



# March Newsletter 2025

**“Inviting ALL to Live  
the Gospel through  
Faith, Love, and  
Compassion”**

10970 185th Street West ♦ Lakeville MN 55044 ♦ 952-435-5757 ♦ [www.familyofchrist.com](http://www.familyofchrist.com)

## Message from Pastor

A couple weeks back I had the wonderful opportunity to join friends on a vacation to Mexico. They had been going for many years and this year kindly included me in their plans. It was February and we have had some particular cold days and the long nights get to me the way they always do this time of year. Needless to say, I was very excited about learning about a different culture and snorkeling new waters, but I still had to get there.

I was blessed to be traveling with a friend, but neither of us have traveled for awhile. To begin with I had to make sure I had my travel documents, then moved on to pack all the things I needed in a suitcase that had to meet certain weight and size requirements, and finally I had to download all kinds of stuff on my phone. The night before I felt like a kid on Christmas and didn't sleep much. The plan was set, we'd be picked up at 5:45 am, get to the airport in plenty of time, and get on our four-hour flight that would be in paradise by noon. Oh the best-laid plans of mice and men.

First, the driver was late, but just a little. I hate to travel because of all the uncontrollables, but it was just 15 minutes, and I had already planned for some delays. We also had the first major snow since before Christmas which was itself four hours late in coming. Even though we got to the airport in record time, the plans began to fall apart. First, it was the beginning of the spring break season, and I didn't realize that everyone flies out on Saturday. The lines to check in were huge, but we made it. Then we had to go outside and into a parking ramp to line up for security. As we finally got to the front it felt as though I was in a prison wedding scene as we paraded past TSA agents and a German Shepherd that seemed to be interested in the dog treat remnants in my pocket. Things only got worse from there. The coffee shop wasn't open yet, the storm was increasing in strength, we were delayed an hour and a half, had to de-ice, and go to another runway because the one we were supposed to use was closed because of increasing snow. After we were in the air things went pretty well, but head winds made the trip an hour longer, and when we got to Mexico all fell apart. I was tired, stressed, and overwhelmed, but we landed. Now all we had to do was get to the resort. Well, first of all we were very late as were 20 other planes; and we all came in at once. Customs and immigration took 2 hours, their electronic system broke down and my partner was taken to an unmarked room for some quality time, but we made it. Only to discover that there was a line to get cabs that backed up into the airport. This too took another hour and a half but this time it was waiting in the hot sun which I was looking forward too only not with MN clothes and gas fumes surrounded by hundreds of other weary travelers who were at least as frustrated as I was. But I was there, and as I look back at this time, I realized that the memories of something I was looking forward to weren't just about where I was going, but included the journey I was on. As I laugh about this now, I find myself just as enhanced by the journey as the destination.

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## MESSAGE FROM PASTOR—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

What if we embraced the journey of life as much as the life we hope to achieve someday? What if we stopped living as if we feel like we just have to make it over the next hurdle or next goal as a way of “arriving in life”? Join us this lent as we follow the paths of our biblical friends seeing that the journey and how we live in God’s love is where life really is. Join us as we explore the “arrival fallacy” that can keep us feeling disappointed and unhappy when we get to the “next thing” and find we still haven’t arrived at our hoped-for destination. This Lent, let us learn to savor our uniquely human journey without the pressure of arrival, as we reconnect with the God of Jesus Christ who leads us in the way, providing sustenance, meaning, and hope through all our ups and downs.

Peace,

Pastor Brent

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### Ash Wednesday Worship

**March 5th**

We begin our Lenten journey with Ash Wednesday. This service is an invitation to observe a Holy Lent through the practices of prayer, worship, service, creativity, and community. Join us on March 5th @ 6:40pm as we start our journey towards Easter. No soup supper this night.

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### Wednesdays in Lent

#### “Come and See: *The Chosen*”

Join us Wednesdays in Lent at 6:40 PM for a time of Worship and reflection using the video series *The Chosen*. Come and see some of the most well-known stories of Jesus come alive and understand how they are still relevant today. Appropriate for the whole family come and bring a friend.



### Soup Suppers

**Wednesdays at 6:00pm**

We need help with food for our Lenten Soup Suppers! We are looking for people to set up, bring soup, sandwiches, desserts and help clean-up.

Please sign up on the clipboards

or on the Sign-Up Genius in the weekly email.

**The dates are March 12, 19, 26, April 2 and 9.**

We will also be collecting cans of soup for the food shelf!

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## **LENT SERIES: Are We There Yet?**

Do you ever feel like if you just make it over the next hurdle or reach your next goal that you will have finally arrived in life? Many people do, including our Biblical friends, but guess what? That's called the "arrival fallacy", and it can keep us feeling disappointed and unhappy when we get to the "next thing" and find we still haven't arrived at our hoped-for destination. We are still unfailingly human, flawed, broken.



This Lent, let us learn to savor our uniquely human journey without the pressure of arrival, as we reconnect with the God of Jesus Christ who leads us in the way, providing sustenance, meaning, and hope through all our ups and downs.

### **March 9: Getting Free and Staying Free | Exodus 15:22-27**

Like the Israelites who were freed from Egypt only to find themselves without drinkable water, we too can find ourselves freed from one trouble only to be met with another. God invites us to shift perspective and find our freedom in relationship with God.

### **March 16: It's Not the Destination, It's the Journey | Deuteronomy 32:1-10, 44-52**

We can work for weeks, months, even years to arrive at a certain point in life, our own "Promised Land." But sometimes that Promised Land is not what we envisioned. Sometimes we don't even make it there. And even when we do, the Promised Land is not the end of the journey. How can we let God reshape our vision of both the destination and the journey so that we can find beauty and meaning in all of it?

### **March 23: Who's Your Hope? | 1 Samuel 8**

When we are dissatisfied, the idea of a strong new leader can seem like our only hope to get where we want to go. But the story of the Israelite people and their demand for a king is a powerful reminder that leaders are all too human and that we must place our ultimate hope in God, the true King.

### **March 30: No Going Back | Ezra 3:10-13**

Sometimes we think that everything will be fine if we can just go back to the way things were, but the present will never be the past. The good news is that God is in what was, what is, and what will be.

### **April 6: The Fake Out | John 2:13-25**

Just when we think we have it all figured out – the right job, the right routine, the right way of doing things – Jesus comes in and upends our certainty, always moving us into deeper truth, justice, and relationship.

### **April 13 (Palm/Passion Sunday): Staying Power | Luke 19:28-40**

Everyone loves a parade but what happens when the party is over? Real hope is built in daily acts of showing up – in times of celebration, in times of challenge, and in the ordinary in-between.

### **April 20 Easter Sunday: Setting Out Again | Matthew 28:1-10, 16-20**

Death is not our final arrival. Jesus lives and so do we. He sends us out on the journey anew and promises to be with us the whole way.



**FMSC Meal Pack**  
 On Wednesday, February 5th, members of Family of Christ packed meals at Feed My Starving Children. The group of over 60 packed 25,920 meals that will feed 71 kids for an entire year!!  
**Well Done!**



**Potluck and Game - February 22, 2025**





**Wednesday Youth Schedule**

Beginning March 12th, Confirmation Class and Youth Group will start in the Sanctuary at 6:40pm and end at 8:15pm. No Pizza but Soup Suppers will be at 6:00pm.

**Mar 12, Mar 19, Mar 26, Apr 2, Apr 9:**  
Dinner: 6:00pm  
Conf/Youth Group 6:40-8:15pm

**March 2:** Chili Cook-Off Fundraiser

**March 9:** Sunday School  
Tempted

**March 16:** Sunday School  
God's Promises to Abram

**March 23:** Sunday School  
Parable of the Fig Tree

**March 30:** NO SS – Spring Break

**“Unplugged”- Youth Game Night  
Friday, March 21st**



Do you love games and hanging out with friends?  
Are you a 6th-12th grader?

If so, then come and join the group on Friday, March 21st from 6:30-9:00.  
Games are provided: Exploding Kittens, Taco-Cat-Goat-Cheese-Pizza, One Night Ultimate Werewolf, ping pong, carpet ball, foosball, shuffleboard and of course lots of Grogg.

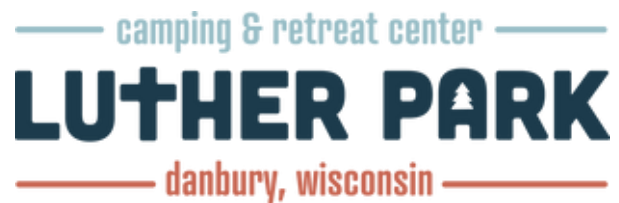
Feel free to bring a friend and/or your own games.  
Bring a snack or drinks to share if you can!

**Luther Park Opportunities 2025**

Attention Family of Christ kids and parents! Luther Park has a special week planned for our youth. A \$150 scholarship will be given to each FOC camper.

- July 20-23 Grades 1-4 Half Week Cabin Camp
- July 20-25 Grades 3-6 Full Week Cabin Camp
- July 20-25 Grades 7-12 Full Week Treehouse Camp

Go to [www.lutherpark.com](http://www.lutherpark.com) to register.



**Mission Trip Updates**

If you haven't officially registered for our trip to Lake Traverse, please find the link (sent in an email) and fill out the form.

Our next fundraising opportunity is on Saturday, March 16th at Cub Foods on Kenwood Trail in Lakeville. See sign-up genius to select a shift.  
Mark Your Calendars: Our Easter Bake Sale is also fast approaching!

— camping & retreat center —  
**LUTHER PARK**  
 — danbury, wisconsin —

**March Mission of the Month  
 Luther Park Camp**

This month our noisy offering will go to support our bible camp Luther Park in Danbury, WI. We know what an impact this camp has made on our community and as they seek to continue to do ministry this summer in new and unique ways we can support them.



**CHILI COOK-OFF**

Join us Sunday, March 2nd after worship for the Chili Cook-Off to benefit Luther Park Bible Camp. The competition will be HOT as we look to crown our next Chili Champion of FOC. Special Cornbread competition.



**Luther Park Opportunities 2025**

On March 9, Leah Pletscher, the Executive Director of Luther Park, will be visiting our church and speaking to us during worship. She will share all that Luther Park Camping & Retreat Center has to offer. Come to worship on March 9th to find out more.

*“FoCus” is a monthly publication of Family of Christ Lutheran Church.  
 Please contact the church office to submit items for publication in our newsletter.*

**Family of Christ Staff Ministry Team:**

Lead Pastor:	Pastor Brent Erler
Church Administrator:	Linda Bauer
Children, Family and Outreach Coordinator:	Dana Sahlin
Musicians:	Mary Wescott
	Ann Mikiska
	Solveig Englund
	Kim & Steve Wolff
Custodian:	Kelly Kritsberg

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**Faith Forum** (Formerly Adult Ed)- Join us as we continue to look at foundational faith beliefs and practices and how they have and continue to shape our Christian journey today. Faith Forum meets at 10:45am after worship in the conference room.



**March 9      Salvation | Abundant life Now**

The cross of Christ stands as a symbol of God's saving work. But what, exactly, does it mean to be saved? From what? For what? Is salvation a reward we claim at death or something meant to change our lives right now? These are the questions we need to answer if we are to truly receive the release that comes with salvation in the here and now.

**March 16      Cross | Where God Is**

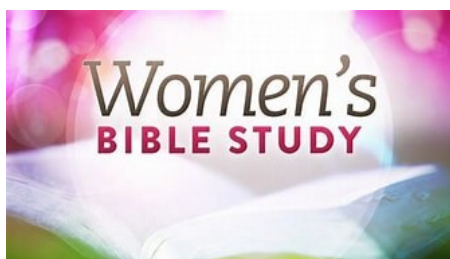
The cross sits at the center of our faith, and yet our understanding of what exactly happened on that cross remains conflicted and confusing. Was Jesus our proxy? The payment? The only way to appease an angry God? Our theories about the cross tell us as much about ourselves and our view of God as they do about Jesus and salvation.

**March 23      Bible | Book of Life Like no Other**

Why read the Bible? There remains something odd about the way Christians read the Bible. Why do we keep turning to the same stories in search of some new revelation? What is it about the Bible that makes it worth repeated reading? What gets in our way as we read the Bible and try to make sense of it? These are issues the church has wrestled with for centuries and yet we keep at it. We keep coming back to this book and its strange narrative full of plagues and miracles and destruction and rebirth. So why do we do it?

**March 30      Church | An Imperfect Family**

Church as family is a metaphor that has been used for centuries. As our notion about what it means to be a family continues to change, what does it mean in our understanding of the church. Often it is the messiness, the dysfunction, and the joy that comes from complex relationships that make church worth hanging on to. So how do we stay connected to this sometimes-broken family system? What does it mean to commit ourselves to the church family, for better or for worse?



**Women's Bible Study**

**Monday, March 3**

Women's Bible Study will held at 10:00am on Monday, February 3rd at Family of Christ.

For additional information contact Linda Bartz

**All women are welcome! Invite a friend.**



**Mark Your Calendars: Upcoming Events**

Sock and Underwear Collection for April... keep an eye out for sales!

April 12: 1st Communion Class

April 20: Mission Trip Easter Bake Sale



**Dates to Remember**

- Sun. Mar 2: Worship/Sunday School  
Chili Cook-off**
- Wed. Mar 5: Ash Wed/No Youth Programs**
- Sun. Mar 9 : Youth Sunday\Luther Park**
- Wed. Mar 12: Soup Supper/Worship/Conf & YG**
- Wed. Mar 19: Soup Supper/Worship/Conf & YG**
- Fri. Mar 21: Youth Game Night**
- Wed. Mar 26: Soup Supper/Worship/Conf & YG**
- Sun. Mar 30: No Sunday School—Spring Break**
- Wed. Apr 2: Soup Supper/Worship/Conf & YG**
- Wed. Apr 9: Soup Supper/Worship/Conf & YG**

**Vision Statement**

*Family of Christ invites ALL to Live the  
Gospel though Faith, Love, and  
Compassion*



**Our Core Values F-A-M-I-L-Y:**

- Fait**
- Acc**
- Meaningful relationships**
- Imp**
- Love**
- Youth**