fireside room to discuss disbursement of our funds as follows:

Organ update	\$2,000.00
VLM Dining Hall	1,000.00
Church office expenses	1,000.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	1,000.00
Church Utilities	1,000.00
Boy's and Girl's Club	200.00
Leave in Funeral Fund	500.00
WELCA Conference & Synod	200.00
Baptismal Quilts	100.00
Balance to OSLCW general	1,757.92

The reason for the balance to OSLCW general fund is for emergency purposes.

Also listed under OSLCE are designated funds:

Kitchen remodel	\$11,231.91
Kitchen equipment	883.79
OSLCW Quilting	1,242.79

We would like to Thank the men of our congregation who willingly help us on many of our projects, especially the Pasty Bakes and Funerals.

Of the OSLCW expenses we give at least 10% to missions which included this year \$1,810.00 to the Missionary Fund and \$2,000.00 to ELCA USA Disaster Relief.

Also discussed were snacks for Sunday School and the Boy's and Girl's Club. Mission Action people said they would take these over.

Linda Kangas and Kathy Anderson will buy new cutting boards for the church kitchen and dispose of the bad ones now in the kitchen.

Pasty Bake with prep on April 19<sup>th</sup> and baking on April 20<sup>th</sup>. We will try a slightly smaller pasty so we do not have to raise prices. Dough will all be prepped and rolled on Wednesday using our roller machine. This frees up the big mixer for mixing the filling on Thursday.

Discussed what to serve on February 11<sup>th</sup> for the VLM Annual meeting at our church. We are thinking it will be Sloppy Joes.

Discussed having one person head up Soup Suppers and the group serving that week to help prepare the homemade soup.

We will have a Fall Luncheon and Bake Sale rather than the traditional "Bazaar". This means we can have everything in the Fellowship Hall.

Several ladies volunteered to make bars for the Annual Meeting on January 29<sup>th</sup>.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Soli Deo Gloria – To God alone the glory,

Sue Schock

## *News from Mission Action Committee*

Please join us on Ash Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> for the baked potato meal. It's a meager meal to start the Lenten season. The offering collected will be donated to the Hibbing Boy's and Girl's Club to be used towards snacks.

The Lenten project for this year will be a continuation of the simple well or spring box for a community in need. During Advent \$910.00 was collected. An average cost for this is \$2,500.00. Maybe we can work towards this goal. Water is a necessity of life. Easier access to water is a big asset for the people and farmers of the community. This is a very worthwhile project through ELCA World Hunger. Help us reach this goal.

## *Council Meeting Highlights* (January 10, 2023)

- The General Fund as of December 31, 2022 was **(\$9,425.70)**.
- The Council was given an update on the Administrative Assistant search.
- A continued discussion on Pastor Kevin's future Sabbatical was held.
- A brief discussion was held in regards to the upcoming Annual Meeting.
- The next Council meeting has been set for Tuesday, February 7, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.



**It's time to register for Camp Vermilion or Camp Hiawatha this summer!**

**OSLC will pay for your camp experience!**

Register online.

Go to: **VLMcamps.org**

**Register by February 15<sup>th</sup> to get the "Early, Early Bird" rate!**

Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry is **HIRING!!!** Summer 2023

Multiple available positions open. Contact VLM Program Director Katie Mauer at [katie@vlmcamps.org](mailto:katie@vlmcamps.org) or call/text 218-780-4116.



### *God's Valentine Gift*

God's Valentine gift of love to us  
Was not a bunch of flowers;  
It wasn't candy, or a book  
To while away the hours.

His gift was to become a man,  
So He could freely give  
His sacrificial love for us,  
So you and I could live.

He gave us sweet salvation, and  
Instruction, good and true--  
To love our friends and enemies  
And love our Savior, too.

So as we give our Valentines,  
Let's thank our Lord and King;  
The reason we have love to give  
Is that He gave everything.

*By Joanna Fuchs*