**Community Connections April 2024**

Published by **Love In the Name of Christ** (Love INC of Douglas County Lakes Area) Phone: 320-759-302[2 www.loveincdouglas.org](http://www.loveincdouglas.org/)

Churches partnering to transform lives with life skills classes, clothing, shoes, personal care items, furniture (referrals through Love INC to the Caring and Sharing Room), Rainbow Rider passes, gas cards, appliances (must take a class to qualify), Christmas toys, blankets, andprayer.

#  **Connections For All Ages**

**Save the Date** – **Love INC Community Garage Sale** will be **June 8** this year. More details to come in May!

**FREE Tax Preparation** – **WCMCA and Alex Tech College** are offering free tax prep. Call West Central MN Communities Action at 218-685-7004 now to schedule an appointment and to request a tax informational packet or sign up online at <https://wcmca.org/program/free-tax-preparation/>. Alexandria Technical & Community College accounting students are offering free tax return preparation for low income taxpayers from **February 6 to April 11** (closed over spring break). To sign up or for more information please check out <https://ttsu.me/vita2024>, call 320-762-4429, or email vita@alextech.edu.

**Community Chess** – Everyone is Welcome to join instructor Sean Foster at AAHS Commons Area on **April 3rd, 10th, 17th, and 24th** 3:30 – 5:30 PM! 12 sessions total instruction or just play! There are plenty of chess boards and chairs available for you!

**Friday Night Karaoke and Koffee** – Come sing your heart out in this joyful informal setting. This group tends to be quite silly, so be prepared for lots of laughter and no judgement! **Every Friday** from 7 PM – 9 PM at ArtisTree Café (2020 Fillmore St, Alexandria).

**Grace in the Garden** – Ladies, come hear tips about how you can grow both spiritually and in your garden. Enjoy a relaxing time of fellowship and learning with our spring workshop on Saturday, **April 6th** from 9 AM – 11 AM. Register online here: https://lcc.ministryplatform.com/portal/event\_signup.aspx?id=9911

**Hello Neighbor: Shenanigans Indoor Playground** – Hello Neighbor is an Alexandria area initiative with a simple purpose – to help new and existing residents integrate into the community. Moving to a new place and feeling connected to a new town with new people is challenging. Hello Neighbor can help with that. April’s event will be held at Shenanigans Indoor Playground (1410 McKay Ave S, Alexandria) on **April 9th** at 4 PM. Enjoy quality family moments while creating lasting connections with others working or supporting their partners in the Alexandria area! Come dressed as you are (kiddos need socks to play). Water provided. Snacks available to purchase. Learn more at helloneighbornmn.org, by emailing hello@helloneighbormn.org, or by calling 320-763-3161.

**Lunch & Learn** – “The Mental Health Toolbox” is an interactive visual aid designed to help you build the coping skills you need to improve and/or manage your mental health. We can’t rely on one tool to help us through, we need an entire toolbox accessible to us, depending on how we are feeling or what we are experiencing in life. Lunch will be provided at no cost. Presented by Becky Schmitz, ED of Vikingland CSP, will be held **April 10th** from 12 – 1 PM at Do. Co. Public Works (526 Willow Dr, Alexandria). For questions and registration, please contact Anna Olson at 320-762-3823 or annao@co.douglas.mn.us. Please register by April 8.

**KXRA’s Home & Garden Show** – The 55th annual KXRA Home & Garden Show brought to you by Erickson’s Plumbing Heating and A/C is Saturday, **April 13th** from 10 AM – 5 PM and Sunday, **April 14th** from 11 AM – 3 PM. The event is at the Runestone Community Center (802 3rd Ave W, Alexandria) and is free to the public. There will be nearly 80 vendors with many things for your home and garden. Vendors include tree service, water treatment options, builders, contractors, landscapers, banks, insurance, and so much more.

**Alexandria Job Fair** – Join us at the Alexandria Job Fair 2024 located at the Viking Plaza Mall (3015 Hwy 29 S, Alexandria) on **April 16th from** 10 AM – 1 PM hosted by CareerForce, Rural MN CEP, Alexandria Echo Press and JobsHQ! This is a multi-industry job fair. Come and see career opportunities available with over 30 employers. Bring a copy of your resu7me and be ready to interview!

**Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota Medicare Workshop** – Join John Derbis at the Hampton Inn & Suites on **April 18th** from 11 AM – 12 PM for a free, no obligation workshop to learn about Medicare and available plans based on the county you live in. For additional information, contact John Derbis at 507-281-2130 or at john.derbis@bluecrossmn.com.

**“Fix-It” Clinic** – Do you have a small repair, watches, sewing, jewelry, wood items? Bring it to the fix-it clinic at the Alexandria Senior Center (414 Hawthorne St, Alexandria) on **April 18th** from 12 PM – 4 PM. Contact the Senior Center for additional details at 320-762-2087 or at info@alexsrctr.org

**Earth Day: Celebrate Bugs!** - This Earth Day (**April 18th**), stop into the library (720 Fillmore St, Alexandria) from 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM and learn about one of the nature’s most amazing features, insects! University of Minnesota Extension educator Robin Trott will lead the discussion about bugs, with stories and a craft to round up this Earth Day celebration. This program is open to kids of all ages but may fit best for kids ages 5-8. No registration is required for this free event.

**Dave and Ann Wilson Vertical Marriage Seminar** – The Unity Foundation is hosting The Vertical Marriage Seminar which will be held **April 20** from 9 AM – 2 PM at the Lake Geneva Christian Center (605 Birch Ave, Alexandria). The Vertical Marriage Seminar is entertaining, humorous and provides practical advice and wisdom you can apply in your relationship. Dave and Ann Wilson, cohosts of FamilyLife Today, make the day fun and truly meaningful for all couples seeking God’s presence in their marriage. It is packed with real life experiences that all married couples can relate to. Dave and Ann will share how God brought them from the brink of divorce to a healthy and vibrant relationship. Please register in advance at <https://brushfire.com/unityfoundation/daveannwilsonverticalmarriageseminar/569961>.

**Father’s Reading Every Day** – The Douglas County Library (720 Fillmore St, Alexandria) is hosting a free program on **April 23rd** from 5:30 PM – 7 PM that is open to all dads and their kids, ages 2-5. Kids will create a “boat” using a cardboard box, listen to a story, and watch a short movie in their boat. Register your family here: <https://douglascountylibrary.libcal.com/event/12241158>.

**Day of Caring** - is serving Douglas & Pope Counties by providing 1,000+ hours of community service through student service learning. Students from Discovery Middle School will head out into the community to complete projects submitted by local individuals and non-profits. The Day of Caring will take place Wednesday, **May 22nd**. Project request form due by May 2nd for consideration. Please sign up by filling out a form at <https://uwdp.org/what-we-do/united-way-programs/day-of-caring.html>.

# **Kid Connections**

**Holding Hands** – Moms and caregivers with children birth through homeschooling join Lake Community Church (490 Voyager Dr, Alexandria) in the gym **every other Tuesday** from 9 AM – 10:30 AM for a short devotional, free play, parachute games, circle-time songs, and plenty of time for ladies to fellowship while the kids run off some energy! Reach out to Saraah for more details: saraahloryn@gmail.com.

**Stay and Play at the Library** – Enjoy a warm and inviting space at the Douglas County Library (720 Fillmore St, Alexandria) every Thursday from 10 AM – 11:15 AM where you and your child can play and socialize with others in the community. Please note: this is unstructured free play time for both caregiver and child; not a structured storytime.

**Story Hour at Cherry Street Books** – Join Cherry Street Books (503 Broadway St, Alexandria) on **Saturdays** for a fun filled mornings from 10 – 11 AM. Geared for kids ages 3-5 we will sing songs, read stories, and make crafts. ****

**Douglas County Library** – has many storytime hours and activities going on at the library (503 Broadway St, Alexandria) daily. Please see their website for more information. <https://www.douglascountylibrary.org/events>.

# **Teen Connections**

**Girls Art Night** – Middle and High school girls join Youth for Christ (124 7th Ave W #15, Alexandria) from 6 - 7:30 PM on the **third Friday** of each month to create! All supplies provided.

**Youth for Christ Games & Fun** – Join for games, conversations, and fun after school! Middle School Campus Life get together **Mondays** from 3:30 – 5 PM and High School Campus Life get together **Thursdays** from 3:30 – 5 PM at the Youth for Christ Building (124 7th Ave W #15, Alexandria).

**Dungeons and Dragons League** – Youth for Christ (124 7th Ave W. #15, Alexandria) hosts The Nordic Dungeon League **every Thursday** from 5:30 – 7:30 PM.

# **Adult Connections**

**Young Families Sundays** – Join Lake Community Church (490 Voyager Dr, Alexandria) **every 1st and 3rd Sunday** of the month from 3:30 – 5 PM or 5 – 6:30 PM for a Bible study to bring together young families to share experiences and learn about God together. New families welcome to join any time! Contact Tyler Hauck for more details: hauck\_tyler@yahoo.com. Sign up for the 3:30 session here: <https://lcc.ministryplatform.com/portal/event_signup.aspx?id=9337>.

**Young Adults Ministry** – Meets **every Thursday** at 6:30 PM at Reach Church (1310 N Nokomis NE, Alexandria).

**Refine Your Rhythm Women’s Group** – was created to offer an opportunity come together every **2nd Saturday of the month** from 9 AM – 11 AM at Crossings Life’s Bridges, LLC (5396 Peaceful Ln NE, Carlos) to unwind, experience connection, and shift your rhythm in an emotionally safe space. Learn from others. Increase your self-compassion. Give yourself grace. Join us when your schedule permits and the time is right for you. Must register for each session you attend at <http://www.crossinglifesbridges.com/events-2>.

**Mom Talk** – is provided by Life Connections so that moms (married or single) can have a time and place to get to know other moms in the area, get a light lunch, and explore life and parenting topics that interest you. Come for a break, a meal, craft projects, playtime for the kids, and new friendship **Tuesdays** from 12 – 2 PM. There is FREE childcare and a meal. Must sign up the Friday before you hope to come by emailing at lifeconnectionsmn@gmail.com or by calling Life Connections at 320-762-1224 where they will give you more information.

**Mom’s Group** – This is a group for mom’s with children of all ages to engage in fellowship and community as we encourage one another on the **1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month** at 9:30 AM at Reach Church (1310 N Nokomis NE, Alexandria). Children are invited to join with you!

# **Old couple cartoon Vector Internet via a laptop computer | Vector Senior Connections**

**Ready Ride** –Safe, friendly rides helping adults 65+ maintain independence. Call Ready Ride at 218-685-7433 for more information.

**Senior Linkage Line** – a service of the Minnesota Board on Aging in partnership with Minnesota’s area agencies on aging. Call 800-333-2433 for information on a variety of services such as Aging in Place, Caregiving, and Medicare. <https://mn.gov/senior-linkage-line/>

**Alexandria Senior Center** – Open weekdays 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM (414 Hawthorne St, Alexandria). For more information on all their many exciting events, call 320-762-2087 or visit their website at [www.alexsrctr.org](http://www.alexsrctr.org).

**Aging In Place Program** – sponsored by Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County to make improvements to your home for safety, accessibility, or energy efficiency for people 65+. To find out more, please call 320-762-4255.

**Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging** – Dancing Sky works with rural communities to help older adults stay in control of
their choices. Go to www.dancingskyaaa.org for more information on programs for older adults and caregivers in your area. Follow Dancing Sky Area Agency on Aging for updates and information. Contact the Senior Linkage Line for assistance on options for seniors at 800-333-2433.

# **Support Groups**

## Sundays

**Recovery Game Day** – **Every third Sunday** at the Alano Club, 12 – 4 PM (1604 Jefferson St, Alexandria).

**Friends & Family Game Day** – Get ready for an evening filled with laughter, competition, and quality family time at ArtisTree Café (2020 Fillmore St, Alexandria) **every Sunday** from 2 PM – 6 PM for Friends & Family Game Night! Whether you’re a seasoned board game enthusiast or just looking to unwind with your loved ones, this free event promises something for everyone.

## Mondays

**Amazing Journeys Support Group for Weight Loss** – Meets **second and fourth Mondays** from 6 – 7:30 PM at the YMCA. For more information, please call Betty at 320-304-3444.

## Tuesdays

**Young Couples without Kids** – This Life Group is an ongoing group that meets **every Tuesday** 7 – 8:30 PM with the purpose of growing deeper in community with others and studying the Bible regularly. Topics and studies will change periodically, but they are intended to establish a strong foundation in the faith. Located at the Peterson home (1804 Oak Knoll Dr. NE, Alexandria) contact Andrew Paskewitz at andrew.paskewitz@gmail.com for more information.

**Senior Coffee** – Located at Calvary Lutheran Church (605 Douglas St, Alexandria) – The **first Tuesday** of every month from 10 – 11 AM.

**Pens and Pals** – Held on the **first Tuesday** of every month at The Church of St. Mary’s (420 Irving St, Alexandria). Pens and Pals is a ministry to love and serve persons in our faith community with disabilities through adult faith formation by creating a trusting partnership between all abilities of adult parishioners. God wants our lives to overflow with mercy, love, and compassion. Contact Barb Friedrichs by email at barb326@live.com or call 320-766-6106.

**Caregivers Support Group** – Meets the **second Tuesday** of each month from 1:30 – 3:30 PM at First Lutheran Church (1655 18th Ave. E, Alexandria). For more details, call Val at 320-762-2196.

**Jesus Cares Bible Studies** – The Jesus Cares Ministry reaches out to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities through bible study and fellowship opportunities. They meet on the **second and fourth Tuesdays** of the month at 7 – 8 PM at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church (718 Victoria Dr, Alexandria). If you have questions or would like more information, call 320-762-1644.

**Cancer Support Group** – Meeting the **third Tuesday** of the month at Alomere lobby conference room, (111 17th Ave. E, Alexandria). Meetings are offered in person or on Zoom. For more information call Jo at 320-766-3741 or email her at jopete@gmail.com.

**Grief Connect Group** – Located at Calvary Lutheran Church (605 Douglas St, Alexandria) – **The third Tuesday** of every month from 6:30 – 7:30 PM.

**Grieving Parents Group** – Located at First Lutheran Church (1655 18th Ave E, Alexandria) on **every third Tuesday** of the month from 7 – 8:15 PM. Contact FLC for more info at (320)762-2196 or at admin@firstlutheranalexandria.com.

**Alexandria Area Newcomers** – Shalom Lutheran Church (681 Voyager Dr, Alexandria) The Alexandria Newcomers meets on the **fourth Tuesday** of every month from 6:30 – 8 PM. Meetings are open to residents of all ages who are new to the community or former residents who have moved away and returned. For more information contact us at alexandriaareanewcomers@gmail.com.

**Wednesdays**

**All Recovery Meeting** - All Recovery is a support group for people interested in talking about any path to Recovery. We are open to people curious about, currently in, or affected by/supportive of substance use and mental health Recovery. We read a daily mediation of a different kind each week, and check in or share anything that could be helpful to you or someone else’s Recovery. This is a free, confidential group that meets on **Wednesdays** from 6 – 7 PM.

**Worship Wednesday** – Join ArtisTree Café (2020 Fillmore St, Alexandria) for an inspiring and joyful afternoon of music, worship, and creativity **every Wednesday** from 4 PM – 7 PM. This is a great place to meet up before youth group, practice new songs, and discuss ways to show God’s love to your community.

**Handicraft Support Group** – Knitters, sewers, crafters of all varieties and abilities are encouraged to join the Handicraft Support Group. Bring your projects and join others for company, encouragement, and inspiration. Located at Douglas County Library (720 Fillmore St, Alexandria) from 1 – 3 PM **every first and third Wednesday**.

**St. Mary’s Walking Group** – Are you looking to get some exercise and good conversation? Join Katrina Brault the **first and third Wednesdays** each month from 6 – 7 PM. Meet at Big Ole. All are welcome!

**Someplace Safe Women’s Empowerment Group** – A support group for survivors of abuse. Please call Leigh, at Someplace Safe for more information at 320-762-1995.

**Coffee Connection** – Are you feeling isolated, alone, and disconnected? We need real relationships with one another, so we are starting on ongoing opportunity to connect with other people, make some new friends, and to care well for one another. Join from 9:30 – 11 AM for coffee, donuts, and genuine conversations at Lake Community Church (490 Voyager Dr, Alexandria).

**Game Night** – Join Unity Recovery (503 Hawthorne St, Alexandria) on the **4th Wednesday** of each month from 4 PM – 6 PM for card games, board games, dice games, cribbage, UNO, Yahtzee, Go Fish, and more!

**Thursdays**

**Belong** – Women’s Connection Group **every Thursday** from 6:30 – 8:30 PM gather for community game night and connection. We will celebrate our differences, cross generations, and nurture friendships. Located at Leigha VanderTuin’s home (9364 County Road 11 NW, Alexandria) contact Leigha VanderTuin at leighavandertuin@gmail.com for more information.

**Ladies & Lattes Coffee Chat** – Ladies of all ages welcome: Come join us for fellowship, sharing, and laughter the **second Thursday** every month at Common Ground Coffee House (516 Hawthorne St, Alexandria) from 1 – 2:30 PM. Contact Paulette DeFoe for more information dpdefoe@gmail.com.

**We’ll Walk** – Alomere Health is launching a monthly wellness walk. Every **second Thursday** of the month from 5:15 – 6:15 PM, an Alomere doctor will lead a group of walkers and discuss wellness along the way. With the cold weather, we’ll meet at Viking Plaza Mall (3015 S Hwy 29, Alexandria).

**Musical Magic!** – Join ArtisTree Café (2020 Fillmore St, Alexandria) **every Thursday** from 7 PM – 9 PM for a night of enchanting melodies, rhythmic beats, mesmerizing dance choreography at the “Musical Magic” event. This event is a celebration of musical creativity, where talented musicians and bands are encouraged to showcase their unique talents.

**Fridays**

**Meal and Fellowship** – **Every Friday** dinner and fellowship at The Regeneration Center (1615 6th Ave E, Alexandria) at 6:30 PM. For questions call Dave at 320-815-3590.

**Ground Zero** – A place for singles, ages 18-30 and is designed for fellowship and to be a safe place for spiritual growth. Meeting **Fridays** from 6 – 8 PM at the Ahlers Home (1015 Kenwood St, Alexandria). Contact Nick Ahlers for details (507) 786-3256 or nickahlersrom116@gmail.com.

**Osakis Life Group** – Do you live in the Osakis area and are looking for community? If so, we have a group meeting at the Clapper’s home on the **first and third Friday** of the month from 7 – 8:30 PM. Light refreshments and childcare provided. Currently studying the book of Philippians. Located at 405 W Queen St, Osakis, contact Bob Clapper at bobclapper@yahoo.com for more information.

**Each day of the week**

**AA Meetings** – Seven days a week at various times at the Alano Club located at (1604 Jefferson St, Alexandria). The schedule is posted outside the club door, or you can go to [www.district4online.org](http://www.district4online.org) or call the AA Hotline at 866-423-2969 for more information as well as the schedule for other area meetings.

