

April 2023



Breeze Thru the Leaves

Tree of Life Lutheran Church

“No Greater Love”

The Cross.
The Nails.
The Pain.
The Blood.
He Shed.
For You.
For Me.
For All.

And Jesus did it all for love.

Find a cross in your home and look upon it for a minute or two or longer if you'd like. Think upon this love, love personified, that died for you and me. Think upon the amazing sacrifice that Jesus went through for you and me to forever alter our eternities, to pay the price for every single sin, and to welcome us into His heavenly kingdom.

“Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to your Cross I cling;
Naked, come to you for dress;
Helpless, look to you for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me Savior, or I die.” (From LSB #761, “Rock of Ages Cleft For Me”)

After looking at the cross for a few minutes, meditate on these words from God’s holy word.

“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” -2 Corinthians 5:21

“For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.” -Colossians 1:19-20

“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.” -1 John 2:1-2



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You can reach Pastor Mark Couser at 214-908-0242 or mark.couser@gmail.com

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A Word from the Pastor, *continued*

"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." -Romans 5:6-8

Prayer - Lord God, I can never repay You for what You have done for me. Your perfect sacrifice, Your death and resurrection have forever changed my life today and for all eternity. Thank You for living a perfect life. Thank You for saving me with Your precious blood. Thank You for washing away all my sins. Help me to daily keep Your loving sacrifice on the cross upon my heart and at the forefront of my mind. Your grace and mercy is life to me! Help me to live a life that reflects Your love and grace today and each day. All glory be to You my crucified and risen Savior! In the name of Jesus I pray. Amen.

Men's Breakfast

Men's Breakfast will not be meeting in April. For more information about the monthly Men's Breakfast, please contact Bob Green.



Sunday, April 30th after worship

There will not be a potluck.

HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Maundy Thursday
April 6th at 7:00 pm

Good Friday
April 7th at 7:00 pm

Easter Sunday
Worship at 8:00 & 10:30 am
Breakfast at 9:15 am

The Easter Breakfast is hosted by our Youth as a fundraiser for their trip to the National Youth Gathering in 2025. Please be sure to look for the Freewill Collection on Easter morning and support our Youth.

Easter Celebration & Egg Hunt



Saturday, April 1st, 10-12 noon.

This event helps us share with our Community just how much Jesus loves us by His death and Resurrection. Please invite friends & family to come! **Thank you to all our volunteers!!!**



LWML is hosting a Sundae Sunday on April 23rd. Come enjoy the treat!



Worship & Bible Study Opportunities at TOL

Please join us for worship – Sundays at 10:30 am in person and on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/TreeofLifeLCMS/>

The Adult Bible Class

Sundays at 9 am in person in E 7/8 and via Zoom.
“A Study on 1 Peter”

The Thursday Morning Bible Class

10 am in person in the Narthex and via Zoom.
The Gospel of John

All are welcome to join these classes in person or on Zoom. Please contact the church office for the Zoom link.

Children’s Sunday School

Elementary students meet at 9 am in E3.
Youth meet at 9 am in E5

MEN’S BREAKFAST

All men are invited to this potluck style breakfast with fellowship and Bible study in the Narthex at 8 AM on the second Saturday of each month. Please contact Bob Green for more information

LADIES FELLOWSHIP

The Ladies’ Fellowship meets monthly for a variety of activities and events. For more information about the group and what is planned, contact Megan Kortze or the church office.

Offerings and Attendance for March

DATE	SS	10:30	General Offering	Mission Tithe
3/5/23	NA	84	\$5,255	\$526
3/12/23	NA	74	\$4,279	\$428
3/19/23	NA	82	\$3,739	\$374
3/26/23	NA	97	\$7,269	\$727
Total for March			\$20,542	\$2,055

*Planned for in January—\$21,998

Offerings and Attendance for February

DATE	SS	10:30	General Offering	Mission Tithe
2/5/23	NA	75	\$5,290	\$529
2/12/23	NA	84	\$5,399	\$540
2/19/23	NA	82	\$2,671	\$267
2/26/23	NA	88	\$7,914	\$791
Total for February			\$21,274*	\$2,127

*Planned for in February—\$21,998

General Offering Total for 2023	Planned Offering for 2023
\$46,801	\$43,996

Board of Stewardship - Lyft Cards

Dear Tree of Life Church,

Thank you so much for providing me a way to my GED PREP every Wednesday. It means so much to me that you all are willing to go out of your way to make sure I make it to these prep sessions. I am learning so much and I'm very determined to get my GED. Thank you for all of your help.

Love

Zania



Dear Pastor Mark, Board of Elders, and Church Council of Tree of Life,

I am writing to inform you of my intention to step down from my position as church secretary for Tree of Life in July 2023. It is my hope that I can help train the new secretary and make the transition as smooth as possible for everyone.

Let me assure you that I am not disgruntled in any way with anyone. Being the secretary at Tree of Life for the past twelve and a half years has been a tremendous blessing and privilege! This position allowed me to care for my school-aged children and for my parents when their health was declining. It allowed me to serve in ministry in a way that I could not have imagined. I have been blessed by the relationships I have formed with each pastor and with the members of Tree of Life, and those will continue because I am **not** leaving our congregation! I plan to continue my service here among you as a volunteer with a renewed passion.

As my life has evolved, working solely for MISD is what is best for my current situation and my future retirement plans.

I want to thank all of you and the members of Tree of Life for your kindness, generosity, and countless acts of support through the years. I pray that whoever fills this position next will be as blessed through it as I have been!

Your sister in Christ,

Kara Jander



Thursday, April 20th —
Join us for a potluck lunch at noon
and then quilting after that.

No sewing skill is required to participate.
For more information contact Lisa Theriot.

Gift Card Fundraiser

Would you like to raise money for the ministry of Tree of Life while you do your everyday shopping? It's easy with our RaiseRight gift card program! RaiseRight is not just physical gift cards. When you download the RaiseRight app, you have gift cards at your fingertips. And every purchase helps TOL. Here is a link to a short video to walk you through the setup:

<https://youtu.be/c-v65F0xr2c>

To see all the brands available go to:

<https://www.raiseright.com/brands>

When you sign-up, you will be asked for Tree of Life's enrollment code: EL5E2575514L5

See Kara Jander for more information.

Gift card order day is **April 2nd** if you would like to order physical gift cards.

Weaving Lives and Ministry

Basket weaving in Botswana is a true art. Before plastics became widely available, people would weave all their storage containers- huge grain silos to tiny household vessels- from grasses, palms, and reeds. The craft almost died out but has continued, as weavers now make their baskets for tourists. It is a major source of income for many people. Weaving baskets takes lots of time-not just the actual weaving, but the growing, gathering, dyeing, and preparing of materials. Then, at the end, adding the finishing touches and preparing a basket for use. This is where we are. In the pre- and post- work of our weaving. Some things here are wrapping up and some are just beginning. A strong beginning takes patience, especially when you just want to get started! And a strong ending takes no less patience and perseverance.

The Shekgalagari New Testament is so close to publication! We are in touch with the typesetters and printers. Right now, the team is working on the back matter-maps and things that go in the back of the book.

Kelsey's final graduate class is going well. She is learning about traditional basket weaving, from before plastics and metal drums were available. Her teacher, Boipuso is showing her how to gather the materials. She took Kelsey to her field and gave her a watermelon, saying "you're my sister now."

Unfortunately, this month has held a lot of illness for Kelsey. The month started with a 105 degree fever, which required an IV for fluids and antibiotics. The month ended with a persistent headache and plans to see another doctor tomorrow. We are very thankful for the medical facilities available here.

The kids' school had half term break last weekend, so with the two extra days off, we spent some time together at a safari camp owned by a friend. It was so kind of her to invite us up. We had a great time renewing!

Keep us in your prayers:

- For Kelsey's health to improve and the root cause to be found.
- For the process of applying for new residency permits, as ours expire soon
- For the health of our family
- For our new kitties to settle in well.
- For the Wayeyi community, that they would rally behind their translation project and continue in the momentum they have going
- For the Shekgalagari community to find renewed energy for their New Testament launch
- That God would continue to provide for our ministry through partners like you.

Dear Tree of Life Lutheran Church,

Our family is entering one of the most exciting seasons of our life. We are currently starting interviews for the Call that we will receive in April where we find out where I will be serving as a pastor. There is so much excitement around where we might be going, and we continue to pray that the Lord would guide this process and calm any nerves that we might have.

Our daughter, Naomi, just turned six months last week. She is growing up so fast (too fast for me)! However, she is entering such a fun stage. She is smiling all of the time. She is starting to roll around and getting close to crawling. We cannot believe that it has already been six months with her in our lives, and yet we continue to praise God for the abundant blessing that she has been. It will be amazing to see how she continues to grow over this next year!

As my time at the Seminary is coming to close, I find myself feeling a tremendous amount of gratitude. The growth that has happened in me not only mentally but spiritually during this Seminary experience has been tremendous. I am thankful for all of the wonderful classmates and faculty that I have been blessed with over these four years.

Finally, my gratitude shifts to you. Your support has allowed me and my family to not be burdened by large amounts of debt that normally incur from going through a graduate program. You have allowed us to be able to be in a position where we are hoping we can move into a home (Lord willing) right after we receive our placement. I cannot thank you enough for that blessing that you have provided for me and my family.

I pray that the Lord would continue to bless you in all that you do, and that He would guide you in your ways this upcoming year. Your willingness to be generous has blessed me and my family, and I pray that your generosity would continue to flow in all the other areas of your life as well.

In Christ,
Daniel Langewisch

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The loving family of Tree of Life, rooted
in God's Word, exists to share the joy,
love, and peace of Jesus Christ with you!

