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**WORSHIP WITH US!**  
Saturdays at 5:30 PM • Sundays at 10:00 AM • Anytime at [www.MorningStarOmaha.org](http://www.MorningStarOmaha.org)

September 2021 Newsletter

# Message

FROM PASTOR CHRIS

*When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick.*

~ Matthew 14:14

There are approximately ten instances in the New Testament that describe Jesus' compassion toward an individual or a crowd of people. The original Greek word used to convey this utterly raw emotion is about as impossible to pronounce as it is to translate. Just for fun, I'll share it with you. It's *splanchnizomai*. Don't worry, I won't quiz you on this later.

As a point of etymological interest, the root word, *splanchnon* literally means one's intestines or guts. It is perhaps the source of the modern-day word, spleen. Nonetheless, it describes the very core of a human body. Consequently, the *splanchnon* was understood in the Greek world to be the place that generates human kindness, benevolence, and by extension, and in a raw, visceral way, a sense of human compassion.

When Jesus had *splanchnizomai* or compassion for the crowds it wasn't just some detached or fleeting emotion. Jesus' love and care for those who sought healing was felt viscerally, in his very gut. Jesus was moved by those he encountered, drawn to them not just by his divine nature, but unified with them through his human nature as well. For Jesus to feel compassion, it meant that he felt it in the very core of his being, his gut.

When I think of those whose vocations involve being compassionate for others, I often sense that they too feel it deep inside their gut. Caring for others, whether it's health care professionals, therapists, or first responders, not only requires years of education and training, but it also requires *splanchnizomai*. It requires a compassion grounded and sourced in the very core or essence of their very being.

For over a year and a half, we have witnessed first-hand the compassion, guts, and courage of our doctors, nurses, pharmacists, medical researchers, first responders, and other essential personnel. Time and time again, they have demonstrated what it means to have an innate *splanchnizomai* in helping us journey through this pandemic.

They've donned uncomfortable protection gear for hours, worked exhausting weekend shifts, and put themselves in harm's way of a dangerous virus. They've surrendered opportunities to spend time with loved ones and accepted extra on calls, all while witnessing the devastation of severe illness and death. They've battled through a quagmire of information and societal confusion, while simultaneously making efforts to educate us on how to keep our communities healthy and safe. They've served. They've sacrificed. They've accompanied the suffering. Their compassion and care are worthy of our recognition and thanks.

On **Sunday, September 19** we would like to recognize those in our congregation and community that have served as essential personnel, health care workers, and first responders. As part of our service that day, we would like to not only recognize the many compassionate members of our congregation, but also to lift them up in prayer and thanksgiving for serving our community in such a critical way.

If you are numbered amongst those who serve or have served in this way in the past, we want to invite you to join us for worship that day. We will not only lift you up in prayer but would like to also present you with a gift. It's just a small token of our deep appreciation for your meaningful service to the community and especially your vocational commitment of compassion.

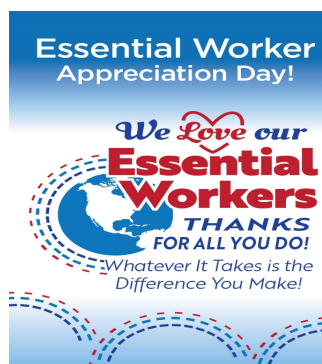
Please join us as we thank the many in our community who not only demonstrate compassion but inspire us to love and serve our neighbor as Christ's hands and feet in the world.

Your partner in ministry,

Pr. Chris

## Council Highlights & CELEBRATION

- Based on our COVID Task Force recommendation, the Council approved updated COVID guidelines. Please see information included in the mid-week update.
- We are applying to be selected to participate in a cohort for the ELCA Congregations Lead Initiative. The program provides an opportunity to connect with other congregations for innovative ministry.
- Our Outreach Team hosted a dinner and worship for Crossroads Connection. It was well attended. Thanks to Todd and Deb Washburn for all they did!



THANK YOU essential personnel, health care workers, and first responders!

Join us Sunday, September 19 at 10 AM as we honor YOU!



We will receive new members on Sunday, **SEPTEMBER 12** at the 10 AM Worship Service. If you want to learn more about membership at Morning Star, contact us to attend the New Member class on September 12 at 9 AM.

## COVID-19 GUIDELINES UPDATE

Due to increased possible risk of acquisition and transmission of the Delta variant (the predominant strain in Nebraska) even amongst the vaccinated, combined with the updated CDC guidance for mask use amongst the vaccinated in public places, updated recommendations are needed to optimize the protection of our congregation, staff and students during this evolving phase of the pandemic. These changes are important particularly to reduce transmission of the Delta variant those who are unvaccinated, the under vaccinated (such as the immunocompromised or older persons in which a vaccine may be suboptimal) or those who have high-risk family members at home or family members, such as children, who cannot be vaccinated.

The COVID Task Force is recommending the following changes in order to maintain the safe environment that we have established here:

- Masks/face coverings are required for entering the building.
- Seating in every other pew.
- Holy Communion will be received via prepackaged elements. Worshippers may come forward to the altar to receive the pre-sealed, non-alcohol elements and return to their seats or they may select one of the consecrated kits at the welcome table prior to worship.
- No coffee fellowship following worship.
- Groups using the church building can do so as long as they remain masked and socially distanced.

# Missions and Outreach

*Bringing the Light of Christ to ALL Creation*

## Green Envelope



**Food4Friends** is an original Morning Star ministry that provides a complete Thanksgiving dinner to the “working poor” families of the Omaha Metro area. Morning Star is able to deliver around 150 people a delicious meal during a time that can be financially taxing to families barely making ends meet. The time and cost associated with this outreach is entirely sustained by Morning Star. We hope to raise several thousand dollars in the next few months to continue this beloved and necessary outreach event. Thank you for your help in making this a reality!



### “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday



**Sept. 12**  
2021

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday is September 12 giving us an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the ELCA: one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. These service activities give us an opportunity to explore one of our most basic convictions as Lutherans: that all of life in Jesus Christ – every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life – flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God’s grace.

Morning Star’s participation God’s Work Our Hands begins with worship at 10 AM followed by lunch. Then you and your family are free to participate in any of our arranged service activities. Please sign up in the Gathering Space ahead of time or online at [www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d4faaae2da7ffc43-gods1](http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d4faaae2da7ffc43-gods1). Many activities are family friendly!

- ★ Habitat T-Shirt Bundling - We will bundle 200 t-shirts for Habitat to give out.
- ★ Scatter Joy Acres Volunteering
- ★ Table Grace Café Volunteering
- ★ Stuff Socks for Homeless Veterans - We stuff socks with necessities for homeless Vets.
- ★ Morning Star Clean-Up - We will do a little internal “house” cleaning.
- ★ Collect items for Afghanistan refugees coming to Omaha

#### Suggested Items Needed for Homeless Vets:

Socks	Body Wash
Shaving Cream	Shampoo
Deodorant	Razor
Toothpaste	Chapstick
Toothbrush	

#### Suggested Items for Refugee Families:

Towels/wash cloths	Kitchen & Bathroom cleaner
Sheet Sets ( <i>queen &amp; twin sizes</i> )	Sponges, rags, paper towels
Pillows	Laundry detergent
Pens, notebooks & pencils	Waste Baskets
Dish Soap	Mop, Broom & Vacuum

## Morning Star Preschool & Child Care Center



The Preschool is welcoming the children to the new school year! The first week is all about helping children feel good about themselves and giving them a sense of belonging that contributes to school readiness and learning.

Our next theme features learning activities based on Eric Carle’s book **“Teacher, Teacher, What Do You See?”** This book engages children with rhyming and predicting. Children will be creating cards to mail for **Grandfriend’s Day** and we will have a **Teddy Bear Picnic**.

During **Beautiful Colors** week, children will begin to broaden their artistic talents as they mix colors and use a variety of art media and tools in self expression.

Children will learn the importance of physical activity, personal care and nutrition during **Healthy Bodies** week. They can use their large and small motor skills to demonstrate coordination, balance, and body awareness.

During the last week of the month we will be **Exploring Our Senses** with materials and activities that will help children explore and investigate.



Pastor Chris & Sarah Dumke on her installation





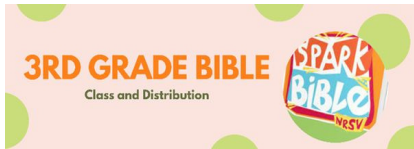
Sunday School is BACK! We will have IN PERSON Sunday School on the second Sunday of each month this fall at 9<sup>AM</sup>. While Sunday School is for elementary school aged children, we are inviting the whole family to participate!

Sunday School Dates:

September 12    October 10    November 14    December 12



The **WHOLE FAMILY** is invited for fun, games, food, balloon creations and more! Come get excited about the fall with us at this free, outdoor event. COVID safety protocols will be in place. Contact the Church Office for more information!



First Bible & Elementary Bible Presentations are coming in October! Watch the mid-week updates, newsletter and your mailboxes for more information!



A calendar of youth events is available by contacting Greta or the Church Office. We need youth help for Rally Sunday on September 12 with games! Then stay for God's Work, Our Hands following worship where the youth will help with the "Stuff the Sock" project.

2022 ELCA Youth Gathering Preparations have Begun! Registration for the ELCA Youth Gathering is due Sunday, September 26. Turn in \$150 deposit along with the Registration Covenant and Worksheet.



Confirmation classes begin Wednesday, September 22 at 6:30 PM. If you have a student entering 7 or 8 grade or older who hasn't been confirmed, contact Greta (Greta@MorningStarOmaha.org) or the Church Office to enroll.



Blessings to this year's Confirmands:

- |                |                      |            |
|----------------|----------------------|------------|
| Nick Bowman    | Renny Maxwell        | Mason Rue  |
| Nathan Hawkins | Hattie Moeller       | Hope Weber |
| Anker Jensen   | Hailey Neussendorfer |            |
| Kate Lieske    | Jackson Post         |            |



Morning Star Youth BBQ

Pastor Chris, Simone, Deb & Crew:

I have no doubt that the "Great Spirit" (aka God) was with all of you in the rain dance. It had to be a moving experience. Thanks for your message. Thanks for the beautiful music! Thank you for the delicious pasta dinner and cookies and your warm hospitality!

Blessings,  
Diane, Crossroads Connections



Dear Morning Star Congregation,

The family of Don Lieberknecht would like to thank all of you for the love and support during this difficult time. Mom and dad loved this church and we see why.

Lori, Bob, & Hunter Herwig; Melissa Noonan; Britt & Jeff Buch, Harrison & Walter; and Ryan & Maggie Noonan

## Notes

FROM PASTOR GLENN

in Drink

Drink From the Well is a ministry of Seeking the Spirit Within: The Nebraska Synod Institute for Spiritual Direction Formation. It is a unique opportunity to learn from spiritual directors from around the Nebraska Synod ELCA and grow in your experience of the Divine. Consider these benefits when you participate From the Well:

- Discover how you are wired to connect with God
- Experiment with a variety of classic prayer practices to discover which ones work best for you
- Meet with certified spiritual director every month in a small spiritual direction group
- Get to know like-minded people in your vicinity who are on a similar spiritual journey
- Develop habits for deepening your inner spiritual life
- Honor the yearning in your soul for "something more"!

Here is the schedule for this program

You will get an invitation to an introductory webinar in September. From October through May, on the first Tuesday of each month beginning at 7:00 PM, a synod-wide webinar will introduce a 90-minute lesson on a spiritual life and prayer practice with additional time for Q&A.

In the middle of the month, you will meet with a small group led by a certified spiritual director for two hours somewhere in the general vicinity of your community. The location, date and time will be determined by each small group. Where a small group cannot be accommodated in your general vicinity or when a small group decides not to meet in person due to the coronavirus pandemic, online opportunities will be made available.

Your commitment is to:

Watch the webinar each month. The webinars will be recorded so you can watch them as often as you would like, on your own time. Have your computer, smart phone or tablet connected so you can access the webinars. Try new prayer practices throughout each month and discover what the Holy Spirit is inviting you to. Attend the spiritual direction group in your area or online.

Information about this ministry and get the instructions to register at [www.seekingthespiritwithin.org](http://www.seekingthespiritwithin.org) and click on *Drink from the Well*. Registrations are being accepted through September 14, 2021. Consider inviting a friend or family member to journey with you from anywhere in the world!

For more information, contact Spiritual Directors Patrick Gregory & Emily Wageman at [dftwnesynod@gmail.com](mailto:dftwnesynod@gmail.com).



Contact the Church Office to update your information in our records so we can keep you current on Morning Star events. Thank you!



Visit  
[MorningStarOmaha.org/calendar](http://MorningStarOmaha.org/calendar) and click on  
"See Complete Calendar"!



YOU GAVE ME COMFORT

Prayer Shawls, hand-crafted by members of Morning Star, have been lovingly prayed over as they are created. Take one for yourself or a loved one.

## Worship Assistants for September

Thank you to this month's worship assistants for your help in facilitating worship. If you are unable to serve, please trade with another person or contact the Church Office. If you would like to get on this list, please contact the Church Office at [Office@MorningStarOmaha.org](mailto:Office@MorningStarOmaha.org) or 402-393-5553!

<i>Date</i>	<i>Communion Assisting</i>	<i>Reader</i>	<i>Greeter/Usher</i>
September 5	Bill Ervin	Diane Ervin	Jan Zarestky
September 12	Rod Anderson	Diane Konvalina	Jan Zarestky
September 19	Gloria Miller	Donna J. Walter	Greta Carlson
September 26		Rod Anderson	Joel Rohde & Terry Micheels



The Morning Star Lutheran Church Staff will be on a planning retreat on Tuesday, September 14 at Camp Carol Joy Holling. The

offices will be closed that day. Thank you!



All are welcome to join us for Bible Study on Wednesdays at 10 AM in the conference room.

The Church Council's Retreat is Saturday, September 11 at 9 AM at Camp Carol Joy Holling.



For those who wish to continue to worship from home, video streaming will always be available on Facebook LIVE at 10 AM or shortly after on our website [www.MorningStarOmaha.org](http://www.MorningStarOmaha.org).

**Home Communion kits are available for contactless pick up anytime by contacting the Church Office.**

**WE WILL BE  
CLOSED  
LABOR DAY**

The Morning Star Office & Preschool will be closed on Monday, September 6th for Labor Day!









### flowers & bulletins

Thanks for your generosity with the altar flowers and bulletins. If you would like to sponsor them, see the calendar in the Welcome Center or call the Church Office. Thanks **Great Harvest Bread Company** for providing communion bread **free** each week and thanks **Piccolo Florists** for providing our Altar Flowers at a discount.

Flower Sponsors		Bulletin Sponsors	
September 5	LouAnn Henkens	LouAnn Henkens	<b>Available</b>
September 12	LouAnn Henkens	LouAnn Henkens	Fred Zabel
September 19	LouAnn Henkens	Francy Van Meter	<b>Available</b>
September 26	Jan Zarestky	Jan Dahlk	<b>Available</b>



# SEPTEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 10 Bible Study 4:30 Covid Task Force Meeting	2 7 DBSA	3	4 9 Gone to Pieces Quilters 5:30 Worship
5 10 Worship	6 	7 9:30 Staff Mtg 5:30 AA Mtg 6:30 Exec Comm Mtg	8 10 Bible Study	9 7 DBSA	10 	11 9 Council Retreat 5:30 Worship
12  9 Rally Sunday 9 New Member Class 10 Worship Lunch & God's Work, Our Hands 	13 6:30 Church Council Mtg 7 Trailblazer Meeting (NWFT)	14 9:30 Staff Mtg 5:30 AA Mtg	15 10 Bible Study 4:30 Covid Task Force Meeting	16 7 DBSA	17	18 5:30 Worship
19 10 Worship <b>Essential Personnel Appreciation Day</b> 	20	21 9:30 Staff Mtg 5:30 AA Mtg 5:30 Personnel Committee Mtg	22 10 Bible Study 6:30 Confirmation	23 12:30 Sarah Circle 7 DBSA	24	25 5:30 Worship
26 10 Worship 	27	28 9:30 Staff Mtg 5:30 AA Mtg	29 10 Bible Study 4:30 Covid Task Force Meeting 6:30 Confirmation	30 7 DBSA		



# MORNING STAR LUTHERAN CHURCH

331 S. 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Omaha, NE 68114

Address Correction Requested

### Sympathies

Our deepest sympathies go to the families of Don Lieberknecht, Bill Palmer, and Fred Zabel who recently passed away. Our prayers also go to Jurene Wegner on the loss of her mother & Amy Hawkins on the loss of her mother.

### Prayers

Anita Bernstein  
Lindsay Bowley  
Lowell Gratopp  
Ken Hagemann  
Virgene Kobold  
Eunice Levisay  
Bev McCollum  
Don McWhirter

### Friends of Morning Star

-Alexandria (Michelle Miller's daughter)  
-Aya (Moy family friend)  
-Carol Schacht (Pastor Glenn's sister-in-law)  
-Craig Kochen (son of Larry & Joyce Kochen)  
-Dave Davis (friend of Ric Miller)  
-Debbie (friends of the Wollenburg's)  
-Gary (friends of the Wollenburg's)  
-Joseph (friends of the Wollenburg's)

-Kevin (friend of Tim Mueller)  
-Kitty (friend of John & Donna Walter)  
-Margaret (friend of Lori Mueller)  
-Megan (Betty Williams' daughter)  
-Shelley Anderson (Carol Anderson's daughter)  
-Tim (friend of the Moys)  
-Todd Koers (son of Wally Koers)  
-Will (brother-in-law of Ben Byers)

### September Anniversaries

Jon & Sabrina Beck	1
Alan & Alyce Berk	1
Virgil & Ruth Johnson	1
Philip & Torrie Niewohner	12
Lee & Judy Hollander	13
Michael & Patsy Behm	18
Jim Olmsted & Denise Stange	22
Jean & Troy Gutheil	23
Nolan & Miranda Zimmer	26
Todd & Jill Moeller	27



### September Birthdays

Isaiah Boyd	2	Sabrina Beck	17
Alex Johnson	3	Trevor Potter	18
Sarah Davie	4	Kevin Nelson	20
Jeremy Ring	6	Adam Hedican	23
Deb Bruckner	8	Bill Ervin	24
Mitchell Krohn	9	Betty Kellams	25
Sarah Lieske	9	Jan Zarestky	25
Torrie Niewohner	10	Bob Gilmore	26
Zayden Gaines	11	Josh Bowman	28
Sheryl Cuba	13	Charlie Beck	29
Leslie Palmer	13	John Davis	29
Laura Ring	13	Stacie Neussendorfer	29
Charles Bowman	15	Susie Syx	29