

# February Late Breaking News

## "TAKK FOR ALT"

Dr. Gerhard Frost tells the story of the old woman whose dying words are "**Takk for alt.**" That is Norwegian for "Thanks for everything." Dr. Frost explains that this Norwegian phrase is more than just a simple "thank you" but is meant to express deep and heartfelt appreciation for all of life as God has graciously provided it for us. Her parting words were an expression of thanks for everything God had given her.

As Jennifer and I tug loose our roots from the Lord of Life Faith Family, we are overwhelmed by the loving and gracious response that we have received from so many wonderful people. Even before yesterday's amazing final worship service and farewell event, we had heard many expressions of surprise and sadness, but then quickly affirmations, blessings and promises of prayer support for our new mission.

We are leaving because I believe that:

- Lord of Life will be blessed by fresh, new leadership.
- Lord of Life is in a really healthy spot in terms of staff, leadership, membership, facility, finances and future potential.
- Greater opportunity awaits in God's plan for this church. (Please stretch to strengthen youth & family ministry...)
- God wants me to take on a new challenge before I retire.
- First Lutheran Church in Aitkin needs a loving, mature pastor to come and help them to get up and moving together into God's future for them.

But, it still hurts. Heart strings are being pulled. We have deeply loved you our sisters and brothers in Christ who call Lord of Life Lutheran your faith home/family. We have been blessed over and over again, and now once more by your loving support and encouragement as we head off to Aitkin. **I am counting upon you folks** who are the Body of Christ here in this congregation, Lord of Life, to step up and help your faith family to move forward in faith. **I am trusting Jesus**, who loved and cared for, who guided and empowered this congregation so far, to continue to be faithfully present for and with you. **I am excited to see what God has in mind for you.**

"Thank you" is too small. Maybe "Takk for alt" is better. Jennifer and I give thanks to God for the love, grace and peace that we have experienced among you. We give thanks to God for the hope which is ours to know and to share as God's people. We give thanks to God for starting and for giving life to this congregation and for granting

us this time together with you. This world is often wounded and limping. However, it is also an amazing glimpse of the wonder and majesty of a God who loves us enough to live, die, rise again and walk with us every day. God will be walking with us to First Lutheran in Aitkin. God will also continue to walk with each and with all of you here at Lord of Life.

**Thanks for your love, friendship and partnership in the Good News of Jesus!**  
Amen.

Your Friend in Christ,

*Darrell J. Pedersen*



## Highlights of January 19 Church Council Meeting

- ◆ Accepted with regret Pastor Darrell's resignation as Senior Pastor to accept call to First Lutheran, Aitkin, MN
- ◆ Received report on pastoral replacement process from Pr. Vicki Taylor, Assistant to the Bishop NE MN Synod.
- ◆ Voted to proceed with Intentional Pastoral Interim process.
- ◆ Appointed sub-committee of council members to determine interim ministry objectives and term, interview candidate(s) proposed by the Synod and make a recommendation to the Council.
- ◆ Approved 12/31/11 General and Capital Fund Financial reports. (See separate report on pg. 6.)
- ◆ Approved recommendation from Executive Committee to use \$15,275 of the \$17,408 in 2011 General Fund "long-fall" for repayment of borrowed dedicated funds, reserve for long-term repair and maintenance, one-time award to staff members and Pr. Darrell January 22 celebration event.
- ◆ Approved motion to recognize youth as the number one concern of the congregation and to work towards staffing to support that priority.
- ◆ Approved 2012 General Fund budget for presentation to the Congregation at the February 5 annual meeting.
- ◆ Next Council meeting will be Thursday, February 16 at 7:00pm.

## THOUGHTS SHARED BY JEFF KOZITZA

January 3, 2012 Jeff's Funeral Letter

Pastor Darrell Pedersen added the ending based upon their conversations together. Read by Pastor Darrell Pedersen at Jeff's funeral on January 21, 2012:

Amen. Now why would I start with a word that you normally would use at the end of a thought, a prayer, a job well done, or even a job you're glad to finish? Amen!! We say Amen when we are ready to turn it over to God. We did our best and now it is in God's hands. We could say it's the start of a new beginning. Today is the start of a new beginning for all of us.

All kinds of thoughts have been going through my mind. Happy, sad, glad, sorrow, excited, scared... Well, picture this!! Here I am sitting at the right hand of our Father. I do my normal and say something stupid. He's just going to reach back and clip me one on the back of my head. I'm really going to have to watch what I say. Before when I would do something wrong, all I would do is say a prayer saying I was sorry. Say Amen and start all over again.



Remember this is the start of a new beginning. I just want to say thank you to each and every one who is here today. I want to say thanks to my Family, Friends, and neighbors. You will never know how much you have helped me on my journey. I love you all.

I thought that when you die you would cross the finish line on your journey. I'm rethinking that thought because I don't believe, or I hope that I don't cross that finish line. That would mean that it would be over for me. I would not grow in my faith. I would not be able to help my Family, Friends and neighbors. Like I said before, all of you have helped me on my journey of faith. I may not be able to physically help you, but I hope that I can help you spiritually. My Family, Friends and neighbors have taught me – Love, Faith, Joy, Prayer, Hope, Courage, Strength...

This brings me back to Amen. When we say Amen, we are turning our lives, thoughts, hopes and dreams over to God. As I leave this world, leave behind all of you, who are so precious to me, I want to trust myself and all of you safely into God's care, Amen.

I am so thankful for the life that I have lived together with all of you in this world. But it is hard to think of letting go of you when I leave here to be with God.

Heaven will be wonderful for me, but I don't want to leave you behind, alone. So, I am clinging to this promise; God has a place saved for me at his heavenly banquet table and I believe that whenever you receive Holy Communion at the Lord's Table here on earth, we will be dining together with Jesus. When you go up for communion, listen carefully to the promise, "This is my body given for you. This is my blood shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin." Then say Amen. Eating together at the Lord's table will always keep us together in God's love and care – Amen. Then on the last day, we'll all have a seat at that heavenly banquet together.

I'm not coming to the Finish Line. I'm coming to the Starting Line for a joyful eternity with God and all those I love. Amen. Remember what you taught me – love, faith, joy, prayer, hope, courage, strength... These will help you in life both spiritually and physically. In the meantime, I'll meet you at the Lord's Table, now and forever. Thanks be to God. Amen.

### LSS Morning Out

- What:** The LSS Caregiver Support Day Respite Program is for adults age 60 or older who have medical conditions such as Parkinson's, dementia related illness or other medical conditions that require a caregiver's attention. We provide activities which include music, crafts, games and socialization.
- Where:** The program is held at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 6190 Fairview Rd in Baxter
- When:** The Caregiver Support Day Respite program will meet every Monday (excluding holidays) from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
- Why:** It is important for family caregivers to take a break, and for the person experiencing dementia or social isolation to meet with others to socialize.

If you or someone you know are/is caring for a loved one who is 60 years of age or older and is experiencing Alzheimer's, Parkinson's or other medical condition requiring caregiver attention, or you are looking for a meaningful way to volunteer your time, contact Rana Peeling at 218-820-8144 or rana.peeling@lssmn.org for more information or to register. Pre-Registration is required.

This program is sponsored by Lutheran Social Service MN through the Older American's Act and is funded by Central Minnesota's Council on Aging.