

# LIFETIMES

February 2026

## From the Pastor



*Kai Nilsen*  
Senior Pastor

There are many ways to evaluate the vitality of a Jesus-following community — inspiring worship, the quality and depth of relationships, the desire and ability to co-create a more loving world, both in close relationships and in our love for the neighbor and stranger. I sense a growing capacity for all of that at Incarnation.

Another indicator is our willingness to be generous with our money. Martin Luther is said to have talked about three great transformations in our spiritual journey—the head, the heart, and the pocketbook. Even in the 16th Century, the use of our money and possessions was a deeply spiritual issue. How much more in our intensely consumeristic and money-obsessed culture?

With that in mind, I want to commend this community for your growth in giving these past years. For me, that's a wonderful indicator of growth. The Apostle Paul listed generosity as one of the fruits of the Spirit. When the Spirit of God is alive within God's people, we become more generous. Well done!

In 2025, your generosity was apparent across our ministry.

- *Operating Budget:* After being behind by almost \$200,000 at the end of October, we ended the year over \$100,000 ahead, giving almost 8% more for our ongoing ministry than we did in 2024.
- *Ministry Partnerships:* Both the overall number of volunteers and the money given for our ministry partners (our “Church Outside the Walls”) grew in 2025. A total of \$412,000 went out from Incarnation to our ministry partners. Add to that total the number of bags of groceries, winter wear, and welcome baskets for families transitioning to a permanent home. In partnership, we are co-creating a better, more loving world.
- *Building for Our Future:* Through 2024 and 2025, we have received over \$2.55 million of the \$2.7 million we will need by the end of 2026! These gifts support our new staffing for seniors and young adults, ministry partnership funding, new windows in the offices, a new roof, and a solar field that helps us care for God's gift of creation.

You might think, “That's just dollars!” It's not. It's one of the ways the spirit of God is expanding the souls and spirits of this community. Keep open to what God can do through you and through us in this new season and beyond.

Peace, Kai



*Ted Trahan  
Council President*

The year 2026 is the year of the Fire Horse. Each year of the Chinese Zodiac celebrates an animal and one of the five elements: wood, fire, earth, metal, or water. This is such a different way of thinking about expectations for the new year from how I grew up as part German, part Cajun, and part Texan. Other cultures different from my own have much to offer, from language and dress to traditions to ways of thinking about the world. I feel richer for my exposure to them. I was introduced to lefse by marrying a Minnesotan!

February is the month of our **annual meeting**, and this year the meeting will be held at **11:30 am on February 22, 2026**. This is a time to update on all the great “Church inside the Walls and Church outside the walls” going on at Incarnation over the last year, and to look forward to what’s coming up in 2026. Among the business items being discussed is the 2026 budget. I invite all confirmed members to participate. The meeting will be held in-person and via Zoom immediately after the 10:30 am worship service. The Zoom link will be sent in a future communication. If you regularly attend the 9:00 am service and have time at church prior to the meeting, consider attending the Kairos session. **Rebecca Bergman** will speak on “Reflections of a Recovering ELCA College President”.

Interested in a preview of the annual meeting? The council is hosting its **first quarter council forum** at 7:00 pm on Thursday, February 19. The forum will provide a smaller (Zoom) setting if you are interested in more discussion on a topic. The Zoom link for the forum is listed below.

**Christine Ventrelli, Amy Faymoville, and Heather Hoecke** completed the transition of Incarnation's financial data to QuickBooks. Talk about Fire Horse energy! With this change, reconciliation is more automated, and the finance team can drill down in the financial reports to transaction-level detail.

Our new council members, Rebecca Bergman and Matt Cambronne, were installed at the January council meeting. In addition, the council approved the slate of officers for this year.

President: Ted Trahan  
Vice President: Sheri Hansen  
Treasurer: Steve McCormack  
Secretary: Katie Solfest

I am excited to work with this great team in 2026. I am also eager to work with the staff and the congregation as we grow a culture that follows the example of Jesus, regardless of what zodiac we're in!

## Financial Report

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### *Finance Report December 2025*

December Actual Operating & Mortgage Revenue	\$372,183	YTD Actual Ops & Mortgage Revenue	\$2,796,427	YTD Budgeted Operating & Mortgage Revenue	\$2,707,756
December Actual Operating & Mortgage Expense	\$262,736	YTD Actual Ops & Mortgage Expense	\$2,694,848	YTD Budgeted Operating & Mortgage Expense	\$2,700,229
OPERATING TOTALS	\$109,448		\$101,579		\$7,527



*Joy McDonald Colvet  
Pastor for Faith Formation*

## **Tell Me Something Good: Grounding ourselves in the Good News this Lent**

Lent was originally a season for those new to faith to learn and prepare for their baptism at Easter. During that time, they would study what was central to Christianity. What are the core, foundational parts of Jesus' life and ministry? What makes it good news? Can we trust that the good news is truly good, even when it challenges us?



The good news brings us back to our roots, back to what grounds us: loving our neighbor, caring for the vulnerable, pursuing justice and mercy, and resting in God's unending grace. The good news grows like a mustard seed that flourishes rapidly into a tree to shelter the birds. It sounds like children laughing. It feels like feet washed with tender care. The good news is alive in the world. When we are grounded in the good news, the goodness of God can infinitely flourish and grow.

We hope this series will provide fertile ground for conversation and worship, rooting our hearts and lives in the expansive goodness of God. This Lent, may the teachings of Jesus lead us forward. Let the good news ground us. And let that good news inspire us to take action in a world desperate to hear, see and taste what is good.

### **Lent Begins With Two Opportunities for Worship:**

**Ash Wednesday, February 18, Noon or 7:00 PM.**

Our theme on Ash Wednesday:



We'll continue with this theme—**Tell Me Something Good: Grounding ourselves in the Good News this Lent**—on Sunday mornings.

### **Wednesday Soup Supper & Evening Prayer for five weeks, beginning February 25**

On Wednesday evenings, beginning on February 25, we'll share in Lent Soup suppers followed by Lent Evening Prayer at 7:00 PM. Are you interested in volunteering for the Lent Soup suppers? Watch for more details, a Sign-Up Genius link and opportunities to serve—all coming soon.

I look forward to sharing in the good news with you this Lent.

Blessings,  
Pastor Joy

## Holy Week and Easter

Maundy Thursday – April 2, 6:00 pm

Good Friday – April 3, 7:00 pm

Easter Sunday – April 5, 8:00 am, 9:30 am and 11:00 am

## Lent Soup Suppers

You're invited to join in Lent Soup Suppers (soups, sandwiches, crackers & dessert) each Wednesday starting February 25 to March 25

5:30 - 6:45 pm

## Greetings and Happy New Year from the Music Department!



Sean Turner  
Minister of Worship,  
Music & the Arts

We are settling back into our routines and eagerly looking forward to all of the wonderful musical experiences ahead! I am very grateful for the overwhelming support of this community and the value it places on music as a vehicle for spiritual growth.

We have already had inquiries as to whether or not people can join the various ensembles we have available at this “mid-year” time. Absolutely! If you are interested in participating in bell choirs or Prime Chimers, please contact Amy Maakestad ([amaakestad@incarnationmn.org](mailto:amaakestad@incarnationmn.org)). If you are interested in the Joyful Noise children’s choir, please contact Kathleen Johnson ([kjohnson@incarnationmn.org](mailto:kjohnson@incarnationmn.org)). If you are interested in Senior Choir, Brass Ensemble, or have other questions about ways to be involved musically at Incarnation, please contact me ([sturner@incarnationmn.org](mailto:sturner@incarnationmn.org)).

We eagerly anticipate witnessing how the gift of music will impact the lives of our congregation and guests in 2026!

See you in worship!

Sean

## The Wall O' Money—Support Our Youth on Their Summer Mission



Stop by the Wall O' Money board in the atrium after worship over the next two Sundays (February 1 and 8) and help support our youth as they prepare for their summer mission trips.

Students will be there to share about where they are going, the ministry they are invited to be part of, and how your financial support can help make these trips possible.

So come and connect with our youth, hear firsthand about their summer service trips, and partner with them in this meaningful ministry.

## New Eagle Scouts from Troop 9416 Honored

Six New Eagle Scouts from Shoreview Troop 9416 were honored with a ceremony on December 23, 2025, at Incarnation Lutheran Church (ILC). The following Scouts were recognized: Xander Daire, Pierson Willmert, Elijah Englund, Wyatt Erwin, Jordan Erwin, and Wade Miller. These Scouts achieved the rank of Eagle, the highest rank in Scouting America, in 2024 or 2025. Each Scout completed at least 21 merit badges, held leadership positions, demonstrated

outdoor skills, followed the Scout Oath and the Scout Law, and completed a service project to the benefit of the community. Only approximately 4% of Scouts earn the rank of Eagle Scout. These Scouts' names have been added to Troop 9416's Eagle Scout Plaque. The Eagle Plaque can be viewed near Door 3. For more information or if you are interested in Scouting, email Wes Erwin, Scoutmaster, at [wes\\_e@hotmail.com](mailto:wes_e@hotmail.com)



A poster for a First Communion workshop. The background is a wooden wall. The text is as follows:

*first*  
**Communion**

**Sunday, March 1 | 1pm-3pm | Fireside Lounge**

*Children of all ages along with a parent are invited to join us for a  
First Communion Workshop.*

QR code



## You're Invited: Esther Circle February Meeting

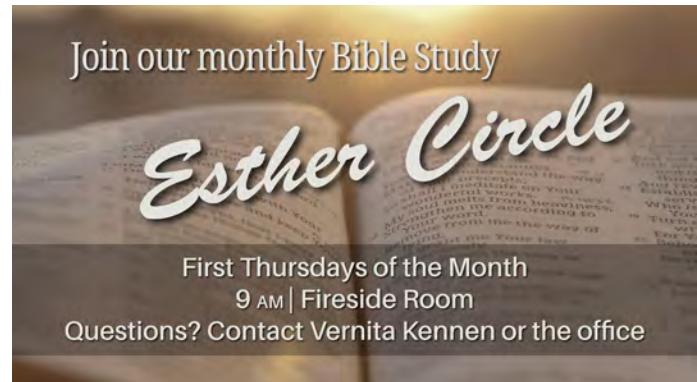
Join the women of the Esther Circle this month for coffee, conversation, and community! Whether you're a longtime member or new to the area, you are most welcome.

**When: Thursday, February 5 at 9:00 AM**

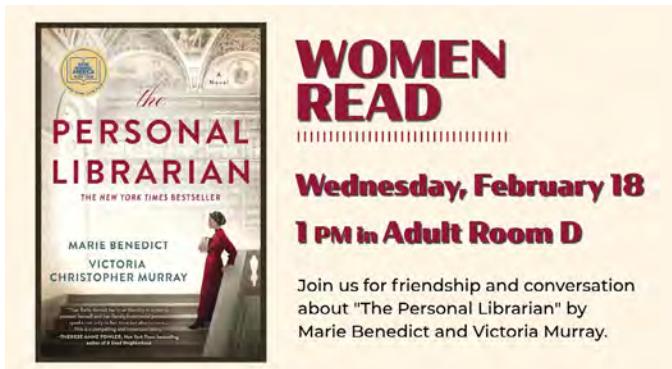
**Where: The Fireside Room**

**What: We'll enjoy morning treats followed by a Bible study using Gather magazine.**

You don't need to be a member of Incarnation to attend—just a woman looking to grow in faith and friendship. We hope to see you there!



## Women Read



Next meeting: Wednesday, February 18  
1:00 PM in Adult Room D

Belle da Costa Greene was J. P. Morgan's personal librarian. She was also a Black woman who had to pass as white to leave a lasting legacy that enriched our nation.

## Senior Ministry News: Well-Being Wednesdays Kicks Off with Creativity



**Patty Nilsen**  
Senior Ministry Leader

**Well-BEING Wednesdays** kicks off with *creativity*, which has mental, emotional, cognitive, & social benefits.

- Reduces stress & anxiety
- Improves mood
- Builds resilience
- Improves focus
- Deepens connections
- Supports brain health



Come paint with us — no prior experience necessary!

Spend a couple of hours with friends and explore your God-given creativity. All supplies (easels, brushes, paint, canvases, etc.) are provided and Sarah Geesey, who brings 25 years of experience teaching art, will give you step by step instruction. You'll be proud to bring home your masterpiece!

**When: Wednesday, February 4 from 1-3 PM**

**Cost: \$35 each payable day of the event with cash, check, or Venmo.**

**Reservations:** Spots are limited and reservation is required. Email Patty Nilsen ([pnilsen@incarnationmn.org](mailto:pnilsen@incarnationmn.org)) or call the church office at 651-484-7213 to reserve your spot. Thank you!

## PrimeTimers Presents: Get Ready to Spring into Gardening!

**PRIMETIMERS**



PRIMETIMERS EVENTS

Spring into Gardening with Mark Armstead, gardening expert from Beisswenger's!

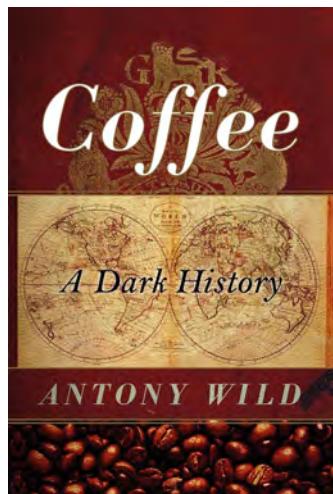
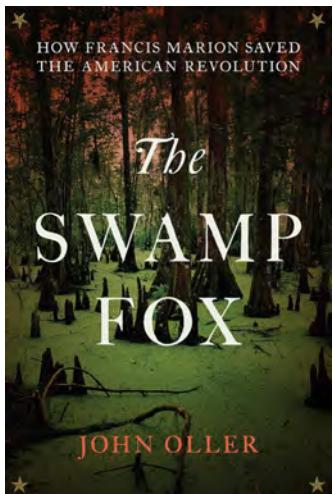
### Get Ready to Spring into Gardening!

**Thursday, February 26, 10:30 a.m.**

Do you have questions about growing plants in small spaces? Mark Armstead, gardening expert from Beisswenger's Hardware Store, is here to help! Learn how to make the most of containers, small decks, and areas with limited light. Come get inspired—and turn even the tiniest spot into a garden oasis.

- **Thursday, February 26, 2026**
- **Doors open: 10:00 AM**
- **Program starts: 10:30 AM**
- **Lunch: 11:30 AM | \$10 (payable at the door)**

Don't forget to reserve your lunch spot—please give Julie Durbin a call by **Monday, February 23**, at 651-484-7213 to sign up.



The Men's History Group meets on the *first* and *third* Tuesdays at 9 AM in Bethany Lounge to discuss a non-fiction history book selected by one of the members. Anyone interested in the subject is invited to attend any session, even if you have not read the book of that month. Here are the next books:

**FEBRUARY** — *“The Swamp Fox: How Francis Marion Saved the American Revolution”* by John Oller. The story of a militia army in South Carolina that disrupted the British “southern strategy”.

**MARCH** — *“Coffee: A Dark History”* by Antony Wild. The 500-year history of coffee and its fascinating link to alchemy, anthropology, politics, religion, and science.

For more information, contact Jerry Gilbert at [dacta49@msn.com](mailto:dacta49@msn.com).

## Among the Congregation

**PUBLIC PRAYER CONCERNS:** George Aram; Bonnie Traver; Dottie House; Carlos Rodriguez; Joan Volkmann; Erin Holmen; Deb Rykken; Karen Stauder; Kara Genia & family; Jon Nelson; Kate Tollefson & family; Carol Beckerleg; Marian Ness; Lowell Odland; Linda Hudepohl; Tim Gray's sister; Katie Gray's daughter, Erin; Mike & Kara Johnson's son & daughter-in-law; Kathleen Erno's brother-in-law & niece; Nicole & Troy Heller's brother-in-law; Kay Leerssen's daughter; Tom Henk's brother; Deb Rykken's brother; Sue Bernlohr's mother; Mike Wielenberg's mother; Al and Carolyn Ek's son; Nancy Haugen's friends David, Michelle & family and Colette & family; Kim Wielenberg's friend, Cindy; Dede Mattison's friends, Allan and Yvonne; caregivers

**SYMPATHY TO:** the family of Marlys J. Nelson on her death; Mary Gustafson & family on the death; Pastor Kai Nilsen, Patty & family on the death of their brother-in-law; Cindy Schlafmann Olson & family on the death of her father; the family of Ed Hagen on his death; Toni Stedman and family on the death of Charlie Peterson; Mary Cooper & family on the death of her father; Duane McEwen & family on the death of his brother; Lorinda Mishek & family on the death of her mother; the family of Bob Fischer on his death

## You Made Families Feel at Home



Thank you for your generous donations of household items and financial support for our January Welcome Basket drive for the families at Solid Ground.

Because of your continued support, Solid Ground was able to provide Welcome Baskets to all families who moved in last year and will continue to meet the needs of more families this year. Your donations do more than furnish homes — they offer comfort, hope, and a sense of belonging during a time of major transition. Thanks to you, families are able to begin their new lives with greater stability and warmth.

Solid Ground is deeply grateful for our ongoing partnership, and the impact of your contributions continues to be felt by families in our community.

Welcome to the 2025-2026 Kairos season. The Kairos logo, the Jerusalem cross, is a universal symbol for Kairos/God's time. Kairos sessions will be held at 10:15 AM in the Fireside Room.



*Presenter: Nicholas Schaser,  
Assistant Professor of Religious  
Studies, Macalester College*

## February 1

### **Jesus, Judaism and Jewish-Christian Relations**

Many Christians know that “Jesus was a Jew,” but fewer spend the time to learn how Jesus’s Jewishness is relevant to Christian faith. Yet when we begin to understand the Jewish nature of Jesus and the New Testament texts about him, we gain a much clearer view of both his message and mission.

Approaching Jesus from a Jewish perspective offers new ways of reading Scripture, fresh insights into the meaning of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection, and constructive avenues for healthy relations between Jews and Christians today.

At Macalester, Schaser teaches Jewish history and literature, including the New Testament. He speaks widely in both churches and synagogues and is dedicated to fostering religious discourse and understanding between Jews and Christians.



*Presenter: Theresa Halvorson-Lee,  
Director, Department of Indian  
Work at Interfaith Action of Greater  
Saint Paul*

## February 8

### **Walking in Partnership: The Department of Indian Work’s Legacy, Impact & Vision for Community Healing**

The Department of Indian Work (DIW) has served Native families in Ramsey County for over 70 years, providing culturally grounded programs that honor Indigenous teachings and address essential needs, including food access, youth enrichment, diabetes education, and economic mobility.

Halvorson-Lee will share DIW’s current work, community impact, and the ongoing call to walk alongside Native families with respect and understanding to heal and grow together. This topic is important for Lutheran Christians because it highlights how faith-based partnerships can support justice, healing, and relationship-building with Indigenous communities, rooted in humility, listening, and shared responsibility.

As DIW Director, Halvorson-Lee oversees four core program areas: Emergency Services (food shelf & clothing closet), American Indian Youth Enrichment, the Family Education Diabetes Series (FEDS), and the Economic Mobility Hub. Her leadership focuses on culturally grounded service delivery, strategic partnerships, and strengthening economic stability and wellness for Native families across the State.



*Presenter: Anne Leland, Executive Director of Exodus Lending*

## February 15

### **Exodus Lending: The new face of extractive lending and what we can do about it!**

At Exodus Lending, we believe Minnesotans deserve real financial relief, not more traps disguised as empowerment. After a successful 2023 legislative win that eliminated storefront payday lenders in MN, we're now up against a louder and more resourced industry working to evade MN laws.

Predatory lenders have moved from the visible street corners—where their harmful patterns were out in the open—to operating almost entirely online and through apps on a phone. These online “fintech” players parade around the halls of our capitol as the heroes solving “cash flow challenges” and “credit access gaps” when they are just the new face of payday lending, quietly fraying the already precarious financial health of hard-working Minnesotans.

Prior to her Exodus Lending leadership, Leland worked as the Financial Capability + Learning Director at Prepare + Prosper where she designed and supported financial coaching and inclusion programs. She holds a master's degree in public policy from Humphrey School of Public Affairs.



*Presenter: Rebecca Bergman, retired Gustavus Adolphus President*

## February 22

### **Reflections from a Recovering ELCA College President**

Bergman will share her journey as the 17th president of Gustavus and the first woman to hold that position. During that time, the college experienced both opportunities for growth and change and daunting challenges.

Her tenure has been recognized for generating over \$400 million in documented philanthropic support for the College, driving academic innovation, and leading three major building projects on campus.

She will also offer insights into college and college students today, and what makes the 27 ELCA higher education institutions in the U.S. impactful in our communities and our world.

Her non-traditional path to college leadership included 26 years at Medtronic, Inc., where she held senior executive positions in research and development and was closely involved in long-term strategic planning. She is currently serving on the Incarnation Congregation Council.

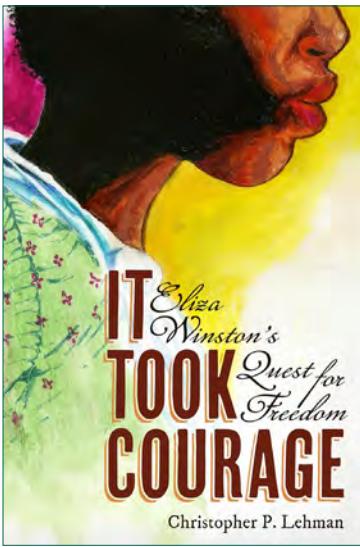
## Thrivent Choice® Dollars

Thank you to those who directed their **Thrivent Choice® Dollars** to Incarnation in 2025.

Together, you were able to donate \$4,016.00 to benefit our Operating budget. We are so very grateful for the additional financial support.

If you would like to direct **Thrivent Choice® Dollars** in 2026, please visit Thrivent's website for more information:

<https://www.thrivent.com/about-us/membership/thrivent-choice>



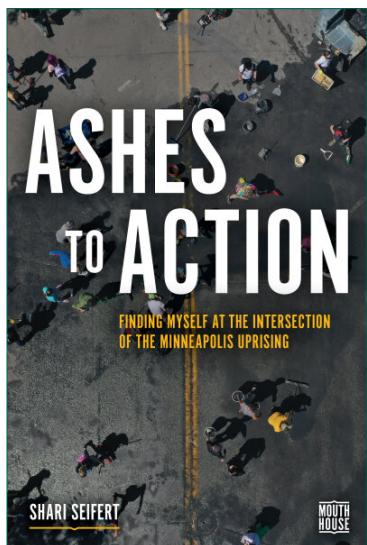
## It Took Courage: Eliza Winston's Quest for Freedom

### By Christopher Lehman

In 1860, Eliza Winston escaped enslavement while traveling in Minnesota, where she secured her freedom through legal appeal. Her story adds powerful testimony to African American experiences and perseverance in antebellum America.

On August 22, 1860, an enslaved woman from Mississippi named Eliza Winston petitioned for her freedom before a judge in Minnesota—and she won. After she left the state for Canada, the abolitionists who had helped her told and retold the story, emphasizing their own actions; their detractors claimed they had used Winston as a pawn. For more than 150 years, historians' accounts have emphasized the mobs who battled in the streets after the ruling, focusing on the implications of the events for Minnesota politics rather than Winston's own story. In *It Took Courage*, Christopher P. Lehman helps set the record straight.

The survival of the remarkable story of Eliza Winston's battle for individual freedom is an important contribution to the larger understanding of what slavery meant on this continent and how it affected individual lives in both North and South. Winston's experience demonstrates the lengths to which a person would go to escape slavery, attempting to work both outside and inside the flawed and inequitable laws of the time, until finally receiving justice. If the traditional accounts relied on stereotypical depictions of Winston as "simple-minded," Lehman's skillful description portrays Winston as a capable, mature woman who understood her life and her values. Eliza Winston herself made the bold decision to leave behind everything she had known for an uncertain but free future.



## Ashes to Action

### By Shari Seifert

Shari Seifert's small book, *Ashes to Action*, is subtitled "Finding Myself at the Intersection of the Minneapolis Uprising" and is appropriate as we are now five years from the murder of George Floyd. Seifert works as a realtor but also works to dismantle racism in the ELCA. She serves as the president of the European Descent Lutheran Association for Racial Justice and is a member of Calvary Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. She is also part of the community at George Floyd Square.

Calvary Lutheran is only one block away from 38th and Chicago, so this is a recounting, a first-person narrative of what happened in her life and in that of Calvary Lutheran in the days, weeks, and months following Floyd's death. It is a very personal story, but also the story of how a congregation can be a place that listens to a community and responds to its needs in a variety of ways. It's a book where "showing up" is important — and where telling the story becomes important, too.

## Volunteer Registration is Now Open!

Incarnation Lutheran Church will be hosting the 19th Feed My Starving Children All Hands on Hope MobilePackTM from April 22-26, 2026. During this time, over 2,000 volunteers from our church community and beyond will be welcomed to pack 614,304 meals, which will feed 1,683 kids for one year. We are seeking individual and corporate donations of \$180,000 to fund the meals we plan to pack.

[Feed My Starving Children \(FMSC\)](#) was founded in 1987 and is a Christian non-profit organization dedicated to seeing all of God's children whole in body and spirit. This is accomplished by providing nutritionally complete meals specifically formulated for malnourished children.

Donations fund the meal ingredients, and volunteers hand-pack the meals. Meals are donated to FMSC food partners around the world who handle distribution. Kids are fed, and lives are saved!

We are pleased to announce that volunteer registration is now open. Simply visit the [volunteer registration page](#) and select one or more packing shifts that work for your schedule. There are a variety of volunteer shifts to meet busy schedules. This is a fun and meaningful community event that welcomes everyone to help feed God's hungry kids around the world. Gather up family members, friends, small groups, co-workers, or members of your civic organization to spend 2 hours of your time making a difference. Volunteers range in age from 5 to 95, and there are many different jobs available for all abilities, including seated jobs. Keep in mind that shifts fill up quickly; don't wait to save your spot today.



If you are interested in making a financial contribution, please follow one of the steps below. Just \$106 feeds a child for one year!

- Visit the [Event Donation Page](#) on the FMSC website.
- Donate via check and mail or drop off at Incarnation. Please put "FMSC MobilePack" in the memo line.
- Use [Incarnation's secured donation site](#). Select your donation amount and use the drop-down menu to select "Feed My Starving Children".
- If you are currently making an ongoing monthly donation directly to Feed My Starving Children, you can easily direct that to the 2026 MobilePack by following the steps below:
- Call FMSC at 763-504-2919
- Ask the representative to direct your donations to event number 2604-038EA
- Any future donations will be allocated to the 2026 MobilePack
- If you are a Thrivent Member and applied for a [Thrivent Action Team grant](#) of \$250, your Action Team card can be applied to this MobilePack. Mail or drop off at Incarnation.
- Your employer might double or triple your giving! A [list of companies that provide matching programs can be found here](#). Consider applying for matching dollars using the event number 2604-038EA.

To stay up to date on all FMSC news, sign up for Incarnations weekly worship emails, follow us on the social media channels below, or visit our [web page](#).

Facebook: @IncarnationMobilePack  
Instagram: @fmsc\_at\_incarnation



Welcome to the Creation Care Corner, information from the Creation Care Action Group. Our hope is to keep you informed about Creation Care projects at Incarnation as well as provide ideas and resources for your own journey in creating a more sustainable world. If you have questions or suggestions, please contact Nancy Stutzman at [nancystutzman@comcast.net](mailto:nancystutzman@comcast.net) or Mike Vant at [mjvant@gmail.com](mailto:mjvant@gmail.com)

## Today's Topic: Microplastics

# 10 things to know about MICROPLASTICS

**Microplastics are everywhere**  
water, soil, air, food, human body...

**They mostly come from**  
everyday plastic use

**Plastic lasts for centuries**  
and accumulates over time

**Microplastics travel** through air and water,  
across borders, and circulate globally

**Living organisms eat microplastics,**  
which can block digestion and interfere with reproduction

**Microplastics carry toxic chemicals and microbes**  
— they absorb heavy metals, pesticides, and harmful bacteria

**Human health impacts are still uncertain, but concerning**  
— evidence suggests cellular damage, immune system stress, and hormone disruption

**Recycling alone**  
cannot solve the problem

**Global plastics production is increasing;**  
microplastic creation is accelerating

**Reducing plastics use, especially**  
single-use plastic, is most effective

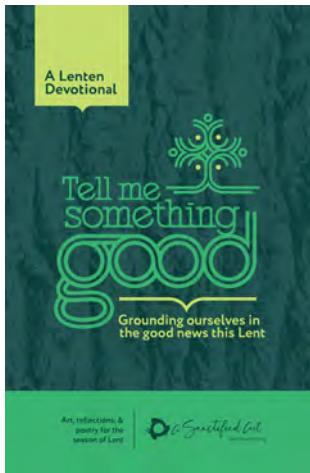




# INCARNATION

## SMALL GROUPS

### Small Groups in Lent



#### Tell Me Something Good: Grounding Ourselves in the Good News This Lent

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The good news brings us back to our roots, back to what grounds us: loving our neighbor, caring for the vulnerable, pursuing justice and mercy, and resting in God's unending grace. The good news grows like a mustard seed that flourishes rapidly into a tree to shelter the birds. It sounds like children laughing. It feels like feet washed with tender care. The good news is alive in the world. When we are grounded in the good news, the goodness of God can infinitely flourish and grow.

We hope this series will provide fertile ground for conversation and worship, rooting our hearts and lives in the expansive goodness of God. This Lent, may the teachings of Jesus lead us forward. Let the good news ground us. And let that good news inspire us to take action in a world desperate to hear, see, and taste what is good.

Want a preview of the devotional resource to consider using it in your Small Group?

Our friends at A Sanctified Art have provided a special e-reader version of this year's Lenten devotional, which you can access on your computer and mobile devices: [online.flippingbook.com/view/546389771/](http://online.flippingbook.com/view/546389771/) In order to protect their work, please refrain from sharing this link or posting it on social media.

#### Moms of Young Adults — A New Small Group

For moms with "kids" in late high school, college, or early to late 20s. Join us once a month for meaningful discussion and reflection as we navigate the exciting season of launching our children into adulthood while reimagining our own lives. Together, we'll explore how to embrace new opportunities as our nests empty and discover fresh ways to grow in faith and purpose. Enjoy discussion and relationship-building with other moms experiencing a similar stage of life.

Small Group Leaders: Melanie Ahlstrom & Tracy Strantz

Second Tuesday of the month, 6:30–8 PM at Incarnation (launching in February 2026).

#### Hope Comes in Small Actions

If you've been wanting to be more involved but weren't quite sure where to begin, this small group is for you. We'll dive into a treasure trove of helpful resources, information, and materials for peaceful actions. The best part? Many actions can be done in the comfort of your home rather than protesting in the MN cold! Two local "everyday activists" will join us. They'll share personal stories, give you a peek into how and why, and offer encouragement to find your own path to Hope. Our goal is to show how even the smallest actions can leave you feeling a sense of emotional high. Together we can create Hope in a time when it is most needed.

Small Group Leaders: Connie Wikman and Patti Williams

If you missed this group in late January and are interested in a future group, please contact Connie and Patti.



### Parents Small Group

This Small Group's purpose is to gather parents of young (and growing) children to grow in faith together, build relationships, and share conversations about the joys and challenges of parenting. We will dig into God's living word, share ideas, and explore how to form faith together with our children and as a family. All are welcome, including Incarnation Preschool families and those worshiping at Incarnation who have a preschooler. Dates are set to match evenings when there is a pizza supper (5-6 pm) or a Lent meal (5:30-6:45 pm).

ILCKids/Childcare is available for participants of this Small Group with advance registration—to register for childcare, see the link and QR code below.

Wednesdays, 6-7 pm on the following dates: January 28 (pizza), February 4 (pizza), February 25 (Lent), March 4 (Lent), March 25 (Lent), April 8 (pizza), April 29

Small Group Leader: Caleb Cordes

<https://onrealm.org/IncarnationLuth/PublicRegistrations/>



*Save the date!*

**Small Groups Leaders Gathering**  
**Saturday, February 28, 11 am to 1 pm**  
**Grace Hall at Incarnation Lutheran Church**