



Gather & Serve

Official Newsletter of OFLC - November 2023



Come Back Here!

BY PASTOR BOB

I took my pooch, Hunter, on a camping trip one summer, and on the way I stopped for gas. Hunter jumped out of the car and started running toward the gas station door. I'm not sure if he wanted lottery tickets or a can of soda, or if he had any idea where he was going. I shouted rather forcefully – "Get back here," and to my surprise he obeyed and came trotting back to the car.

I wish it were that easy to regain church members who leave the flock, either suddenly or gradually. Why do people leave a congregation? Studies have been conducted over the years, and dozens of reasons have been mentioned by those who were surveyed. One study listed the following:

Rank	Reason for Inactivity in Church
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1. Apathetic, but intend to return
2. Self-sufficient without church (busy elsewhere)
3. I don't belong here – undeserving
4. Solitary Christian – anti-institutional
5. Problem with worship - cold, sterile, boring
6. Work schedule on weekends, youth in particular
7. Seeking meaning– haven't found it yet
8. Congregation not emphasizing personal relationship with Christ
9. Congregation provides and expects too little

Continue in next page....

This issue:

Interim Pastor's
Ponderings by Pastor
Bob

PAGE 01

Ministry Updates

PAGE 02-04

Message & Invitation from
Pastor Sarah Zender

PAGE 05

Financial Report & OFLC
Foundation

PAGE 06

Events & Prayer

PAGE 07

OFLC Info

PAGE 08



One look at the above list tells you it's not a simple matter of inactive folks being lazy or the Church being always at fault. A multitude of reasons exist: anger, boredom, shame, unbelief, rejection, apathy.... And many people leave gradually, so gradually that they and we in the church don't see it in time to take action. Interims are times when some people tend to be absent from worship.

The responsibility for intervening in someone's departure from the church is two-fold. First, as members you need to be self-aware. If you haven't attended worship for a few weeks or months, ask yourself why not? Is there some underlying concern or issue that needs attention? Is there someone you need to talk to? Where are you in your relationship with God? Be aware of what's happening in your walk of faith.

Secondly, we the Church must do our work well – preaching and practicing the Word, showing genuine concern for people in times of special need, offering opportunities for spiritual growth. We are not simply 'people pleasers' who will do or say anything that keeps folks content. We have a message to proclaim, a job to do, and sometimes it ruffles feathers. But we have to be sensitive to those who feel ignored, slighted, unwanted. Are you drifting away from Our Father's? You are an important part of this community. We are incomplete without you. So, as I said to Hunter, 'GET BACK HERE'!

-Interim Pastor Bob



Ministry Updates

LOVE INC Opportunity

Love INC provides a program called FRESH START. Fresh Start is a series of 12 weekly classes in a safe and encouraging atmosphere. It is designed to help participants learn new skills, set goals and reduce stress in their home to realize lasting changes to end patterns and cycles of poverty. Subjects include affirming potential, faith and finances, parenting, boundaries, and more.

Our Father's has partnered with Love INC to provide a meal to participants in the program. Our scheduled date is Monday, November 13th. There will be a Sign-up Genius sent out for some of the food needs. If this is something you would be able to help with, please consider a food donation. Food items should be brought to church by Sunday, November 12. Please label Fresh Start. Thank you.

Lynne Greseth (coordinator)
Questions?
612-508-2307
lhgreseth@gmail.com



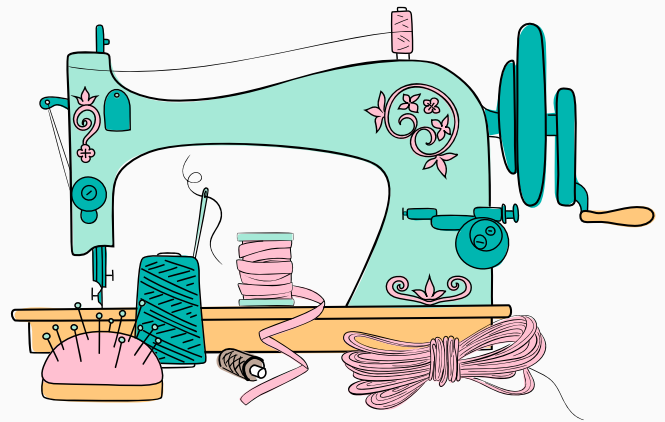


Ministry Updates continued....

OFLC's Quilting Group

OFLC's quilting group continues to meet to sew quilts for Vinland National Center. They are always so appreciative of the quilts we deliver. In November we will be meeting on Wednesday, November 15, and Monday, November 20, 9 to 11:30AM.

Thanks to all who have donated fabric! Nearly all the fabric used in our quilts is donated, and it's always fun to see them come together into a finished product. Please join us if you have an interest in sewing. Or contact Gail at dgswan00@msn.com for more information.



Riverworks Thrift Store

Looking for a way to support our Rockford/Greenfield community? The Riverworks Thrift Store can always use your help. Volunteers are needed to sort donations and tag and hang clothing for sale. Hours are flexible, and you can work almost anytime, for as little as a 2 hour shift. With winter coming, volunteering is a great way to enjoy some conversation and make a contribution to our community's thrift store at the same time. If you're interested, call the store at 763-477-5480, stop in, or talk to Gail or Dave Swanson.



Music Ministry

Bell Choir is meeting Wednesdays from 5:30 – 6:30 pm. No prior experience needed.

Choir is meeting Wednesdays from 6:30 – 7:30 pm. We will start practicing for the Thanksgiving Service Community Choir.

Worship – Do you sing or play an instrument? Please share your music with us during worship. There are always openings during every worship service to share your offering of music. You are always welcomed and encouraged to share your gifts!

Questions? Tammy @ 763-732-8920 or email tammy.jarvi14@gmail.com.



Ministry Updates

continued....

Nourishing Hope



NourishingHOPE

Free Fresh Produce and Dairy

Monday, November 13th

4:00pm – 5:00pm

Boxes of fresh produce and dairy products will be available for drive through pickup on a first come, first serve basis at the following locations:

Corcoran

St. Thomas Catholic Church
20000 County Road 10
Corcoran, MN 55340

Delano

Light of Christ Lutheran Church
3976 County Line Road SE
Delano, MN 55328

Rockford

Our Father's Lutheran
3903 Gilbert Ave SE
Rockford, MN 55373

Buffalo

Buffalo Covenant Church
1601 Highway 25 North
Buffalo, MN 55313

Hanover

Influence Church @ City Hall
11250 5th Street NE
Hanover, MN 55341

For assistance locating a specific site or for questions, please contact us at nourishinghope.oflc@gmail.com or Facebook Messenger.

NourishingHOPE is a ministry of Our Father's Lutheran Church, in cooperation with four area churches. Our vision is to relieve area food insecurity and promote wellness in mind, body, and spirit for people East-Central Wright County. For information on you or your organization partnering with NourishingHOPE, please visit our website at www.ourfatherschurch.org/nourishing-hope.html

Are you able to help with packing or distributing boxes? Please see the link here to sign up to help.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040b4eaca928abf49-2023#/>

Instead of waiting in line for hours, guarantee yourself or another family a box of produce. Sign up below:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4ba9ad2faafdc25-2023#/>

Questions?

Brittni@ourfatherschurch.org

Gratitude

Reflection

BY SARAH ZENDER

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:
The old has gone, the new is here! 2 Cor 5:17

God's creative love is constantly creating new. But with the new often comes the leaving of the old, which offers some sadness and grief amid the excitement for what is to come.

Dear OFLC family,
With your blessings and prayers, I completed seminary and the candidacy process at the end of August. I've been actively involved in the discernment of my call with several possible churches. I'm so excited to announce that on October 29th, Grace Lutheran Church in Luverne, MN voted to call me to pastor their congregation. I'm incredibly excited because I know that when the Spirit is at work and leads people together into relationships of faith and mutuality, that something powerful is happening. I am thrilled to find out what that is.

Big changes are ahead for me and my family with a tentative move date of mid-December. My ordination service will be here at OFLC, on December 9th at 2 pm. All are welcome! I cannot thank the Our Father's congregation and people enough for the years of support and the fertile soil of faith that is nurtured here. This is the soil where God planted me to grow from a baby in faith to a blossoming follower of Jesus, to a mature faith and call to seminary. This ending of time with OFLC is only the beginning of the next stage in my faith journey and I continue to grow in loving God and others. I will continue to hold OFLC in prayer for the next steps in your journey that the Holy Spirit is revealing to you as well. There is something special at OFLC that is a very important part of the body of Christ and I pray you continue in developing that deep love and faith that I have experienced here.

Blessings to each and every one of you and will miss my time with you.

Sarah Zender

You are invited to
the Ordination of

Sarah
Zender

Saturday, December
9th at 2pm

Our Fathers Lutheran
Church

All are Welcome!



Financial Report


September Total Contributions - \$21,340.23
September General Fund Contributions - \$17,833.23
September Designated Fund Contributions - \$3,507

Last year giving for September
September 2022 Total Contributions - \$15,509.14
September 2022 General Fund Contributions -
\$12,966.14
September 2022 Designated Fund Contributions -
\$2,543

Avg household giving per month to "Keep the Lights on"
\$211

Avg household giving per month to "Carry out our
Mission" \$267

Actual Giving per Household \$245
Give to the Max 2022 - \$4,399



We are pleased to announce
that \$18,000 from Give to
the max, along with a
\$3,000 donation from
Nourishing Hope, we were
able to fix the main parking
lot!

OFLC Foundation

Hello! For many of us, November is a month that makes us think about both the things we are grateful for and how we can give back. If you're like me, it often feels like there are so many choices in charitable giving that it starts to feel overwhelming. That's where the OFLC Foundation can really help simplify! The Foundation works hard to invest your money to grow, so dividends can be used for years and years moving forward to support God's work in our church and community. We support a wide range of individuals and charities, from christian camp scholarships for kids to food distribution programs in ours and surrounding communities, to so much more. There are many ways to give, including by cash, check, or online. Please look for our new brochures at church, and you may also notice our apple tree in the hallway. We'd love to add your name as a supporter during our Fall drive! Feel free to contact a Foundation member if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Kelly Kinnan
OFLC Foundation secretary

Events Coming up



Blood Drive

November 14th
OFLC Fellowship Hall
12:30 - 6:30 pm



Lefse Making

November 17th - Prep
November 18th -Lefse Making
Sign-up here:

[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0845ABAB2EA5F8C70-45773113-lefse#/?](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0845ABAB2EA5F8C70-45773113-lefse#/)



Thanksgiving Worship Service

November 21st
Our Fathers Lutheran Church
7 pm



Crow River Christmas

December 1st- Prep
December 2nd -Pancake Breakfast, Cookie Walk & Silent Auction
Sign-up here:

[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0845ABAB2EA5F8C70-45773858-crow#/?](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0845ABAB2EA5F8C70-45773858-crow#/)

Prayer Request



- Would you like to be added to the prayer chain?
- Do you have a prayer concern?
- Would a palm cross or prayer shawl comfort you or a family member?

CONTACT: OFFICE@OURFATHERSCHURCH.ORG

OFLC Information

Staff

Pastor Interim: Robert Linstrand

Office Admin: Cristal McClain
office@ourfatherschurch.org

Community Outreach: Brittni Bronczyk
Brittni@ourfatherschurch.org

Music/Bell Choir Director: Tammy Jarvi
tjarvi@charter.net

Sundays
at
9:00 am

Contact us

Website

<https://www.ourfatherschurch.org/>

Livestream

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCePt4KWmjvq1M7vPbIjUfeA?
view_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCePt4KWmjvq1M7vPbIjUfeA?view_as=subscriber)

Phone

763-477-6300

OFLC Council

- Chandler Drummond
- Wendy Gustafson
- Shannon Sand
- Dan Schiller
- Erin Smith
- Lauren Johnson
- Jody Bryant

Executive Team

- Chandler Drummond
- Wendy Gustafson
- Shannon Sand

