

- A Message from Pastor Trish -



seeking:
honest questions
for deeper faith

During Lent and Holy Week our worship theme is “Seeking: honest questions for deeper faith”. Our gospel readings are primarily from John, and in them we will hear several stories where Jesus is encountering people who are seeking: Nicodemus who comes in the middle of the night, the Samaritan woman who wants “living water”, a man seeking healing from blindness. Each wants a new beginning, a different life, a deeper faith.

Aren't those the things we seek as well? Perhaps you are wondering about your relationship with God or about what you are called to do in your particular season of life. Maybe you're wrestling with questions of faith, or struggling with relationships. You might be tired of uncertainty, or wishing for something more, or less, or different.

What we know is that a willingness to ask questions moves us forward in our seeking. Questions can sometimes provide answers; but maybe more importantly, questions help us to focus our wonderings and turn us in the right direction. I am reminded of all the questions I had when I received my cancer diagnosis last summer. I wanted answers to the specific diagnosis and outlook, but I also wondered what it was going to mean for me. What would happen, how was I going to cope, how it might change me as well as my family? As I embarked on that particular journey some questions would be answered and more would arise. (Many of you know what I am talking about!) In time, most of the questions were answered, the treatment began, the results become official. But I found myself continuing to ask questions not just about my physical concerns but also questions about my spirit. Why was this happening, and what would it mean for my ministry? Where was God in this, and what was God going to teach me or show me? What about my anxiety and worry? What about my loved ones and others who depended on me?

Asking those questions, and allowing space and time for answers was important. I kept a journal, and when I go back and read my entries I am only now best able to see how God walked with me and led me on a path not just toward recovery, but also on a path reminding me that I never walk alone. In that sense, my spiritual recovery became as important as my physical recovery. And it was the asking of questions, and trying my hardest to be patient for the answers, that made the difference.

So what questions do you have for yourself in this Lenten season? What are you wondering, what's making you anxious, what do you dream about? As together we ponder some of the questions asked by those who have gone before us and look for meaning for our own lives today, I invite you to be asking questions for yourself, and to seek ways to listen for and discover the answers that God has in store for you. This is a slow process, a meandering path, but one that can provide a deeper faith in the end. Come and seek.

Midweek Lenten Services

Midweek services during Lent are open to all. A soup supper will be served each week at 5:30 pm with a free will offering. Worship services begin at 6:15 pm. *(There will be no meal during Holy Week on April 5th)*

We are also looking for volunteers to provide cookies for the Wednesday evening meals during lent. Please click on the link or call the office if interested in signing up for a week. <https://signup.com/go/mGirzCa>

With Awe and Love: A Midweek Lenten Service Based on Luther's Small Catechism

Do you ever wonder what happens at Messiah on Wednesday evenings? This Lenten season, come and join us for our midweek services and at the same time, learn a little more about our Middle School Ministries (MSM) program. Best of all, come to help support and care for our young people as they grow in faith and love. (Our young people will have an active role in our services each week!)

Beginning March 1, we will be using a midweek Lenten series that is built around Luther's Small Catechism. During each of their three years in MSM, our students in grades 6-8 learn a portion of this teaching tool of Martin Luther. Perhaps you remember The Small Catechism from your own faith formation activities. The Small Catechism was designed as a teaching tool of the faith, not just within the church but in the home. Luther intended for the home to be the place where faith was first shared and taught. To that end he created the Small Catechism: a simple explanation of the major tenets of our faith. He also included basic prayers for morning and evening, and suggested ways to worship and praise God during each part of our day.

This year in our midweek Lenten services we will explore together five major parts of The Small Catechism: the Ten Commandments, the Creed, The Lord's Prayer, Baptism and Holy Communion. Scripture readings are from the daily lectionary or passages referred to in the Small Catechism itself.

If it sounds like too much drudgery, think again! While our midweek services will allow you to brush up on your Small Catechism you'll also have the opportunity to learn with our young people, and get a taste for how we spend our other Wednesday nights throughout the year. (It might even be fun!)



March Collections

Messiah is supporting **Minnesota Food Share** and asking for monetary and food donations to be collected for ECHO during the month of March. Bring donations of food to church or consider making a cash donation. Simply put March Food Drive in the memo portion of your check and drop it off or mail it to Messiah.

Messiah Food Ministry Volunteer Opportunities

Messiah has committed to volunteer as a congregation for the following organizations. Opportunities exist to make part of a meal or serve at the site. Please see sign-up sheets for the coming month in the narthex. All additional dates through April are listed below.

Crossroads Lunch for a Buck

Crossroads Campus Ministry is for students of all backgrounds and beliefs who need food to sustain them through challenging times. Messiah is looking for volunteers to make food, deliver and serve food.

March 21

April 18

Connections Shelter

The Connections Shelter is an emergency shelter in Mankato that houses men, women, and families. The shelter is open from 6 pm-8 am daily and has a 35-bed capacity with nightly meal.

March 30 & 31

April 21 & 22

If you are unable to help make, serve, or deliver food, please consider a donation to purchase the food.

Council as Leaders

The SEMN Synod is hosting a “Council as Leaders” event on Sunday, March 19th from 1:00-:400 pm at First Lutheran in Albert Lea. The event is also accessible via zoom that day. The afternoon offers a wide range of workshops for congregational staff and leaders on topics such as stewardship, intergenerational ministry, and engaging with ELCA social statements. Anyone wishing to attend, please contact Pastor Trish.

Minnesota River Conference

Messiah will be hosting the Minnesota River Conference rostered leaders gathering on Tuesday, March 21. Our conference covers Blue Earth, LeSueur, Waseca and Steele counties and leaders meet on a monthly basis for a time of worship, education and fellowship.

Via de Cristo Retreat

You’ve heard Pastor Trish talk from time to time about “Via de Cristo” - a three day retreat of spiritual renewal. Weekends begin on Thursday evening and run until Sunday afternoon. The atmosphere is informal and relaxed, and the schedule is built around a series of short talks that encompass the life of a disciple of Christ. Topics include “piety” “study” and “action” as well as the importance of Christian community and learning more about God’s grace. Worship, fellowship, fun and food round out the Spirit-filled weekend guaranteed to leave you recharged and excited about God’s love in your life. The next set of weeks are coming up soon! A men’s weekend will be held March 16-19 and a women’s weekend on March 23-26. Both weekends are held at Zion Lutheran Church in Stewartville. See Pastor Trish for any questions and to get signed up. No cost!

Welcome New Members

We will be welcoming more new members on March 19th. These families include:

Chris & Karissa, Beau, Brooks, Bryanna, & Braxton Baukol

Bonnie and Wayne Gunsolus

Brittany Bowman, Kambrie & Brett Konz

Jim & Nicole, Nolan and Covan Panko

Adam & Angie, Liliana and Brandt Chatleain

Please look for these new members and give them a warm welcome!

Lutheran Men in Mission—Breakfast with the Bishop

Bishop Hassanally will be the keynote speaker for the annual Breakfast With the Bishop. This event is scheduled for Saturday, April 29th at Cabela’s in Owatonna from 9:00—11:00 am. Send reservations and check for \$15.00 per person by Friday, April 22nd to Russell Tesch 906 4th Ave. SE Waseca, MN 56093. If you have any questions, call 507-835-3843 or email marietesch@mchsi.com

Quilting

Mark your calendars! Quilting meets the second and fourth Tuesdays of January, February, March and April from 9:30 am—3:00 pm. The quilts are displayed on Mother’s Day and the Sunday following and then distributed where needed. New faces are always welcome whether you sew or not. There are several phases to finishing a quilt and all are fun to do and can be learned in minutes and lunch is included. Come join our group! Any questions, call Lynn Klaber 387-6172.

Ways to Give Online

1. Scan this QR code: *or*

2. Visit our website at messiahnorthmankato.com

> Click on “OFFERING” on the home-page, or go to the “GIVING” tab

> Choose the amount you’d like to give and the frequency (e.g. one-time, weekly, monthly)

> Make donations by using a credit or debit card, or by using your bank account Know your gift is appreciated and helps support the ministry of Messiah.





Extreme instability propelled this young family to risk everything in a harrowing journey from Nicaragua to the United States. Meet Ariac and Andrea Cruz and their young sons, Randy and Kamil.

While Mankato families slept peacefully, cocooned in their beds completely unaware of the brutal cold and record breaking snow to which they would soon awake, Shellee Hintz sat in her living room anxiously awaiting the middle-of-night arrival of her refugee guests. As the hours passed, she wondered, “Am I ready for them? Do I have the right food? Will they be scared? Will we be able to communicate?”

Her special guests had endured a very long and horrific journey from their home country of Nicaragua to America. Promised housing with a family member who had already settled in the United States, the family was devastated when the invitation was withdrawn. Now what? What will happen to us? Where will we go? Who can help us?

Frantic, they realized that they were literally stranded in an unfamiliar country. The terror of their situation was palatable. It seemed that nobody could help them until they met a kind and gentle social worker. This border employee, on hearing their story, laid the groundwork for them to travel to Minnesota where Shellee and countless other volunteers from five Mankato-based ELCA churches stood ready to help.

At 3 AM, the doorbell rang and in tumbled the exhausted Cruz family.

In the two months since the family arrived, there have been many first-time experiences. They have gone sledding in Spring Lake Park and been swimming at the Y. Special family friends took Randy, age 7, to Underwater World at the Mall of America. Dinner at “King Burger” otherwise known as Burger King, has been a big hit! They marveled at the Kiwanis Christmas lights and absolutely love the snow! Dishwashers, washing machines, furnaces, vacuum cleaners and garage doors mesmerize them!

Refugee Family Update

Ariac, Andrea, Randy and Kamil - the family we are supporting as they seek asylum here in the US - are doing well, thanks to your support! Everyone is in school. Ariac and Andrea are taking English classes at LCC while Kamil is in daycare there, and Randy has started 2nd grade. The rental home will soon be ready, and a garage full of household items are ready to make their house a home. THANK YOU to the many members who have made donations for their home, as well as those who have made financial contributions. More thank yous go out to those of you who are providing transportation for them every day (and coordinating that transportation!) as well as those of you who have helped to ready their new home. They have also journeyed back to St. Paul for their first appearance at Immigration Court, and all went well (again, another thank you for that volunteer responsibility!).

So what's next? The next big thing is an opportunity for all of us to commit to an ongoing financial commitment as the family moves out of their host home and into their own home. Until Ariac and Andrea receive green cards and are able to work, monthly expenses will include rent, utilities, phone, etc. We are also anticipating some legal expenses as they begin the process of seeking asylum. Watch for more details on how you can help in the coming days and once again -

Thank you!

Youth Activities

Sunday School

Mark Your Calendars

March 26— NO Sunday School (Spring Break)

April 2nd — 4th Grade First Communion

April 9th— NO Sunday School (Happy Easter) - Easter Breakfast served from 9:15—10:15 am

April 30th—Prayer Pillow Blessing during worship for Pre-School through 2nd Graders.

4th Graders First Communion Retreat

The First Communion Retreat will be on **Saturday, March 11, 2023**. Invitations have been sent to 4th grade students and parents. It is also open to others who may have missed previous opportunities to attend. On **Sunday, March 12th**, students will want to be sure to come to Sunday School to paint their communion cups. Contact the office to register by February 17th. First Communion will be held at both worship services on Palm Sunday, April 2nd.

Middle School Ministries

MSM During Lent

Midweek Lenten services begin March 1st. Soup supper for all at 5:30 pm and worship services are at 6:15 pm. MSM students will assist with readings and screens etc. during the services each week. After the service each week there will be a short 20-30 minute activity for MSM students that will focus on the theme of the evening. Please stay for that!

8th Grade Affirmation Students

Affirmation students and parents will be receiving a letter very soon regarding important dates and activities in March and April leading up to Affirmation.

April 30th— 8th Grade Affirmation of Baptism

High School Activities

Last Sunday Sessions

Last Sunday Session is scheduled for March 26th at 3 PM. We will meet at church for a service project and some pizza, as well as to plan additional activities for spring and summer.

STEP UP Program

STEP UP is a leadership development resource offered by Gustavus Adolphus College for high school youth who are in grades 9, 10 or 11. The STEP UP day-long workshop introduces youth to college-level concepts of leadership and offers practical tips for developing a stronger personal plan for continuing to grow as a leader. Upon completion, participants receive a certificate from Gustavus Adolphus College acknowledging the completion of the STEP UP leadership curriculum. In addition, students who complete the STEP UP Leadership event and attend Gustavus Adolphus College will be eligible to receive a \$500 annually renewable scholarship (up to \$2000). Date for the Leadership event is March 14, 2023 at Gustavus Adolphus College from 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. CST. Registration fee of \$40 includes, lunch, T-shirt and certificate. Pastor Trish will provide transportation and supervision for anyone wishing to attend. Let her know if you are interested and to sign up. <https://gustavus.edu/churchrelations/stepup/>

Scholarship Application Information

This will be the second year in which the congregation of Messiah will be giving a scholarship to any member of the congregation attending post-secondary education. Please remember, scholarships are not just for our high school seniors – anyone attending or planning to attend a post-secondary institution in 2023 is eligible. The scholarship is a \$250 award, renewable for up to four years/\$1000 total. Deadline March 1st.

SCHOLARSHIP INFO AND FORMS AVAILABLE ONLINE—<https://www.messiahnorthmankato.com/club1706>

CHURCH COUNCIL

February Highlights

Stewardship & Finance would like to share a new way of looking at offerings. Each month, in the bulletin, we will compare our current giving with an average of the past two years. For January 2023, we received \$45,245 which includes \$21,200 prepaid in December for 2023. The average of 2021-2022 was \$46,300 including prepaid dollars.

The council approved the following benevolences will be given for January-March: \$600 to Campus Cupboard, \$200 MN River Conference, \$200 to Green Lake Lutheran Ministries, \$400 to A Fresh Start, and \$400 to ECHO Food Shelf. Road map goals were reviewed, an update was given on the Cruz family, and discussions were had regarding the HVAC and parking lot re-pavement that need to be considered.

Next council meeting will be Sunday, March 12 after the late worship.

Worship Participants and Communion Assistants

If you are unable to serve as scheduled please call the church office or Linda Wenkel (345-6180) to identify a substitute or get help finding a substitute. Thank you!

	<u>8:30 am</u>	<u>10:30 am</u>
3/5	Ushers: Greg Ous & Ron Leiferman Reader: Diane Halvorson Comm: Judy Funk & Cheryl Christofferson	Mark Gulden & Karla Elmore Samantha Erickson Sheryl Gulden & Dee Nolan
3/12	Ushers: Greg Ous & Ron Leiferman Reader: Janet Jones Comm: Renee & Greg Guyer	Mark Gulden & Karla Elmore April Rosendale Jim Jilek
3/19	Ushers: Les Altenburg & Scott Madigan Reader: Linda Wenkel Comm: Amy & Jeremy Soost	Peter Skadahh & Bob Rothenbuehler Jeff Pribyl Swede Mundell & Jan Waller
3/26	Ushers: Les Altenburg & Scott Madigan Reader: Steve Lenz Comm: Elaine Fossen & Diane Halvorson	Peter Skadahh & Bob Rothenbuehler Shirley Rosenau Deb & Frank Steichen
	<u>8:30 am</u>	<u>10:30 am</u>
4/2	Ushers: Rande Bowman & Kyle Vogt Reader: Renee Guyer Comm: Sarah & Greg Suskovic	Cory Merrill & Tim Hatlestad Sandy Hatlestad Shawna Merrill & Judy Spencer
4/9	Ushers: Rande Bowman & Kyle Vogt Reader: Amy Soost Comm: Marilyn Hanson & Linda Wenkel	Jon Karau, Jeran Karau, Amos Tokheim Eva Borneke Marlene Buker & Darci Karau
4/16	Ushers: Steve Lenz & Kim Henrickson Reader: Greg Suskovic Comm: Janet Jones & Cheryl Christofferson	Bill Halstead & Jim Jilek Jeff Pribyl Phyllis & Peter Skadahh
4/23	Ushers: Steve Lenz & Kim Henrickson Reader: Chuck Dulas Comm: Renee & Greg Guyer	Bill Halstead & Jim Jilek Joan Klanderud Cindy & Bob Rothenbuehler
	<u>8:30 am</u>	<u>10:00 am</u>
4/30	Messiah Worships United at 10:00 am	Ushers: Dave Dahl & Dan Pesonen Reader: Lisa Benson Comm: Deb & Frank Steichen

March 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 9:00 am SEE Bible Study 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:15 pm Lenten Worship 7:00 pm MSM Class time	2 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 9:00 am SAIL Group 10:00 am Monarch Meadows 5:00 pm Bible Study	3 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Pastor Trish @ Synod Candidacy Retreat </div>	4
5 8:30 am Traditional Worship (FB also) 9:15 am Sunday School 10:30 am Contemporary Worship (band)	6 9:00 am SAIL Group	7 1:30 pm Staff Meeting	8 9:00 am SEE Bible Study 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:15 pm Lenten Worship 7:00 pm MSM Class time	9 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 9:00 am SAIL Group 5:00 pm Bible Study 6:30 pm Immigration Mtg	10	11 9:00 am—12:30 pm First Communion Retreat
12 8:30 am Traditional Worship (FB also) 9:15 am Sunday School (<i>First Comm. Students Paint Cups</i>) 10:30 am Contemporary Worship (band) 11:30 am Council Meeting	13 9:00 am SAIL Group 2:00 pm Private Meeting	14 9:30 am Quilting 1:30 pm Staff Meeting	15 9:00 am SEE Bible Study 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:15 pm Lenten Worship 7:00 pm MSM Class time	16 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 9:00 am SAIL Group 5:00 pm Bible Study	17	18
19 8:30 am Traditional Worship (FB also) 9:15 am Sunday School 10:30 am Contemporary Worship (band) 6:30 pm Cub Scout Meeting	20 9:00 am SAIL Group	21 9:30 am MN River Conference Gathering 10:45 am Deliver and Serve Food for Crossroads 11:00 am Private Meeting 1:30 pm Staff Meeting	22 9:00 am SEE Bible Study 2:30 pm Oak Terrace Worship 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:15 pm Lenten Worship 7:00 pm MSM Class time	23 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 9:00 am SAIL Group 5:00 pm Bible Study	24	25
26 8:30 am Traditional Worship (FB also) 9:15 am NO Sunday School 10:30 am Contemporary Worship (band)	27 9:00 am SAIL Group	28 9:30 am Quilting 1:30 pm Staff Meeting	29 9:00 am SEE Bible Study 5:30 pm Soup Supper 6:15 pm Lenten Worship 7:00 pm MSM Class time	30 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 9:00 am SAIL Group 5:00 pm Bible Study 5:45 pm Serve @ Connections	31 5:45 pm Serve @ Connections	



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Label

www.messiahnorthmankato.com



“Sharing the Love of Jesus...”

Please Pray For...

In our thoughts and prayers: Ben K, Craig V, Earl W, Judy F, Arthur H, Sally M, Debbie S, Mike F, Heather S, Trudy N, Mike T, Logan, Mollie D, Tom F, Linda R, Carolyn L, Bonnie O, Patty A, Neal L, Wanda C, Katelyn S, Ruby M, Bonnie G

Those who serve our country: Dan P, Carley, Alex

Prayers for the refugee family we are assisting: Ariac, Andrea, Randy, and Kamil

Prayers of Sympathy to the family and friends of Suzanne Holland on her death.

Prayers of Sympathy to the family and friends of Cheech Middleton on her death.

From Pastor Trish

Many, many thanks for all the prayers, cards, texts and get well wishes that you have bestowed on me during recovery from knee surgery. It is much appreciated! I'm happy to be out and about once again, although it will likely be a few more weeks before I am back to my pre-surgery schedule. Thank you as well for your patience with me as I achieve my new normal. Your care and concern means more than you know.

Holy Week Calendar

April 2nd—Palm Sunday and First Communion @ 8:30 am & 10:30 am

April 6th—Maundy Thursday @ 6:15 pm

April 7th—Good Friday @ 6:15 pm

April 9th—Easter Sunday @ 8:30 am & 10:30 am and Easter Breakfast served from 9:15—10:15 am