



Message from Pastor Chris

February 25, 2021

Dear Morning Star Lutheran Church Families and Friends,

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. As we enter the solemn season of Lent, we once again turn our gaze toward the Cross. Often however, I find myself, during the Lenten journey, tempted to rush through it all, foregoing the pain of the Cross in order to get to the glory and celebration of Easter.

Truth be told, as one of the most impatient people I know, it would be enticing to just 'skip ahead' in order to get to the good stuff. Maybe I've been influenced too much these days by the cultural expectation of instant gratification. Or, perhaps, I just want to avoid the pain. After all, who among us is entirely comfortable with muddling through such a penitential season in order to be confronted by sin, mortality, and the agonizing pain of Jesus' Cross?

The problem is we need Lent. As Christians, we need to journey through these forty-days where we are forced to look in the mirror of our lives. We need to see ourselves as humans, who despite our so called 'free-will,' are completely reliant on God for eternal salvation. We need to find the courage to see ourselves as completely and totally dependent on the grace of a God who loves us no matter what, who would die for our sin.

The reason we need Lent is because we need to absorb the reality of God's eternal promises into our very bones and the very depths of our humanity, both individually and collectively. That despite our own fallibility as human beings, we are still, without condition, rescued by a Redeemer, who while suffering on a Cross, would even dare extend his forgiveness, with its invitation to paradise, to a crook who hung nearby.

Remember, even though God's grace is freely given, no one ever said it was cheap. During this season of Lent, I am reminded that we are so cherished by God that he spares no expense in activating the eternal promises through his death and resurrection.

In the meantime, I invite you to join me to continue on this journey. My hope is that you not only find gratification and blessing along the way, but I hope you rediscover the discomfort of facing a cosmic reality of exactly why we and this world urgently need the Cross.

Your Partner in Ministry,

Pr. Chris

P.S. Two Key Updates

1. Our Covid Task Force has been hard at work. Our Congregation Council will receive a recommendation from the task force this month regarding the benchmark for reopening to in-person worship. This benchmark will not be based on vaccine statistics, but rather community infection rate statistics, which appear to be declining. Expect our Congregation Council to weigh the task force



recommendations carefully and communicate its decision(s) on reopening soon. Your safety and the safety of our staff and preschool is our first priority.

2. A Preschool Transition Team, relative to the search for a new Director, has also been hard at work. This team has been laser focused on maintaining and developing our quality preschool staff as we prepare the way in our search for a high quality, new Director. We anticipate receiving candidates beginning this month! A special thanks to this transition team and to Kathy Widdershoven for her great leadership as Interim Director. As a premier outreach of our congregation, I invite your continued prayers during this process as we minister to the wonderful children and families in our program and Center. You are all partners in this ministry.



Congratulations & blessings to Cooper Jay Corbett and his parents, Brady & Morgan, upon receiving the sacrament of Baptism on Sunday, February 14. We welcome him into the Lord's family!



Message from Greta Carlson

Instead of Lenten meals & fellowship on Wednesdays, we will have a Faith Formation ZOOM. Families of **ALL** ages are invited to join us Wednesdays from 6:00 to 6:45 PM, March 3, 10, 17, 24. Pick up activities & supplies during Communion pick up. Contact the Church Office or Greta for the ZOOM link!



Summer Camp is an awesome experience with programs for students K-12th grade! Connect with nature and peers this summer as you join us to explore God's call to live *FEARLESS* (Joshua 1:9) at Camp Carol Joy Holling. Registration and other information, including COVID adjustments, can be found at www.CarolJoyHolling.org. Talk to Greta if you are interested in sending your young person with a group from Morning Star.

Youth Events

- **SUNDAY, MARCH 21:** Youth Project at 4^{PM} at the church. Get creative as we paint the Alleluia sign!
- **SUNDAY, MARCH 21:** Youth Parent Meeting at 4^{PM} (in-person or ZOOM). Look at the year ahead with Greta when you drop your youth off or join us from home.
- **SUNDAY, APRIL 18:** Youth Project at 6^{PM} at the church. We will prepare care packages for local college students with the Outreach Committee for Campus Ministries!

First Communion

Children third grade and older (or those who have shown interest in taking Communion) are welcome to join our First Communion classes on Sunday, March 14 on ZOOM at 11:30^{AM} and Sunday, March 21 at the church socially distanced in the Gathering Space at 11:30^{AM}.

Students will make their chalices at the second class. If you have any questions contact Greta. Please register for the classes to ensure we have enough supplies.



MISSIONS & OUTREACH

Morning Star...a light in the heart of Omaha & Beyond



Green Envelope

Our Green Envelope offering for this month goes to Table Grace Café! In downtown Omaha, Table Grace Café is a

place where lasting connections are made and the needs for healthy food and job opportunities are met. The cafe is an extension of Table Grace Ministries and the dream of managers Matt and Simone Weber. At this pay-what-you-can restaurant, anyone who walks

through the door is served a nutritious meal regardless of their ability to pay. In place of a bill, patrons are asked to pay what they are able through monetary donations or through the giving of their time. More than a meal, the cafe's connection with its patrons often goes beyond food. A 10-day training program is available to community members who are experiencing homelessness or are seeking to re-enter the workforce but lack the job skills or training. Your gifts this month help the Webers do more of the work that God has called us to do together. To read more about what's happening at Table Grace Cafe go to tablegracecafe.com.

TABLE GRACE **C A F E**
Nourishing Hungry Bodies and Souls

Fundraising Dinner & Silent Auction ~ Friday, March 5 ~ 7:30 PM

Livestream the gala: www.nhbs.cc/gala2021

Auction Bidding: www.nhbs.cc/bid2021

Taste some of Table Grace's excellent cuisine!

Lunch To Go:

Friday, March 5 ~ 11^{AM}-2^{PM}

Table Grace Café ~ 1611 ½ Farnam St.

Dinner To Go:

Friday, March 5 ~ 4^{PM}-6:30^{PM}

Mobile Grace Food Truck ~ 17007 Q St.

Call 402-965-1276 for more information. Thank you for your continued support of Table Grace Ministries!

For our March service project, we are collecting supplies for Rejuvenating Women, a non-profit that supports, protects and restores survivors of human trafficking. A complete list is available by contacting the Church Office or see their Amazon wish list at:

www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/genericItemsPage/14LEKUWAGVW8M



Join Rejuvenating Women in the continued effort to recognize and stop familial sex trafficking in our community. Learn how to prevent human trafficking at www.RejuvenatingWomen.com.

Morning Star Preschool & Child Care Center



402-393-8215 • Preschool@MorningStarOmaha.org

The preschool will spring into March with a favorite authors theme. Crazy sock day, creative hair day, wacky Wednesday, March forth & sing a silly song day and crazy hat day are upcoming events that will spark children's creativity. Weather Forecaster's week includes draw a cloud day. Let's hope our junior forecasters predict warm days ahead.

March activities include a "Leprechaun Hunt" and creating a mural of children's favorite March Madness Mascots. Our favorite Bible stories is our final theme of the month. Our annual "Noah's Ark Parade" will be a little different this year but still a fun way to bring the story of Noah's Ark to life.









MORNING STAR LUTHERAN CHURCH

331 S. 85th Avenue
Omaha, NE 68114

Address Correction Requested

HOLY WEEK			
March 28 10 AM	April 1 TBD	April 2 TBD	April 3 10 AM
			
Palm Sunday	Maundy Thursday	Good Friday	Easter Sunday


**MORNING STAR
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

LENT

Virtual Lenten Services
Sundays ~ 10^{AM}
Wednesdays ~ 12^{PM}

Lenten Faith Formation
6^{PM} on ZOOM

Join the Morning Star community on
ZOOM (by phone or computer) to
participate in this intergenerational
study & fellowship.
ALL AGES are welcome!



March Anniversaries

Jim & Anne Jenkins	March 13
Derek & Lindsey Nelson	March 14
Travis & Kristin Garges	March 18
Bill & Diane Ervin	March 22

March Birthdays

Ruby Engel	March 01	Luke Beck	March 10
Kristin Garges	March 01	Joe Bonnett	March 10
Sandy Becher	March 02	Ellen Olson	March 11
Betty Goehring	March 02	Sherry Charf	March 13
Terry Micheels	March 02	Ruth Johnson	March 16
William Beck	March 03	Jim Olmsted	March 16
Jan Dahlk	March 03	Addison Hawkins	March 19
Rachel Hall	March 03	Eunice Levisay	March 19
Ande Johnson	March 03	Abby Nabity	March 20
Josephine Johnson	March 04	Noah Nabity	March 20
Greta Carlson	March 05	Nick Saitta	March 20
Lily Karnish	March 05	Brent Ericson	March 22
Gregory Fong	March 06	Philip Niewohner	March 22
Bobby Micheels	March 06	Nancy Gadzikowski	March 27
Mackenzie Turner	March 06	Simone Weber	March 28
Dan Hartman	March 07	Don Lieberknecht	March 30
Samuel Lieske	March 07	Gabriel Boyd	March 31
Barrett Mooney	March 07	Fred Zabel	March 31