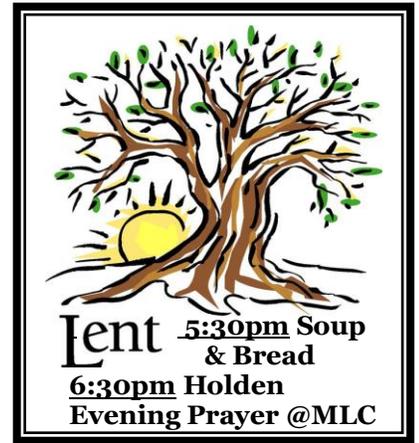




# The Epistle

Unity Lutheran Parish ~ March 2026  
 March 1 – Smith Baptism @MLC.  
 March 29 – Palm Sunday.  
 April 2 – Maundy Thursday, Apr. 3 – Good Friday  
**April 5 - Easter**



## From the Pastor

***Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life..."***

Not bad, so far have kept my goal of reading a book of the month. The name is, "Don't ask the blind guy for directions - a 30,000-mile journey for Love, Confidence, and a Sense of Belonging" by John Samuel.

Drew had to read it for work. The author describes his journey in life to figure out how to accept, and deal with his disability of going blind. He describes himself as a brown kid, with parents from India.

Spoiler alert. He discovers his vision is declining at age 17. As he continues to move on in life over the next few years, on to college and beyond, he tries to not let others know about it. His understanding of life was to be *successful* (his use of italics in the book).

In fact, he is very successful in life but always fighting the fact he is going blind with retinitis pigmentosa.

The one passage that caught my interest is from the middle of the book. The company that he is working for is growing quickly. He says, "People with disabilities are some of the greatest problem-solvers in the world. We are constantly having to figure out creative solutions to problems every single day, no matter whether we are at home, at work, or out in the world." That quote is on page 71. I love the reminder to trust others strengths and gifts.

He eventually comes to terms with life as a blind person.

That's all I'll say if you want to read it. His journey is interesting.

I know that Jesus is the way the truth and the life, and I am reminded how the apostle Paul spoke of his "thorn in the flesh" and how God works in our weakness, but Paul will boast about God and give the glory to God.

*"<sup>8</sup>Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, <sup>9</sup>but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me."*  
 2 Corinthians 12:8-9.

Now the author of the book overcame his challenges in life but also learned to rely on friends and others to help in his life.

By continuing my "resolution" and through the book I have been made more aware of others who may need help, even if it is not a "disability".

We are still in Lent, this time to Repent, Reflect, and Renew. Maybe we can Repent and acknowledge our need for Christ, Reflect on how God guides us and allow others to help us, and Renew our lives as being servants of God.

God's blessings this holy season.

Pastor Bob



**Hymn Sing**  
**Sunday**



It has been a few years since we had it, we will have "Hymn Sing Sunday" the second Sunday after Easter.

On Sunday March 8<sup>th</sup> through the 22<sup>nd</sup> we will vote for our favorite hymns. Vote once a week while you are at worship.

We will tally them up and sing the top 5 on Holy Humor Sunday.

**Confirmation Class News!!!**  
**Malta and Whitewater**

**Class schedule for March 2026.**

In March Lenten soup suppers and Lenten worship will be on Wednesday evenings. (\*For students that are going to be confirmed members, Lenten worship is required)

Soup supper starts at 5:30 with Holden Evening Prayer at about 6:30.

**Scripture Discovery**

We meet at **10 am on Monday mornings**. This month we will look at the upcoming Sunday morning readings. Bring a friend. Please join us; there is always room for one more, invite a friend.

March schedule:

March 2 – Scripture Discovery

March 9 – Scripture Discovery

March 16 – Scripture Discovery

March 23 – Scripture Discovery

*\*If there is interest in an evening Bible Study, please let me know.*

Pastor Bob

**Prayer Time throughout the month**

Pray for Peace

In Lent, “Repent, Reflect, and Renew”.

Pray for the world leaders.

*\*Challenge for us all – to live out God’s love for the world.*

**ULP Council News**

Monday, Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup> at 4:00pm the ULP Council meeting received a resignation from Elaine Enerson

as Parish Treasurer after 19 years of service.

We commend Elaine for her faithful unending service even when under the weather, she kept us afloat. **Thank you, Elaine for your dedication over the years, even before this one hat out of many that you have worn!**



The Parish Council is seeking someone to volunteer for this position under the guidance of Elaine’s expertise on yearly tasks.

This is a faith guided unpaid position. Individual will need to gain knowledge of health insurance, parish payroll, taxes etc.

*Please contact Elaine Enerson or any other Parish Council member with any questions.*

**MLC Council News**



The 2026 Lenten Soup Supper *free will donations* go towards a **FRONT DOOR FUND.**

The current doors will not open/close correctly during the winter. It’s time to start saving for repairs and/or replacement.

**Scholarships**

**Flansaas Memorial** (due April 15<sup>th</sup>) applications are available at Parish Office and Malta High School.

**WELCA** (due June 1<sup>st</sup>) applications are available at Parish Office and printable PDF online News & Forms [unitylutheranparish.com](http://unitylutheranparish.com)

**Application for Order of Eastern Star Training Award for Religious Leadership**

Montana “ESTARL” Awards are given by the Montana Grand Chapter, Order of Eastern Star, and are intended to assist Montana students to prepare themselves for work in one of the following fields or one closely related to the field of religion:

***Ministry - Missions, including medical missions; directors of church music; religious education; and youth leadership.***

These awards are given to students attending accredited college, universities, or seminaries. In selecting the recipients, emphasis is placed on need, character, scholarship ability, leadership and citizenship. These awards are for a maximum amount of \$2,000 and a minimum amount of \$500 in an academic year. **Applicants must have applications and information to the Sponsoring Chapter by April 1, 2026.**

*\*Northern Star #23 of Chinook is the northeast Montana sponsor. Contact Russ or Sarah Osmundson for an application or any other Star member with questions.*



**Secretary Note:** Happy St. Pat's Mar. 17<sup>th</sup>! Thanks SO

Do you have an April birthday to add?  
**HAPPY MARCH BIRTHDAYS!**



- |                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 5 - Khristi Drabbs       | 16 - Dexter Henry    |
| 7 - Rosemary S. Veseth   | 17 - Scarlett Marino |
| 9 - Rosanne Sleater      | 24 - Nancy Knudsen   |
| 15 - Pastor Bob          | 29 - Ron Soiseth     |
| 22 - Sharon Kienenberger |                      |

**Newsletter Lifeline:** Monday, Mar. 23<sup>rd</sup> for April 2026. Thanks SO

## thrivent®



**Brenda Clark**  
Associate  
Representative  
406-654-4949

***Thriving in Your Golden Years*** is a financial webinar for today's retirees. Whether retirement is just around the corner or well underway. Two events are available –  
Tue. March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 11:00am  
Thur. March 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm.

Special guest speaker: Eric W. Bilger,  
FIC Financial Advisor, Thrivent

Register here <https://bit.ly/bilgermarch26>

Please contact Brenda with any questions and to set up a meeting time. \*Please RSVP to Sarah for zooms at MLC Sanctuary\*

**THRIVENT MEMBERS:** Don't forget you only have until **March 31<sup>st</sup>** to designate your **Thrivent Choice Dollars for 2025**. For questions about how to designate Choice Dollars, contact Brenda, call 1-800-847-4836 or got to: [thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://thrivent.com/thriventchoice)

## WELCA BOARD MEETING

Thursday, February 12, 2026

**New Business:** February meeting canceled due to illness. Two more names will be added to our Honor Plaque. Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup> is National Quilting Day. We will recognize it on Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>. LWR new shipping costs is \$4 per kit & quilt. An offering basket will be used to collect funds for the shipping of LWR items around the world & USA.

**Soup & Bread Suppers begin 5:30pm**  
**Holden Evening Prayer Vesper Service 6:30pm**



- Mar. 4** – Group #4 Marlene Holman
- Mar. 11** – Group #1 Jan Kirkwood
- Mar. 18** – Group #2 Elaine Enerson
- Mar. 25** – Group #5 High School ~ Lynda Brown

**Next Board Meeting:** March 12, 2026,  
1:00pm meeting & 2:00pm Bible Study.

**Closing:** with all praying the *Lord's Prayer*.

**Faithfully submitted by:** Jan Kirkwood

\*WELCA would like a volunteer Group #1 Chairperson. Please contact Jan Kirkwood if you feel called to fill-in.

### **"SEARCH" 2026**

The St. Mary's SEARCH TEAM, PO Box 1042  
Malta, MT 59538

Questions: Dianne Salsbery 654-4675, Becky Bruce 390-0913, Alora Jesson 399-1675. Application deadline is March 13, 2026. Application available on back pew of MLC.

#### **Who may attend?**

Age 16 (or to be a sophomore) through age 19.

#### **When is the SEARCH being held?**

**Friday, Saturday and Sunday**

**March 20, 21, and 22, 2026**

Since SEARCHERS will be sleeping at the new MT National Guard Armory, they need to drop off their bags at the armory between 5:45pm and 6:15pm on Friday evening March 20<sup>th</sup>. Registration begins at 6:30pm on Friday in the St. Mary's Church. The SEARCH begins at 7:00pm on Friday and ends about 2:30pm on Sunday. Meals will be served BEGINNING on Saturday morning.

#### **Where is it?**

St. Mary's Catholic Church 107 S. 7<sup>th</sup> W. Malta, MT 59538 654-1446 and RE Center 654-1311.

#### **Cost:**

The cost per participant for the weekend is \$50.00 and is payable when you arrive at the door or before. We do have some scholarships available. **Deadline March 13<sup>th</sup>.**

**This Lent, let's connect intentionally.**  
**Here are 40 ways to do so. By Deonna Hart**

Here are the 40 intentional acts of connection – simple, creative and purposeful things you can do during this Lenten season to engage with God, the people around you, and yourself!

***Deeping spiritual connection with God...***

1. Begin each morning with a short prayer of gratitude.
2. Read one Psalm a day and reflect on its meaning for you.
3. Set aside 10 minutes of silence to simply listen for God's presence.
4. Take a "prayer walk" in your neighborhood, blessing the people and places you pass.
5. Memorize a Bible verse each week and recite it throughout your day.
6. Keep a journal where you note moments when you felt God's nearness.
7. Create a worship playlist that lifts your spirit. Listen to it while you get ready for the day.
8. End your evening by naming three ways you saw God at work that day.

***Strengthening the home front...***

9. Share a meal without any screens or distractions.
10. Ask a loved one about their favorite childhood memory.
11. Write a handwritten note of encouragement to someone in your household.
12. Pray together before bedtime or before leaving the house in the morning.
13. Cook a new recipe together and share your experience.
14. Start a "family gratitude jar" and fill it with daily blessings.
15. Surprise someone with an act of service: Do one of their chores for them.
16. Plan a tech-free evening to play games, read aloud or talk.

***Cultivating circles of care...***

17. Call or message a friend you haven't spoken to in a while.
18. Send a "thinking of you" card by mail or a note by text.
19. Invite a coworker, neighbor or church member for coffee or lunch.
20. Share an encouraging devotional or podcast episode with a friend.
21. Celebrate a friend's achievement with a small gift or note.
22. Bring snacks or coffee to share at work, or before or after a worship service.
23. Ask someone how you can pray for them, then follow up later.
24. Send a playlist of uplifting songs to someone who could use encouragement.

***Extending connections outward...***

25. Greet someone new at church and remember their name.
26. Volunteer once for a ministry or community project.
27. Deliver a small baked good or treat to a neighbor.
28. Join a small group, Bible study or discussion circle.
29. Offer to give someone a ride to church or an appointment.
30. Attend a local event to support a community cause.
31. Invite neighbors for a casual meal or outdoor gathering.
32. Pray over your town or city while driving through it.

***Heart songs in action...***

33. Share a song or hymn that has been meaningful to you with someone else.
34. Ask a friend what song inspires them right now. Listen to it together.
35. Create a "Lent playlist" of worship and encouragement songs.
36. Visit a church member on the sick and shut-in list. Sing or share music with them.
37. Use a favorite song as a journaling prompt.
38. Send a friend a link to an uplifting song or hymn.
39. Learn a new hymn or praise song. Sing it during personal devotions.
40. Host a small "praise and prayer night" with friends and family.

May this season of Lent for you be a time of not only fasting from distractions, but feasting on relationships – with God, your loved ones and the broader community. And may you experience the kind of holistic, physical, mental and spiritual well-being that research affirms, and Scripture promises.

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