



Our Father's Lutheran Church Gather & Serve Newsletter

March 2023

Why it's so important to celebrate Jesus' death

By Pastor Aaron

If I were to ask you what you're looking forward to in the Month of March, what would your answer be?

Some of you might answer, "Spring Break!" Others, "warmer weather." Farmers out there "getting ready for fieldwork and planting season."

How many of you would answer: "Celebrating Jesus' death"?

I'll admit, I do think it is odd that as Christians, our faith centers on the idea Jesus willingly died for our sins. Furthermore, crucifixion is quite possibly one of the most horrible ways to die as well. Yet, that's what we say we celebrate. In fact, without Jesus' death, his resurrection and our celebration on Easter doesn't make as much sense. Yet, that's what we look forward to, attending church on Easter, fitting it in with all the other things we look forward to each spring.

In my time at OFLC, I've had the privilege of conducting funerals for various families. I think what is so interesting to me is how a family tends to come together, to find ways to love each other, to put conflict and annoyances aside, and a whole host of other things at the time of a loved one's death. Death provides us clarity about what is truly important in life, and provides us the energy to live into those things just a bit more than usual. And I think that is why it's so important to celebrate Jesus' death.

Continued....

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**Remember to turn
your clocks ahead,
March 12th!**

Why it's so important to celebrate Jesus' death

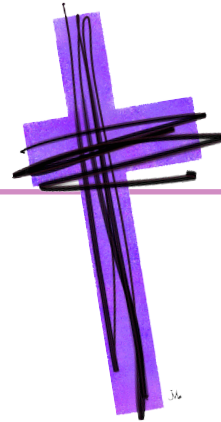
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Love. Forgiveness. Humility. Confession. Acceptance. Compassion. As we read the story of Jesus' death, not only do we hear these important things in the story, I think we get a little closer to them in our own lives. There's a clarity of where they fit, where we need them most, and why they're so necessary for our lives. As we gear up for all the amazing things in this spring, even looking forward to Easter – let us not forget to celebrate Jesus death and the extraordinary gift that it is!

Peace,



Pastor Aaron



A message from new Council President Wendy Gustafson

As we make our way into 2023 I find myself reflecting on 2022 and looking forward to 2023. As I shared at the council meeting we had so much fun celebrating the 50th anniversary and now we are looking forward to the next 50 years. We are enjoying being together again after Covid and seeing the growth and engagement in different ministries. I encourage you to try something new this year, or revive something old. New ministries develop because someone has a passion for something. What ember are you noticing? Have you always wanted to try bells? Do you wonder if you could help as a service coordinator? Do you miss young children and want to help out in Sunday School? Or are you thinking of something that hasn't been dreamt of yet? I believe that little voice is the voice of God, and I encourage you to find a quiet space to listen for where God is leading you..... because that's how he is guiding OFLC, it's through each and every person that walks through our doors. Whether you have been with us for 5 decades or 5 minutes you are an important part of Our Father's family.

2023 Lent, Holy Week, and Easter Worship-Save the Dates

The season of Lent has a long-standing tradition in the Christian Church. It is symbolic in that it lasts 40 days (excluding Sundays), equal to the number of years Israel journeyed from Egypt to the Promised Land and the number of days Jesus was in the wilderness, tempted by Satan. Today, it is marked for



Christians as a time to practice a number of disciplines we normally don't on a regular basis – prayer, fasting, acts of service. One of those disciplines is worship. Listed below are the worship opportunities over Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. Mark them down and we hope you'll join us as we observe Lent together!

- **Ash Wednesday.** February 22nd, 7pm.
- **Mid-week Lent Soup/Sandwich Supper.**

Join us for a soup and sandwich supper from **5:30–6:30pm on Wednesdays during Lent**. It'll be great for folks to gather and have time for a simple meal and to get to know each other! There will also be questions for "tabletop discussions" each week.

- For worship, there won't be a planned worship service in the sanctuary, there will be an opportunity to sing Holden Evening Prayer to close out the day. It's also an opportunity for some of you who may have musical talents to use them in a less intimidating setting. Either way, we hope you will join us on Wednesdays during Lent!
- **Palm/Passion Sunday.** April 2, 9am.

Procession of Palms as a start to Holy Week.

- **Maundy Thursday OFLC Cantata.** April 6, 7pm.
- **Good Friday.** April 7, 7pm
- **Easter Sunday worship services.** 7am-Sunrise Service. 9am-Traditional Easter Worship.

This information and links can be found on Our Fathers Website.



Council Minutes

By Chandler Drummond

Our Father's Lutheran Church
Agenda for Leadership Team Meeting
February 7, 2023

Attendees: Aaron, Jodi, Dan, Wendy, Chandler, Shannon, Erin, Lauren

Devotion & Prayer – Wendy

Internal Ministries:

Feedback on annual meeting – 53 attendees

Dialog and feedback very positive – some confusion on where offerings and donations are allotted

Council leadership transition plan

Council Considerations – Email needs to go out to check within the congregation again to see if we have any volunteers

Treasurer – Need still exists

Council members areas of oversight discussion

Wendy – Executive Council

Dan – Worship/Music

Shannon – Outreach

Aaron – Foundation

Chandler - Building and Property

Jodi - Hospitality

Aaron - OFLC Foundation

Erin – Internal Ministry

Lauren - Education

Discussion and approval of meeting schedule for 2023

Proposal to move meetings to Wednesday evenings

Considerations around choir and lent need to be balanced

Start time likely needs to move to 7:15 to accommodate confirmation

Discussion around seasonal options to better accommodate everyone's schedule

Administrative/Personnel:

Pastoral update

Attached to email

Items for consideration

Consideration and approval of vacation in March (3/8-3/12)

Discuss dates to meet with Nourishing Hope Committee

Council Minutes continued

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Hoping to schedule another meeting with Council – likely not in February

Delegates for Conference and Synod assemblies – FEB 12th Zoom LINK

Need representatives (2) for Conference (February 12) and Synod (April 28 and 29) Assemblies

Last two years we have not sent delegates – looking for attendees who have interest

Finance:

Treasurer update

No update

Other:

Lenten supper- consider council prep/serve a meal

March 15

2X/Cornbread/Sandwiches/Salad/Utensils/Napkins/Utensils

Space Requests – finalize rental process/fees

Move forward with option #2 – will review in July

Other items from council

Devotion Schedule:

February – Wendy

March – Dan

May – Shannon

June – Erin

July – Aaron

August – Lauren

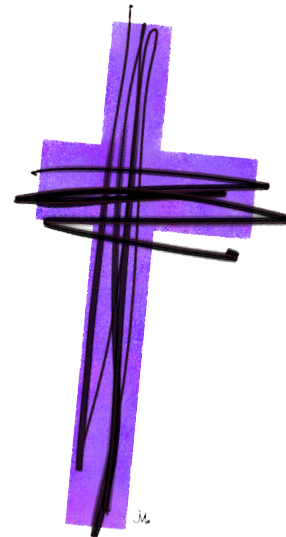
September – Chandler

October – Jody

November – Shannon

December – Dan

January - Wendy



Upcoming council meeting schedule:

March 7, 2023 07:00 PM

Upcoming working session meeting schedule:

Discuss potential workshop for Tuesday February 21, 2023

Pastoral Report—Jan.

Worship & Education

Plan for Lent/Holy Week:

Ash Wednesday Service: February 22nd, 7pm.

Mid-Week (Wednesdays): Soup/Sandwich Supper, 5:30-6:30pm. Faithful Conversations during supper.

Palm Sunday: 9am (regular worship time)

Maundy Thursday/Easter Cantata, 7pm.

Good Friday, 7pm.

Easter: Sunrise, 7am. Regular worship, 9am.

Bell Choir & Singing Choir practice time will be adjusted accordingly. Confirmation will continue at regular time.

Soup and Sandwich Suppers resuming. Asking ministry groups to sponsor one of the five Wednesdays in Lent. Confirmation will be taking one of the weeks.

Sunday School kids will be leading parts of worship on February 26th. Wes Kimball will be preaching and I will be presiding in worship that day.

Pastoral Care

Memorial service for Jeffrey Blodgett: February 18th. (Son of John Blodgett)

Memorial service for Derek Nielson: March 11th. (Son of Myron and Shirley Nielson)

Outreach

Confirmation class made blankets for pets at local shelter during E&C.

Started “3rd Wednesday hangouts” on January 18th. Had 4 folks join me at Billy’s Bar Wednesday evening.

Would like to hold a meeting with NH Committee this month. Looking for proposed dates/times to present to the Committee.

Administrative

No reply from La Iglesia Roca Fuerte since last month’s meeting.

Conducted two listening sessions on the budget on January 8 and 15 after worship. Both had about 15 persons at each session.

Membership rolls updated in database. Created the following lists: voting members, active/non-voting, inactive.

Active/non-voting persons have received communication to inquire about status.

Inactive will be removed from database after 6 months.

Non-members who are family/spouses of active (non-voting/voting) will be retained for communication purposes.

Updated position description for Coordinator of Community Outreach has been reviewed with Brittni.

Approved Constitution has been sent to the Synod for final approval.

Pastoral Report—Jan.

.....continued.....

Some voiced displeasure that no online options was offered for the Annual Meeting this year, and thus were not able to participate.

Need representatives (2) for Conference (February 12) and Synod (April 28 and 29) Assemblies.

Info for Council – Pastor Aaron

Completed Navy Training January 19-22 and February 3-5.

Wes Kimball, Seminary Intern, led worship on 1/22.

Served on Synod Candidacy Committee on February 2.

Requesting vacation March 8-12. I will arrange for coverage in worship that Sunday.

Upcoming Pastor Aaron events:

Presenting at workshop on February 11th, part of Synod Toolkit Event.

Preaching in chapel at Augsburg University on March 7 as part of Mental Health Symposium.

March 22-24: in New Orleans to complete my Navy Physical Fitness exam.

Men's Group Retreat

Date: April 21-22

Location: Koronis Ministries on Lake Koronis - Paynesville, MN

Cost: \$94.00 per person (includes bed, breakfast, and lunch) Checks can be made out to Our Father's Church with "Men's Retreat" written in the memo field. There is funding available if cost is a barrier for anyone going. If anyone has any dietary restrictions, please let us know so we can communicate them to Koronis. They are very accommodating for us in that regard. Lodging will be on the first floor of the Sunrise Hotel on their grounds.

Time: Leave church at 5:00 pm Friday, return around 4:00 pm Saturday. If you are not able to make it at 5pm on Friday at the church you are more than welcome to meet us there in the evening.

What do we do?

Topic for study and conversation

We invite suggestions for topics that might be of interest. More info to follow in the coming weeks. Sign up sheet will be available soon. Please reach out to any of the Men's Group members or Pastor Aaron with questions, concerns, or suggestions.



Finance Report

By Amy Krcil

The general fund is broken out this month among the components. The table below demonstrates how we also need consistent regular giving to maintain our operating expenses.

	December		
	2022	January	Inc/(Dec)
Total Unrestricted (General) Cash			
General Fund	\$ 6,095	\$ 4,406	\$ (1,689)
Give to the Max	22,399	22,399	-
Employer Retention Credit	21,080	21,080	-
Total General Fund Cash Balance	\$ 49,574	\$ 47,885	\$ (1,689)
Total Restricted (Designated) Cash			
Nourishing Hope	48,905	48,954	49
Building Improvements	10,364	10,614	250
Mortgage Reserve	2,610	2,603	(7)
Ministry	22,408	23,123	715
Technology	9,606	9,606	-
Other	15,635	11,004	(4,631)
Total Designated Cash	\$ 109,528	\$ 105,903	\$ (3,625)

Below is income/expense for January. Overall, we came in under budget, but still a loss for January.

	January Results			
	General Fund	Nourishing Hope	Other Designated Funds	Budget-All Funds
Contributions	\$ 16,734	\$ 50	\$ 4,137	\$ 14,930
Expenses	17,117	1	7,748	26,408
Net Result	\$ (384)	\$ 49	\$ (3,611)	\$ (11,478)

As discussed at the preliminary budget meetings, an average contribution per family of \$211 is need to “keep the lights on.” In order to fulfill our full ministry needs, \$267 is need on average per family. Actual giving to date is \$220 per family.

Any questions can be directed to accounting@ourfatherschurch.org.



NourishingHOPE

Free Fresh Produce and Dairy

Monday, March 13th

4:00pm–5:00pm

Boxes of fresh produce and dairy products will be available for drive through pickup on a first come, first serve basis at the following locations:

Corcoran

St. Thomas Catholic Church

20000 County Road 10
Corcoran, MN 55340

Delano

Light of Christ Lutheran Church

3976 County Line Road SE
Delano, MN 55328

Rockford

Our Father's Lutheran

3903 Gilbert Ave SE
Rockford, MN 55373

Buffalo

Buffalo Covenant Church

1601 Highway 25 North
Buffalo, MN 55313

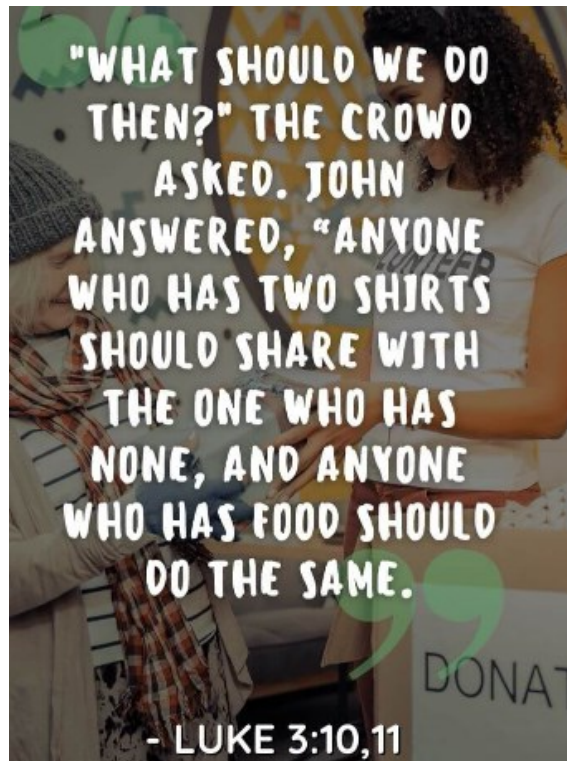
Hanover

Influence Church @ City Hall

11250 5th Street NE
Hanover, MN 55341

For assistance locating a specific site or for questions, please contact us at nourishinghope.oflc@gmail.com or Facebook Messenger.

NourishingHOPE is a ministry of Our Father's Lutheran Church, in cooperation with four area churches. Our vision is to relieve area food insecurity and promote wellness in mind, body, and spirit for people East-Central Wright County. For information on you or your organization partnering with NourishingHOPE, please visit our website at www.ourfatherschurch.org/nourishing-hope.html





2023 Distribution Dates

NourishingHOPE

FREE Fresh Produce and Dairy

-January 9th
 -February 13th
 -March 13th
 -April 10th
 -May 8th
 -June 12th

-July 10th
 -August 14th
 -September 11th
 -October 9th
 -November 13th
 -December 11th

4:00pm–5:00pm

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 Corcoran, MN 55340

Rockford

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Buffalo

Buffalo Covenant Church
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 Buffalo, MN 55313

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Prayer Requests:

Do you have a prayer concern? **Contact:** Shirley Bolstad, pbolstad@aol.com

Would a palm cross or prayer shawl comfort you or a family member?

Contact: melissa@Ourfatherschurch.org

Newsletter Deadline:

Deadline for articles, photos or announcements is the 15th of each month.

Send to:

Melissa@ourfatherschurch.org

Office Hours: Wed. 10-2pm

Please call:

Phone: 763-477-6300

Website: www.ourfatherschurch.org

Staff Contacts:

Pastor Aaron Fuller: pastoraaron@ourfatherschurch.org

Office Admin: Melissa Ungaro melissa@ourfatherschurch.org

Community Outreach: Brittni Bronczyk brittni@ourfatherschurch.org

Music/Bell Choir Director: Tammy Jarvi tjarvi@charter.net

Council Members:

Chandler Drummond, Wendy Gustafson, Shannon Sand, Dan Schiller,
Aaron Fuller, Erin Smith, Lauren Johnson, Jody Bryant

Executive Team Members:

Chandler Drummond, Aaron Fuller, Wendy Gustafson, Shannon Sand

WORSHIP
Sunday's 9:00am

We are in Person

In the sanctuary @ 9am

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

[https://
www.ourfatherschurch.org/](https://www.ourfatherschurch.org/)

We're on YouTube!

Watch from the comfort of home. Visit us at:

[https://www.youtube.com/
channel/
UCePt4KWmjvq1M7vPbl-
jUfeA?view_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCePt4KWmjvq1M7vPbl-jUfeA?view_as=subscriber)