



# FAITH ALIVE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, LCMC

## From Pastor's Heart

A wonderful time in the Church Year will make its presence known on March 5th when the season of Lent will begin with Ash Wednesday. But before we go to Ash Wednesday, we will have the Last Sunday after the Epiphany, known as The Transfiguration of our Lord on March 2. The paraments will be white for this special Sunday in the Church Year, because it is something special that happened in the life of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This will be the last Sunday that we get to sing Alleluia's until Easter. The reason for this is in Lent our worship is dulled down or more somber, which helps us contemplate what our Lord and Savior is doing/has done for us.

As I have said, Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. The name "Ash Wednesday" comes from a practice originating in the Middle Ages of ashes being sprinkled over the heads of those who came to church and went to confession. Today, we still use the practice of ashes, but we apply them to the forehead in the shape of the cross. The ashes that we use can come from the palms that were blessed on Palm Sunday. The color of the paraments for Ash Wednesday and throughout the season of Lent is purple, symbolizing sorrow and repentance. As I said, our worship during Lent is not as festive as it can be.

Even though that is the case, I would like to say Blessed Lent!! You might be wondering what is so blessed about Lent? All

we ever do is sing hymns that are like a funeral dirge!! Well, that might be the case, and it might not be, but let me remind you of what Lent is about. Lent begins, as we all know, with Ash Wednesday and lasts for a period of forty days, excluding Sundays. Therefore, Sundays are "in" Lent but not "of" Lent. Lent is to be used as a time to reflect upon our baptism, a time for rebirth and renewal in preparation for the celebration of Easter. Lent is also meant for the discipline of learning and growing in faith, for repentance, and for prayer. Therefore, the Lutheran Church, as a whole, has added worship services to offer us the opportunity to be able to do all these things. For your convenience, I have posted all of the worship opportunities, on the back of the church calendar, which is a separate sheet of paper found in this newsletter.

For the Sundays in Lent, because we have several families in this congregation who have had loved ones die, I am preparing a sermon series entitled: "Face-to-Face with Death." To quote from my opening sermon on this series: "As a pastor listens and learns from his people to sense their needs, he tries to respond through biblical sermonizing, for those who gather together faithfully each Sunday. Among those needs, I perceive, is dealing, as children of God, with profound loss in life. We will identify some of the stages of grief that people experience as they deal with their loss. Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross helped

us along that path 50 years ago by publishing a book, 'On Death and Dying' (New York: Macmillan, 1969/2014), in which she listed five common stages of grief. They are (1) denial/isolation; (2) anger; (3) bargaining; (4) depression; and (5) acceptance. The author also notes, 'These [stages] will last for different periods of time and will replace each other or exist at times side by side. The one thing that usually persists through all these stages is hope.' All of that sounds pretty 'lentenish' to me, so we will review these stages of grief on the five Sundays in Lent."

For our Midweek services, after Ash Wednesday, we will be doing "Holden Evening Prayer." I have heard from several members that they really love this service. I have never done this service; therefore, I have been practicing with Marge Kline, who will be playing for those services. For our Midweek theme, starting with Ash Wednesday, I have chosen "Good News from the Beginning: The Gospel in Genesis." From the Ash Wednesday sermon: "When we think about the Old Testament, we normally think of the Law. When we think about the New Testament, we think about the Gospel. When we think about the old covenant, we think of Moses. When we think about the new covenant, we think of Jesus. When we think about Mount Sinai and the Ten Commandments, we think of bad news. When we think of Mount Calvary and John 3:16, we

think of the good news. When we think about the book of Genesis, we think about the fall into sin. And when we think about the book of Revelation, we think about heaven.

Now, there is no question where we're heading as we begin this Lenten season. The cross of Jesus Christ on Calvary, that event so detailed in all four Gospels; Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the centerpieces of the New Testament, is the event that secures Good News for the world, that whosoever believes it shall not perish but have eternal life in heaven. There's also no question that the season of Lent is a time to reflect on and repent of our sins. Sin first infected the world in Genesis 3 and is shown

to us in stark reality in the thundering of Sinai and the Commandments we fail to keep.

But it's way oversimplifying, in fact, it's wrong, to think that people had to wait all those Old Testament centuries to receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ and his cross. From the very beginning, at least within hours of the first sin, God was also promising the Savior. Genesis means "beginnings," and that first book of the Bible tells not only of the beginning, the creation, of the world, but also of the first words of Good News. That's what our sermons during these Lenten midweek services will explore, the Gospel as it's so richly proclaimed in the book of Genesis.

Therefore, now is the time to

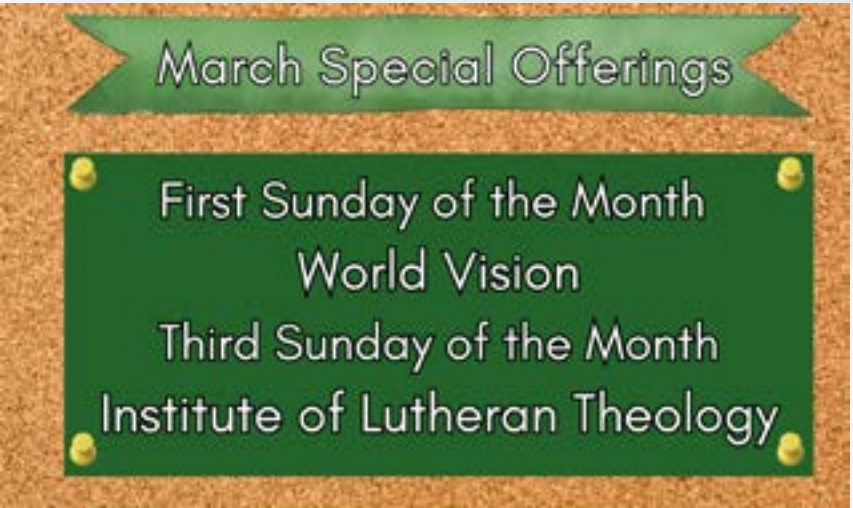
commit to doing the Lord's will for Faith Lutheran Church. And with God's help, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we, as members and Pastor, can work together to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to our community and to bring about a spiritual renewal into the life of our congregation. I pray that we will have many happy years in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ here in the Great Falls area. I pray that this Lenten Season will be a time to deepen our faith here at Faith Lutheran Church. God's blessings as we continue to work together in the Lord. Have a blessed, joyous, and penitential Lenten season. See you in church.  
Pastor Alsen

Faith Lutheran Church.  
Please accept our many thank you's for helping in so many ways with mom's funeral and the ongoing support to all of our family members. We all love you all so much and will remember this forever. ❤️  
The Hutchinson and Western Families

Thank you for supporting Samaritan's Purse – US Disaster Relief with your gift of \$1,255.13.

I am writing to express our deepest gratitude for your incredibly generous donation of \$612.57. Your support is instrumental in our mission to empower and uplift vulnerable youth and families in our community.  
Kristy Pontet-Stroop  
Executive Director, Alliance for Youth

Thank you for your donation of \$408.37. We are thankful for your partnership to provide moms and dads with more than professional services. You provide seeds of truth, the Gospel of Jesus, and the hope that is within us.  
Autumn Robertson, CEO Echoz



You can donate to the special offerings by marking your offering envelope or putting the non-profit name in the memo line of your check.



### Church Policy for Retention of Staff

1. The Pastor will oversee all staff and approve duties, programs and continuing education.
2. Members will contact the Pastor or council if they have concerns about staff members.
3. There is zero tolerance for workplace bullying.
  - a. Workplace bullying is defined as any pattern of behavior that harms, intimidates, undermines, offends, degrades, or humiliates an employee.
  - b. Workplace bullying with staff will be reported to the Pastor (including name) for peaceful conflict resolution.
4. The council will support the Pastor in his efforts to maintain a peaceful work environment.

Remember - Misunderstanding is the biggest distance between two people.  
Faith Lutheran Church Council

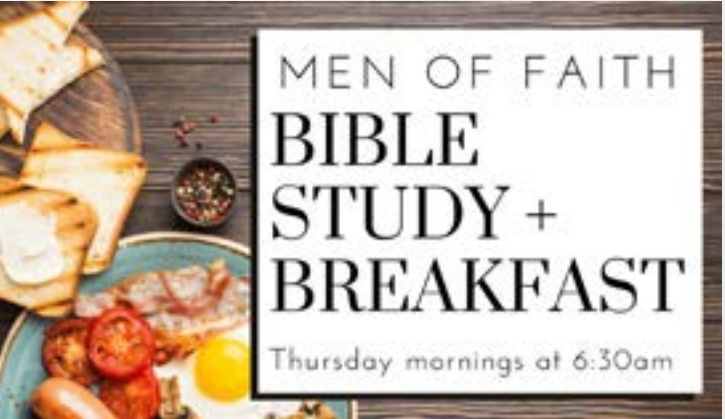
Visit our website:  
[www.FaithLutheranGF.com](http://www.FaithLutheranGF.com)  
for our up-to-date Church Calendar.

### From Hope for Israel

Thank you so much for your generous contribution of \$408.38 to Hope for Israel. We want to express our deepest gratitude for standing alongside Hope for Israel during these challenging times. Your unwavering support has been a beacon of light for so many in Israel who are walking through incredibly difficult circumstances.

### From St. Anne's Soup Kitchen

Thank you for your generous donation to the Kitchen. In such cold weather we are grateful to be able to provide a hot, nourishing meal to our guests. Many are homeless or very short of funds.



## ‘O LORD, HOW SHALL I MEET YOU?’

**An Entrance Hymn, Introit or psalm near the beginning of the service provides an age-old vehicle for meeting God in worship.**

The opening line of an Advent hymn asks, “O Lord, How Shall I Meet You...?” This question brings to mind the reason God’s people - gathered for worship - sing an Entrance Hymn, an Introit or a psalm early in the Divine Service.

God speaks to us through His Word, of course, and we speak to Him in prayer. But another way we speak to God and to one another in worship is by singing together. After being prepared through the Invocation and by the Confession and Absolution, the community of believers is ready to enter that part of the liturgy known as the “Service of the Word.”

### SOME HISTORY

Singing a hymn or a psalm at this place in the service goes back at least some 1,500 years, to the fifth century. The pope at that time, Celestine I, stated that as the clergy moved from the sacristy to the altar, a double choir should sing an entire psalm antiphonally (responsively). Later, only selected psalm verses were sung. These selected psalm verses are known as the “Introit,” from a Latin word that means “entrance.” Psalm texts were used in other parts of the Mass, too: in the Gradual, which comes between the Epistle and Gospel readings; and in the Alleluia or in Scripture verses known as “tracts” that are sung after the Gradual.

Martin Luther kept the Introit in his Latin revision of the Roman Mass. In his German revision, he suggested that a German hymn be sung instead. Singing a psalm or hymn adds solemnity to the entrance of the clergy as

the pastor and assistants move to their appropriate places in the chancel. Singing by the entire congregation has always been a powerful and uplifting part of Lutheran worship. Luther spoke highly of music and provided a strong impetus by including hymns in worship. Not only did he himself write hymns, he also encouraged other poets and musicians to contribute to the development of a hymnody to be sung by the people.

### HYMNS AND PSALMS

Generally, the Entrance Hymn, appointed Psalm or Introit reflects the theme of the Sunday or festival. An example would be: the Gospel for the 4th Sunday in Advent speaks of the announcement to Mary that she will bear Jesus. An appropriate Entrance Hymn would be “The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came.” If an Entrance Hymn is the choice, there may have been preparation for it already in the Prelude, with a composition based on this hymn’s tune. By singing hymns from various time periods and ethnic backgrounds, congregations are reminded that they are part of a church from all ages and for all people, rather than just a congregation of the 20th century.

Singing the psalms is nothing new for Lutherans, but to chant a psalm may be a new experience for some worshipers—even though it has been a practice of the church for centuries. Already in the Old Testament, it was customary for the psalms to be sung (Ps. 68:25). In the New Testament, Paul makes reference to the singing of psalms (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Since many early Christians were Jewish, it was

only natural that they continued this practice. The use of chant adds the element of music to the text and slows down the presentation of the thoughts of the text. Chant also enables singers to handle the varied length of the psalm verses (different from a hymn, in which each stanza is the same length.)

### SO UPLIFTING

In addition to such methods for singing psalms, composers have written many musical settings of the psalms, involving congregations, cantors and choirs. Choral settings of the psalms abound. So do hymn paraphrases. How good is it that at the entry into the Service of the Word, a congregation has the opportunity to lift its collective voice in such uplifting singing!

Psalms used in worship also frequently include a refrain known as an “antiphon.” This refrain, usually drawn from a verse of the psalm, focuses on the theme of the day. The following antiphons for various days show how the Old Testament psalms can help focus our worship of Jesus Christ.

**Christmas Day** - “The Lord has made His salvation known and revealed His righteousness to the nations” (Ps. 98:2)

**Epiphany** - “All kings will bow down to Him and all nations will serve Him” (Ps. 72:11)

**Ash Wednesday** - “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise” (Ps. 51:17)

### New Member Welcome & Refresher Class

Pastor Alsen Wenzel will be teaching “Fit for Life in Christ: A Study in Spiritual Development.” This class is for those wanting to join our church but also for those who would like a refresher course.

The class will begin on Sunday, March 2 at 10:45 a.m., with a second group on Thursday, March 6 at 6:00 p.m. These classes will run for 10 weeks.

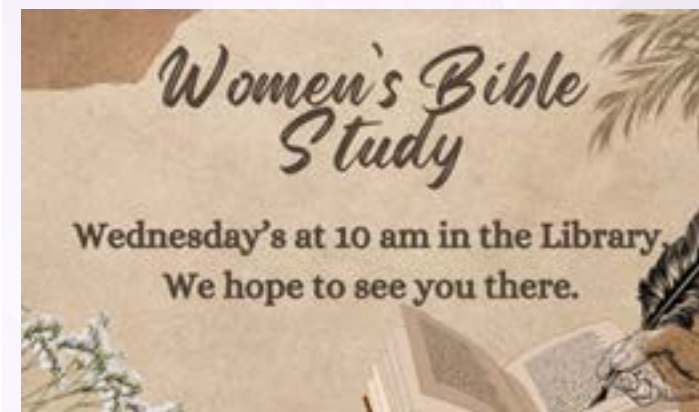


### Life Happens - Led by John Gass

This is a study designed to employ the 12 step principles to help recover from various life experiences. We all have at times experienced life setbacks. They could be a major health issue, death of a loved one, divorce, financial losses, job loss. We will study how each step will carry us through recovery.

Recovery is not always easy, but trusting God is key.

Any questions contact Colleen Palmer or Pastor Wenzel



### Love Day Quilters News

Spring will come this month, at least on the calendar, if not with weather forecast. We hope it arrives both ways. We will still be assembling quilts whatever is falling from the sky. Thank you, Karlene, for last month's delicious pastry treat. Come join us! Augie Records

## IN NEED OF PRAYER?

If you're in need of prayer, please contact the church office. We can add you or your family members to our prayer chain and/or weekly prayer list.



March Anniversaries

12: Tom and Galia Fundis  
25: Scott & Mellissa Hampton

March Birthdays

- 1: Keith Perkins
- 3: Donna Reum  
Bamma Taylor
- 4: Brian Davids
- 5: Pastor Jeff Stoopes
- 7: Berdell Boobar  
Bubba Wilson
- 9: David Neil
- 10: Stacie Gerard
- 12: Gregory Cotton
- 13: Cindy Anderson  
Fred Burow  
Cari Davids
- 14: Sharon Frye
- 16: Jim Lowry
- 17: Kurt Wiggers
- 18: Kari Larance  
Bob Palmer
- 20: Christina Hall  
Lawrence Hoven  
Barb Wuertz
- 23: Cameron Hering
- 24: Kelly Jackson
- 25: Cathy Graham
- 27: McKenzie Clark  
Megan Clark  
Leona Wenaas
- 29: Mildred Hensley

News from the Education Team/Youth & Family

**Sunday School:** We are always looking for volunteers to help with Sunday school, please consider sharing your time.

**CONFIRMATION:** Classes will start with the next school year on September 7th, the Sunday after Labor Day, right after morning service. Pastor Alsen teaches confirmation as a three (3) year program, called “Head to Heart”. It is for children in the 5th grade and up. If you would like more information please reach out the church office.

**5th Annual Easter Egg Hunt:** will be Saturday April 12th for children ages 1-10. Share the date with any families with children in those ages that you know. We will be needing donations of plastic eggs, candy and volunteers.

**VBS:** this year is tentatively scheduled for June 16-20, from 5:30 – 8:00 pm. This year’s theme will be “True North – Trusting Jesus in a Wild World” from Group Publishing. We will need volunteers! Please consider volunteering your time and talents! There will be lots of ways to volunteer. Come share God’s good news and love. Please reach out to Annette Hocker at 406-590-1061 with any questions and/or to volunteer. The March education team meeting is Monday, March 10th at 6:30 pm. We welcome you to attend. Annette Hocker



FISH News

Thanks to the following who worked FISH the week of January 27-31. Jerry and Pearl Miller, Mike Abbott, Loretta Riley, Carol Dawson, Carol Turner, Lane and Sherry Freiboth, Jim and Sharon Wickens, Karen Nebel, Dave Morgan, Jeni Stevens, Tom Fundis and Sandy Clapshaw. We served a total of 26, with Friday being the busiest with a total of 10. Faith Lutheran Church is scheduled to work the week of April 14-18. Mark you calendars, I’m always looking for volunteers. Sandy Clapshaw

TWENTY ANNUAL LOAVES & FISHES DINNER  
AN EVENING OF GOOD FOOD

Salmon Loaf, Cucumber Sauce, Rolls, Coleslaw, Jell-O, Dessert Bars

Plus, SILENT AUCTION AND RAFFLE  
FRIDAY, MARCH 21, 2025

OUR SAVIOR’S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
1326 1ST AVE. NORTH

SERVING: 4:30 PM TO 6:30 PM  
FREE WILL OFFERING  
ALL PROCEEDS SUPPORT FISH



GREETINGS FROM THE KEYBOARD

I know I forgot to submit an article last month and I’m sorry! I just “know” you all can’t wait to hear from me!

I’m blessed to be part of the music team at Faith which includes Jan (from the piano!) along with the Music & Worship team, Pastor and Faith members that are keeping the bells/vocal/instrumental/praise team/etc. praising our wonderful Lord and Savior.

We are heading into the Lenten season so we prepare our hearts in reverence. The hymns and liturgy will be reflecting our need to center our hearts and lives on our Savior, Jesus Christ. Remember at this a time when the “Alleluia” isn’t sung a Lenten response takes its place. A small team will get together to search suggested music for March, with goals to meet and select 3 months of music in advance. We appreciate any input/suggestions that reflect each Sunday’s lessons. God loves to hear you sing

praises to Him. He doesn’t care if you believe you can ‘sing correctly’ or not--He just wants to hear you!

Music is God’s language of love and He wants His children to rejoice! So sing from your hearts with praise to our awesome God!

I have been staying at home because of a barking cough but am slowly on the mend. I look forward to coming back and playing the keyboard in praise to Jesus! Also, to come back to the fellowship with my Faith family. I have been watching Livestream but miss worshipping in person!

I have wonderful news that one of the trumpet players from Christmas is available to play for both Easter services! Thank you Jacob!

One other music aspect we are thinking of bringing back to worship is singing of the Lord’s Prayer! I know quite a few of you have been asking for it to come back.

Please let me know if you have any questions musically, etc. I’m just holding down a few aspects till God leads a new Music Director to Faith. I am here to serve God, my Faith family, and

community as needed. I love you Faith!

Our God is a singing God who loves music (Zephaniah 3:17, Mark 14:26). We are made in God’s image, so we have a natural attraction to music. We can do ourselves much spiritual good by listening to God-honoring music and by worshipping Him in song. This speaks of the great:

- spiritual power in music.
- power of giving our gifts to God.
- strength of what seem to be small or unexpected things.
- importance of worshipping God in song.

Make use of this great, wonderful, God-given, and God-blessed spiritual resource.

I want to thank Pastor for being such a powerful musical leader and being so open to suggestions. I look forward to years of working with him!

Well, before I write a novel here...I’d best close with praise and thanksgiving to God and may you all show your love for God in music and prayer. God bless you all.

Musically in Christ.....Elaine

MARCH SERVICE GROUP

As a way of serving each other, Faith Lutheran is refreshing our monthly Service Groups. The following are being asked to be available in the month of March. If a need arises for a funeral or wedding we will call you from the church office.

We are also asking the Service Groups to help with set up and clean up for Sunday Fellowships. The treats are provided by the church. You are welcome to bring in treats to share as well.

Thank you to each of you for giving your time and talents to help at Faith Lutheran.

- Jim and Glenice Brown
- Fred Burow
- Jan Christofferson
- Sandy Clapshaw
- Joel and Dixie Demko
- Rex and Anne Derr
- Sue Ferrin
- Lane and Sherry Freiboth
- Russ and Cheryl Klette

Note: If you’re not listed on the birthday list, please call the office at 406-454-1309 or email us: FaithLutheran.gtf@gmail.com. We love wishing all our congregational members a very happy day! So, please, make sure your name and correct date are on the list!



1300 Ferguson Drive  
Great Falls, MT 59404  
Telephone: (406) 454-1309  
Web: [www.faithlutheranGF.com](http://www.faithlutheranGF.com)

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## CHURCH STAFF

Senior Pastor:	Pastor Alsen Wenzel
Secretary/Office Manager:	Cindy Fowell
Bookkeeper:	Robin Western
Facilities Manager:	Bob Palmer
Outreach Coordinator:	Colleen Palmer
IT Manager:	John Plank

## OFFICE HOURS:

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday

Our monthly calendar is on our website!

Phone: (406) 454-1309

[Faithlutheran.gtf@gmail.com](mailto:Faithlutheran.gtf@gmail.com)

[www.faithlutherangf.com](http://www.faithlutherangf.com)

## CURRENT COUNCIL MEMBERS

President - Fred Burow	
Vice President - Julie Waag	
Secretary - Mellissa Severson-Hampton	
Jim Brown	Christy Sem
Robin Western	Tammie Klinker-Mayes
Rex Derr	Bamma Taylor
Bob Palmer	Deb Schwandt
Sean Hoven	Colleen Palmer



THIS IS THE JOURNEY OF FAITH.



# 2025 March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 8:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Kids SS 10:45 am Fit for Life	3	4 10 am Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Music & Worship	5 10 am Bible Study 7 pm Ash Wednesday Service	6 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 9 am Love Day Quilters 6 pm Men of Faith 6 pm Fit for Life Class	7 9:30 am Worship Noon Evangelism Team Meeting	8
9 8:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Kids SS 10:45 am Fit for Life	10 5:30 pm Personnel	11 10 am Staff Meeting 11:30 am Soulo Sisters 5:30 pm Executive Meeting 6:30 pm Youth Ed Team	12 9 am Finance Meeting 10 am Bible Study 4 pm Property Team Meet 5:30 pm Soup Supper 7 pm Lenten Service	13 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 10 am LCMC Pastors 6 pm Fit for Life Class	14	15
16 8:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Kids SS 10:45 am Fit for Life	17 ST. Patrick's Day	18 10 am Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Council Meeting	19 10 am Bible Study 5:30 pm Soup Supper 7 pm Lenten Service	20 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 6 pm Fit for Life Class	21	22
23 8:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Kids SS 10:45 am Fit for Life	24          31	25 10 am Staff Meeting	26 10 am Bible Study 5:30 pm Soup Supper 7 pm Lenten Service	27 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 6 pm Fit for Life Class	28	

## LENTEN SUNDAY SERMON TITLE

Sunday	Date	Sermon Title/Text
Lent 1	March 9, 2025	"Face-To-Face with Death: Stage 1: Denial-Isolation – Alone with Christ" Romans 8:31-39
Lent 2	March 16, 2025	"Face-To-Face with Death: Stage 2: Anger – Why?" Mark 8:31-38
Lent 3	March 23, 2025	"Face-To-Face with Death: Stage 3: Bargaining – Let's Make a Deal" John 2:13-22
Lent 4	March 30, 2025	"Face-To-Face with Death: Stage 4: Depression – Look Up and Live" John 3:14-21
Lent 5	April 6, 2025	"Face-To-Face with Death: Stage 5: Acceptance – Oh, to See Jesus!" John 12:20-33

## LENTEN MIDWEEK WORSHIP TITLE

Lenten Series Theme: "Good News from the Beginning: The Gospel in Genesis"

Worship Service	Date	Time	Sermon Title/Text
Ash Wednesday	March 5, 2025	7 pm	"The Good News of a Savior Who Covers Our Sin" Genesis 3:1-13, 21
Lenten Midweek 2	March 12, 2025	7 pm	"The Good News of a Savior Who Conquers Evil" Genesis 3:14-15
Lenten Midweek 3	March 19, 2025	7 pm	"The Good News of a Savior Who Gives Us a New Beginning" Genesis 6
Lenten Midweek 4	March 26, 2025	7 pm	"The Good News of a Savior Who Gives Himself in Our Place" Genesis 22:1-18
Lenten Midweek 5	April 2, 2025	7 pm	"The Good News of a Savior Who Unites Heaven and Earth" Genesis 28:10-22
Lenten Midweek 6	April 9, 2025	7 pm	"The Good News of a Savior Who Brings Good from Evil" Genesis 20:15-21

