

Crown of Glory Lutheran Church

# CROWNICLE

Lent / Spring 2023

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## *Seeking God's Wisdom*

Friends in Christ,

The season of Lent is almost upon us. This liturgical season is like other seasons in the church year because it is a holy and sacred time in our lives of faith. However, Lent is also set apart in different ways. The season of Lent is both a solitary and communal time. Lent is a journey that begins on Ash Wednesday where we receive ashes on our forehead as a reminder of our shortcomings and ends on Palm Sunday, the day that Jesus begins his final steps towards the cross. During Lent, we are invited to look deeply at our patterns and behaviors and consider how fragile and finite our lives truly are.

During this sacred season of looking inward, we seek God's wisdom to better understand ourselves, the people around us, and the world that God has made. This Lent, we invite you to join us each weekend in worship on Saturday and Sunday as we journey through the theme of "The Ways of Wisdom." Our theme for Lent comes from the choral hymn, *Come and Seek the Ways of Wisdom* (ACS 971), which has been arranged by our Director of Music and Worship, Tom Paulson.

Throughout Lent, we will not only sing *Come and Seek the Ways of Wisdom*, but we will also look deeply into the ways that we seek God's Wisdom by focusing on a new experiential theme each week. You are invited to come and take this holy and sacred journey together in faith. Instead of our normal practice of reading the Gospel each weekend, this theme will allow us to explore other passages of Scripture that focus on a variety of expressions of God's Wisdom. We will read only one passage of Scripture each weekend, in addition to a sung Psalm, to take a deeper look at how God's Wisdom has been and still is a key part of our lives of faith.

### The Ways of Wisdom: Seeking God's Wisdom Through...

Patience (Psalm 37:1-11) on February 25 & 26

Nurturing Love (Job 12:7-13) on March 4 & 5

Spirit as Guide (Wisdom 7:22-30) on March 11 & 12

Holy Friends (Proverbs 3:21-35) on March 18 & 19

Rebirth (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8) on March 25 & 26

The last weekend in Lent, April 1 & 2, is Palm Sunday Weekend and also happens to be the beginning of Holy Week. As in years past, join us for a traditional Palm Sunday worship on Saturday and Sunday as we waive our palms to herald Jesus as King. Finally, the journey will continue as we move into our Holy Week worship schedule and end with the celebration of Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Please join us for what promises to be another Lenten season filled with reflection, community, and learning as we journey with Jesus to the cross and celebrate his glorious resurrection.

In Christ,

*Pastor Reggie Klindworth*  
Senior Pastor

# Spring

“...and the darkness does not overcome it.”

Siblings in Christ,

As I write this article, there is sunlight streaming into my office through my window. The sky is a clear, robin-egg blue and there are no clouds to be seen. The light dances off the snow, making my eyes squint in response to how bright everything is. What a difference this makes after several weeks of cloudy, foggy, wet weather! Living in the Northern hemisphere, we know the impact of days and weeks when the sun cannot break free from the thick wall of clouds. We know, in our bodies and minds, the impact of a lack of light and when it finally returns, it is as if we are waking up from a fuzzy dream and coming back to life.

In Advent 2022, we moved through Part 1 of a two-part theme: “The light shines in the darkness...” We focused on the anticipation that filled that short season and all the waiting that was required before celebrating the birth of Jesus, the Light for this world. This year for the season of Lent, our Mid-Week theme will be Part 2 of the theme that we started in Advent: “...and the darkness does not overcome it.” Lent comes to us at a time of year when we move through lengthy stretches where the light is scarce and cloudy darkness prevails. We experience the rise and fall of winter temperatures and a lull in energy in the aftermath of the holiday season.

But just as the sunlight is never permanently gone from us, so too does the light of Christ continue to shine for us, even in the darkest of times. As the writer of John’s Gospel declares, “...the darkness did not [and does not!] over come it.” Each Wednesday in Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday on February 22 (6:30 p.m.), we will hear one scripture lesson read that utilizes and brings to life the light and darkness motif, especially in regards to how real the darkness can be for us, and how God’s Light shines through it all and how we are called to bear that Light in the world.

We will also hear the personal faith stories of five Crown of Glory members, which will include individual experiences of the darkness found in everyday life and the light that is discovered when God shows up. Fun fact: this is the 15<sup>th</sup> year that we have been listening to members of this congregation share their faith stories during Wednesdays in Lent. What a cherished and beautiful tradition! We will also enjoy the worship setting, *Holden Evening Prayer*, which continues to be another beloved tradition at Crown of Glory.

See below for a list of the Scripture lessons for each Wednesday in Lent with a brief description of the focus that will be highlighted the night each is read, as well as a synopsis of this year’s Holy Week and Easter schedule.

## Ash Wednesday (February 22) – John 1:1-14

We begin our Lenten journey with the words from John’s gospel that include our overall theme that began in Advent and will end with Easter: “The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not [and does not!] overcome it.” We will move through an ashy remembrance of our baptisms and reflect on Jesus’ light that is so desperately needed in this world.

## Wednesday, February 29 – Genesis 1: 1-5

“In the beginning...” We will hear the beginning of the narrative of God’s creation story and focus on when God created light, which consequently created a recognition of the difference between light and darkness.



## From the Desk of Pastor Laura

### Wednesday, March 8 – Isaiah 42:1-9

“I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations...” We will hear from the prophet Isaiah, who is acting as the voice of God and declaring that the people of Israel, those that follow God, are to be God’s light to the world.

### Wednesday, March 15 – Matthew 5:13-16

“You are the light of the world.” We will hear from Jesus, via the writer of Matthew’s Gospel, as he gives his disciples, and consequently us, a calling for who and what God calls God’s people to be.

### Wednesday, March 22 – 1 John 1:5-10

“...God is light and in him there is no darkness at all.” We will hear from the writer of 1 John that, as human beings, we are always going to bear the identity of “sinner.” But by the grace of God, we also claim an identity in Christ, who washes us in light, and calls us to imitate him in being God’s light and love in the world.

### Wednesday, March 29 – John 1:1-14

“In the beginning was the Word...” We will end our Mid-Week Lenten series with the same Gospel text that we started with. We intentionally need to be reminded, amid all the darkness in this world, that nothing can overcome the light of Christ, the love of God, and that life, not death, will always have the final word.

## Holy Week 2023

Maundy Thursday (April 6) – Worship at 6:30 p.m. with the celebration of First Communion and a remembrance of Jesus’ final night with his disciples.

Good Friday (April 7) – Worship at 6:30 p.m. featuring the Good Friday Cantata that tells the story of Jesus’ final hours of life and the moment of his death.

Holy Saturday (April 8) – No worship; a morning hike for all ages led by Pastor Laura to reflect, pray, and walk together in God’s creation as we anticipate what is to come on Easter morning.

Easter Sunday (April 9) – Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. with a light Easter Brunch and an Easter Egg Hunt for all ages in between services. We will celebrate the risen Christ, the promise of new life, and enjoy food and fellowship together.

There is so much waiting for us in the upcoming Lenten season as we journey and learn in faith together. I invite you to join us for as much as you are able and discover new ways that God’s light is shining within and through you!

Walking with you,

*Pastor Laura Laughlin*  
Pastor of Faith Formation

## Lent 2023: What are the Ways of Wisdom?

“Come and seek the ways of wisdom, she who danced when earth was new.

Follow closely what she teaches, for her words are right and true.

Wisdom clears the path to justice, showing us what love must do.” (Ruth Duck, 1993)

I found this hymn about ten years ago in *Glory to God*, a hymnal meant to serve the needs of the Presbyterian Church, USA. It is also in our new ELCA hymnal supplement, *All Creation Sings*. I was drawn to its lovely, lilting melody and its thoughtful, challenging, and compelling text. Read that third line again. How can wisdom create justice or show us what we must do? After reading these words, I realized I knew very little about the biblical tradition of wisdom. I knew there were books in the Bible called Wisdom Literature, but I did not know which books they were, as we rarely read them in worship except for Psalms. I now know that the books of Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, Job, a few Psalms, Song of Songs, and, Wisdom of Solomon are all classified as Wisdom Literature. So, where did these books come from and why are they in the Bible?

I found a working definition of “wisdom” in a book I read for an entirely different reason. Arthur Brooks is a social psychologist and a Harvard professor. He wrote a compelling book called, *From Strength to Strength: Finding Happiness and Success in the Second Half of Life*. Brooks defines two types of intelligence: fluid intelligence (knowing facts) and crystallized intelligence (knowing what those facts mean and how to apply them, i.e. wisdom.). He makes a strong case that as we age, we gain wisdom. We may not be able to recite as many facts and ideas as quickly as we once could, but we know how to apply them to a given situation and avoid common pitfalls and mistakes.

In my research, I also went back to a trusted friend. I have read, studied, and struggled through several books by theological historian, Karen Armstrong. A Brit, a former nun, and an excellent writer, Armstrong challenges me and makes me think. In *A History of God*, she writes, “Wisdom literature was a well-established genre in the Middle East; it tried to delve into the meaning of life, not by philosophical reflection, but by inquiring into the best way to live: it was often highly pragmatic.” She also notes that the author of the book of Proverbs suggests that wisdom was part of God’s master plan, and personifies wisdom as female, hence the feminine pronouns in the hymn I cited above. Armstrong goes on to explain that wisdom is not a divine being, but a creation of God. “Like the ‘glory’ of Yahweh, the figure of Wisdom was a symbol of God’s activity in the world.”

Each Sunday in Lent, we, as one family of God, are going to dive into some of the Wisdom Literature over the course of five weeks, and begin to discover what we have been missing. Pastors Reggie and Laura will preach on excerpts from the literature. Musically, we will learn the hymn quoted above and sing it several times. Spoiler alert: the Chancel Choir already knows it. We will also sing many familiar hymns and songs that illuminate the weekly scriptural themes, such as “Be still my soul, the Lord is on your side” (*Patience*), or “Blest be the tie that binds, our hearts in Christian love” (*Holy Friends*).

I am fond of saying, “Epiphany and Easter are for extroverts, but Lent is for introverts.” In Epiphany and Easter, the times immediately preceding and following Lent, we boldly sing “Go, tell it on the mountain,” and “Jesus Christ is risen today, A....lleluia!” Lent is different; an opportunity for resting and reflecting, thinking and learning, nurturing our faith, expanding our understanding, and cultivating our relationships. What a fitting time to learn about several books of the Bible that many of us have probably never read or know very little about.

One of my goals as Director of Music and Worship is to develop compelling worship that gives people a reason to be here and the feeling when they leave that they have grown in grace and faith, and learned something worth knowing. Acquiring some wisdom and finding ways to bring more faith into our lives seems like a good way to do this throughout this year’s season of Lent. Perhaps we will learn how wisdom clears the path for justice and shows us what to do to make God’s love known in our hurting world.

See you in church!

*Tom Paulson*

Director of Music and Worship

## SPARK News

After a busy winter season, I am looking forward to the reflection that the spring and Lenten seasons bring. Patience is one of the weekly Lenten themes that we will be discussing in SPARK. We will be emphasizing the waiting, slowing down, reflecting, and patience that Lent brings along with discussing the themes in our SPARK Bibles. There is an abundance of activities to commit ourselves to, and I notice that kids are doing so much. SPARK has become a space where we can talk, create, laugh, ask our questions about God, and simply be together. It is easy to think about Easter when we talk about Lent. We naturally desire to think about the joy and celebration that is to come. Kids especially are eager to laugh, smile, and skip to the fun part!

We will launch into Lent with a new activity called, "Activity Eggs" which will be passed out during SPARK on February 12. Each egg is opened at a different time during the Lenten season with a unique item to explain the meaning of that day. What a perfect opportunity to practice patience and finding joy in the waiting together.

Kiddos will also participate in our annual "burying" of the Alleluias on February 19. I will invite kiddos to color or decorate a piece of paper with "Alleluia" on it. We will "bury" them in a box under lock and key until Easter to show that we will not say "Alleluia" during Lent.

In March, we will have three different Family Nights that will explore Lenten themes in an interactive way. On Friday, March 3 from 6:30-7:30 p.m., we will have a movie night that explores the meaning of Holy Week. On Thursday, March 16 from 6:00-7:00 p.m., we will taste a variety of bread, grapes, and grape juice, and talk about the Last Supper. On Tuesday, March 21 from 6:00-7:00 p.m., we will go on a nature walk at Fireman's Park where we will notice different aspects of nature and how that connects to the themes of Lent. To RSVP for Family Nights, please email Krysta Flaharty ([krysta@crownofglory](mailto:krysta@crownofglory)).

From February 22 to March 29, there will be Wednesday night worship services at 6:30 p.m. I will be in the Kiddos' Corner with a Lenten activity. Bring your kiddos to come hang out with Miss Krysta!

On March 19, we will celebrate our SPARK volunteers. We ask that any volunteers from January and February come for a special thank you from our SPARK kiddos!

I will be in the Kiddos' Corner during each Holy Week service (Maundy Thursday on April 6 and Good Friday on April 7) with activity sheets and coloring sheets. There will be a special set of activities during both Easter Sunday services (8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. on April 9) in lieu of SPARK, and an Easter Egg Hunt for all ages in between services.

After Easter Weekend, we will discuss the joy, celebration, and new life that the season of Easter brings. We will end our SPARK school year on May 21 with our Year-End Celebration.

## SPARK Curriculum

In connection with worship on Wednesdays and Sundays, SPARK will be focusing on the themes from the Saturday/Sunday Lenten series, "The Ways of Wisdom," happening February 22-March 29, along with our SPARK curriculum. The hope is that SPARK kiddos will be in sync with their families in their learning so that families can stay connected and engage in conversations at home.

I am so excited for spring and Lent this year. I pray that this Lenten season is a reflective one that deepens conversations, causes introspection in our lives, and enriches our relationships with one another.

Peace be with you,

*Krysta Flaharty*  
Director of Children's Ministry





### Connect and Confirmation: In Recess During Lent

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday worship on February 22 at 6:30 p.m. Connect and Confirmation students and their parents are invited to attend worship for the imposition of ashes on this sacred day. Connect and Confirmation groups will not meet during Lent. Confirmation students are expected to attend worship at least 4 out of the 6 weeks of Lent. Confirmation students are also scheduled to serve at the Soup Suppers and as ushers during worship. Please see the schedule below:



	Soup Supper	Worship
February 22	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Girls	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Boys
March 1	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Boys	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Girls
March 8	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Girls & Boys	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Boys
March 15	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Girls	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Boys
March 22	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Boys	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Girls
March 29	Volunteers (Spring Break)	Connect



### Confirmation Worship Notes During Lent

All Confirmation students are expected to complete at least 20 worship notes throughout the program year. Lent worship notes are located at the entrance to the Sanctuary. Completed worship notes may be placed in the basket at the worship note table. Completed Lent worship notes are worth “double credit” for the most complete form. Confirmation students can take advantage of this and catch up during Lent!

Confirmation worship notes are also available on our website ([crownofglory.org/worship-notes](http://crownofglory.org/worship-notes)). Those worshipping in person or via livestream can complete worship notes and submit them electronically when finished!

### Connect and Confirmation Service Event



Connect and Confirmation students will be serving at the Chanhassen *Feed My Starving Children* on Wednesday, April 12 from 4:30-6:15 p.m. Please note the change in service time. This is a drop-off and pick-up event. Parents will drop off their Connect and Confirmation students at the *Feed My Starving Children* site located at 18732 Lake Dr E, Chanhassen.

### Senior High Ministry Mission Trip

Crown of Glory Senior High youth will be headed to Nashville, TN the summer of 2023 for an amazing opportunity to serve on a mission trip! Thank you for supporting our youth in their fundraising efforts.

- **Lent Cinnamon Rolls are Back!** Starting on Sunday, February 26, and each weekend during Lent, our Senior High youth will be serving fresh cinnamon rolls and orange juice following Sunday morning worship service. A suggested \$1 donation per cinnamon roll is requested. All proceeds will support the Senior High mission trip!



*Pastor Reggie Klindworth*  
Senior Pastor

### Milestone Ministry



Pastor Laura and Krysta Flaharty, in collaboration with Crown of Glory member Peter Potter, will be offering a First Communion class on Sunday, February 26 at 1:30 p.m. in the Sun Hall. All third and fourth grade students are encouraged to attend, but all ages of kids are welcome! First Communion will be celebrated during Maundy Thursday worship on Thursday, April 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Please register your child for the class at the church website ([crownofglory.org/milestones](http://crownofglory.org/milestones)) and contact Pastor Laura ([pastorlaura@crownofglory.org](mailto:pastorlaura@crownofglory.org)) with any questions!

### Adult Education

#### Women's Bible Study

We will be continuing our study of the book of Exodus through February and March. In April, we will study a side-by-side comparison of each Gospel account of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Our program year will end in May with a celebration of and reflection on all that we learned together. All women are welcome to attend! We meet once a month in the Sun Hall (Zoom is also offered) on a Saturday from 9:00-10:15 a.m. See below for future dates:



*Women's Bible Study*

February 25	April 22
March 18	May 13

#### Partner Study



**PRACTICES AND  
DIALOGUES: A STUDY  
FOR PARTNERS**

We will continue our study of faith practices, utilizing the *Animate: Practices* series through the month of May. Partners of every variety are welcome to attend this engaging and fun-filled study! We meet once a month on Sunday evenings from 6:00-7:30 p.m. and Krysta Flaharty, Director of Children's Ministry, provides childcare. Join us! See below for future dates:

February 26	April 16
March 26	May 7

#### Sunday Morning Adult Forum

The Adult Forum will continue to be offered at 10:15 a.m. on Sundays through May 14, 2023. Join us for engaging presentations from Pastors Laura and Reggie, CoG ministry teams, and speakers from local organizations. All are welcome!



*"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned, but those who do not believe are condemned already because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."*

*John 3:16-22*

## Crown of Glory Partners With Local Churches for Ecumenical Ministries

In 2023, Crown of Glory will partner with several local congregations to provide ecumenical worship experiences in local communities. Partner congregations include the Chaska Moravian Church, the United Church of Christ of Cologne, and Shepherd on the Hill Presbyterian Church of Chaska. Join us for each of these special events throughout the year.

- **Easter Sunrise Service:** Join us for a special Sunrise Easter Worship service beginning at 6:30 a.m. in the main Sanctuary of Chaska Moravian Church. Worship will include Easter hymns led by a Senior High youth brass band, and lessons will be led by pastors from our partner churches. Worship will conclude outdoors as the sun rises on Easter morning.
- ***Families Moving Forward* Homeless Ministry:** There are families throughout our community that seek the assistance of *Families Moving Forward*, supported by Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative. Throughout the year, local congregations offer financial assistance to support meals and housing for families in need. In 2023, Crown of Glory has pledged to make a special donation to support Families Moving Forward. This support is an ecumenical effort by all our partner congregations. Check out the bulletin and the weekly *Crown Connections* e-newsletter for more information. The first of four donations for the year will be on the weekend of February 25 and 26. If you would like to make a special donation in support of *Families Moving Forward*, please contact Pastor Reggie ([pastorreggie@crownofglory.org](mailto:pastorreggie@crownofglory.org)).
- **Service of the Longest Day:** For those who have experienced loss during the holidays, the Christmas season can be a time of struggle and sadness. Join us next Christmas season for a Service of the Longest Day on Wednesday, December 20, 2023. This will be an ecumenical service of prayer and remembrance hosted at Crown of Glory. Starting time is TBD.

## Fall Social Building Projects Coming to Fruition

Our 2022 Fall Social raised \$13,500 for two valuable building projects. The first has already been completed. We now have automatic doors at the main entrance of the building. This new feature does more than just open doors, it allows all people to better use our building. The second project is underway as Crown of Glory is currently reviewing bids to add a hearing assist system to our Sanctuary. We look forward to having this new hearing assist available for use in the near future. Thank you to Bob Chinnock for organizing the installers and electricians, to all our donors, and to the 2022 Fall Social attendees who helped bring these improvements to fruition!

*Pastor Reggie Klindworth*  
Senior Pastor



I am just wrapping up my first year as a Council member and want to thank my peers for a warm welcome, and patience while I got up to speed. I jumped in mid-way through a term due to an unforeseen vacancy and feel fortunate for the opportunity to experience the organizational management of Crown of Glory at a deeper level.

My wife (Briony) and I joined Crown of Glory shortly after moving to Chaska in 2008. I grew up in Stillwater, MN as part of a larger church system, and have always appreciated Crown of Glory's size; just big enough to have a beautiful space and variety of ministries, yet small enough to where I can see the same friendly faces on a regular basis and feel like part of a tighter-knit community. We have 3 girls, ages 12, 14, and 16, and feel confident that raising our family at Crown of Glory has been one of the best decisions we have made.

In hindsight, I guess it took Briony and I a few years before we started dipping our 'active-church-member' toes in the water and becoming more than just Sunday worship attendees. I probably had the desire to offer more but did not know where to start. Thankfully in our case, other members and staff began approaching us with opportunities, and we slowly and carefully started accepting. First the CoG softball team, then *Meals-on-Wheels*, then building a couple of walls in the new addition, and now we are both Confirmation small group guides. Over the years, our participation has been a process of small steps and gradual incremental improvements eventually compounding into regular participation in a variety of ministries and events that make Crown of Glory feel like home.

For me, 2022 at Crown of Glory felt like a year of positive energy, upward momentum, and small steps forward that are adding up over time. We are seeing new faces at worship, ministries and special events are growing, active volunteer participation is up, and so is the general energy level. None of these numbers are WAY up, and no doubt we still have our challenges, financial and otherwise. But I believe our community has a solid foundation and is experiencing upward momentum thanks to a collective of contributions and improvements from our talented staff, our active volunteers, and our financial supporters.

In 2023, I do not think we need giant leaps to have a great year as a congregation, and I do not think the key is asking a lot more from *a few*. I think the key is a combination of smaller contributions from *the many*, which will have a compound effect over time. Each of us has gifts to offer, in the form of time, talent, ideas, attendance, etc. Is there a small incremental improvement you can offer Crown of Glory this year? It could be just attending a Wednesday dinner, volunteering for hospitality during a service, or joining the softball team. I would like to encourage everyone to investigate the opportunities available at Crown of Glory and consider one small change in participation and contribution this year. You may be surprised how much it compounds over time, adds joy to your life and well-being, and provides a boost to the life and longevity of our entire church community.

*Andy Wright*

Council Member

<u>Members</u>		
<u>President</u>	**Robert Chinnock	*A special thank you to those Council members who are completing their terms of service in March.
*Grant Taylor	**Mikel Jones	
	*Roger Lee	
<u>Vice President</u>	*Mary Leopold	** Welcome to the newly elected Church Council members!
Rachel Berg Scherer	Sarah Morrow	
	**Kate Peterson	
<u>Secretary</u>	Sandi Rue	
Jodi Sie	Rebecca Varone	
	*Andy Wright	
	Pastor Reggie Klindworth	
	Pastor Laura Laughlin	

It is that time of year when I start to get “spring fever.” While I have enjoyed all the things that winter has to offer in Minnesota, I’m starting to look for signs that spring is around the corner. While reflecting on how the church fiscal year ended, I realized it feels like CoG is coming out of a long winter. As we all look for signs of spring in our daily lives, I’m also looking for signs of spring in our congregation.

Looking back on 2022, the Sustaining Fund ended the year \$27,802 in the red on a cash flow basis. Our offerings were \$67K under budget and partially offset by a one-time tax credit of \$29,500 and other revenue increases of \$2,500. The staff did an excellent job of managing expenses and we were about \$7,000 under budget on expenses. By December 31, 2022, we had a cash balance of \$51,000 in our Sustaining Fund, and \$94,000 of cash reserves, for a total cash position of \$145,000. For comparison, we had \$195,000 of total cash at the end of 2021. We also paid back \$52,000 in member loans, leaving us with a member loan balance of \$227,000.

As we look to 2023, it is clear that CoG has some work to do to get back to a place of financial stability. There are some positive signs that we are moving in the right direction! Our community pledged \$396,000 to the Sustaining Fund in 2023, \$17,000 more than what was pledged in 2022. An additional \$21,000 was pledged for the appeal to pay back member loans. Member loans totaling \$70,000 are due in 2023. Loan holders have agreed to extend \$50,000 of the loans, leaving \$20,000 to be paid in 2023. Our special appeal will allow us to pay back the \$20,000 loan without using cash reserves. While we are not “out of the woods,” I see this as a step in the right direction.

Now for some even better news: CoG had a very strong January 2023 compared to recent years. Our giving for January was up \$12,000 compared to 2022 and \$14,000 compared to 2021. While this is very encouraging, we need to stay vigilant and do everything we can as a congregation to continue this positive trend going forward.

As a numbers person, it is sometimes hard for me to stay positive when faced with the facts that we ended 2022 in the red, have \$227K of member loans to pay back, and are proposing a budget that will run in the red for the next two years. I have been recently reminded that we did not get to this place overnight and that it will take time to get back to a place of financial stability. Our strong 2023 Stewardship Appeal, adding a Special Appeal to start tackling member loan payback, and an incredibly strong month of giving in January are all financial signs of life coming back to CoG after the pandemic. I invite you to join me in generously giving of your time, talents, and financial gifts in 2023 so that we can build off the momentum of recent months and live into our mission to Welcome, Serve and Share our gifts.

Speaking of giving of your time...we are looking for more members to join the Finance Team! Please reach out to me, one of the team members, or either of our Pastors if you are willing to serve on this vital team and help CoG build back to a place of financial stability.

*Jodi Sie*

Finance Team Member

Finance Team: Sara Morrow, Jill Nelson, Ashley Pederson, Lori Robinson, Jodi Sie

### SUSTAINING FUND SUMMARY January 31, 2023

YTD Payments: \$65,412

YTD Revenues: \$62,131

## 2023 Stewardship Appeal and Special Appeal Final Report

Our 2023 Stewardship Campaign has wrapped up, and we have accomplished amazing things together!  
Your generosity and financial support for 2023 were filled with Bountiful Faith.

### Year-to-Year Stewardship Comparison

- Total Sustaining Fund Commitments: \$396,315 (2023) and \$379,014 (2022)  
    ◇ \$17,301 additional support for 2023
- Total Number of Commitments: 102 (2023) and 113 (2022)
- Total Number of New Commitments in 2023: 6 Commitments for \$17,000.
- Total Number of Commitments Increased in 2023: 51 Commitments for a total of \$65,000.  
    ◇ Half of our Commitments increased for 2023
- Total Number of Commitments to the Special Appeal: 45 Commitments for a total of \$21,619.

## [ February ]

- Feb. 22 - Ash Wednesday (Drive-Thru Ashes 4:00-5:00 p.m.)
- Feb. 23 - Fare For All
- Feb. 25 - Women's Bible Study
- Feb. 25 & 26 - First Weekend of Lent
- Feb. 26 - Study for Partners



## [ March ]

- March 5 - New Member Orientation
- March 11 & 12 - New Member Welcome
- March 12 - Spring Forward
- March 12 - First Communion Class
- March 18 - Women's Bible Study
- March 26 - Study for Partners
- March 22 - Easter Flowers Orders Due



## [ April ]

- April 2 - Palm Sunday
- April 6 - Maundy Thursday /Celebration of First Communion
- April 7 - Good Friday
- April 8 - No Saturday Worship
- April 9 - Easter Sunday
- April 22 - Women's Bible Study
- April 30 - Study for Partners



## [ May ]

- May 13 - Women's Bible Study
- May 17 - End of the Programmatic Year
- May 21 - Study for Partners
- May 25 - Fare For All
- May 29 - Office Closed: Memorial Day







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Crown of Glory Lutheran Church  
1141 Cardinal Street  
Chaska, MN 55318

## *Lent and Holy Week Schedule* (Livestream\* and In Person)

Ash Wednesday Worship  
February 22  
\*6:30 p.m.

Midweek Lenten Worship  
Wednesdays  
March 1 - March 29  
\*6:30 p.m.

Palm Sunday Weekend Worship  
Saturday, April 1  
5:00 p.m.  
Sunday, April 2  
\*9:00 a.m.

Maundy Thursday Worship  
April 6  
\*6:30 p.m.

Good Friday Cantata  
April 7  
\*6:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday Worship  
April 9  
\*8:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

