

August 2026

A Fresh Start, One Step at a Time

Dear Sterling Parents and Students,

August is a month of transition. Summer is still with us, but signs of a new season are beginning to appear. Calendars fill up, school supplies are gathered, classrooms are prepared, and families begin returning to familiar routines.

A new semester can bring many emotions. Some students may feel excited to see friends and begin new classes. Others may feel nervous about unfamiliar teachers, new expectations, or the challenges ahead. Parents, teachers, and staff may also enter this season carrying hopes, questions, and responsibilities of their own.

The good news is that a fresh start does not require us to have everything figured out.

God does not ask us to see the entire year at once. He invites us to trust Him with the next step. A successful semester is not built in one perfect day. It is formed through small, faithful choices—showing up, asking questions, encouraging others, learning from mistakes, and trying again.

As we prepare for the months ahead, may we remember that every new beginning is an opportunity to grow in faith, wisdom, courage, and love.

Scripture for August

*"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.
They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness."*

— **Lamentations 3:22–23**

Every morning is a reminder of God's faithfulness. Yesterday's mistakes do not have to define today, and today's worries do not have to control tomorrow. God's mercy gives us the courage to begin again.

Wisdom for Everyday Life

Begin with Grace

New beginnings often come with high expectations. We may want perfect grades, perfect routines, or a perfect start. But no student, parent, or teacher will do everything perfectly.

Grace allows us to learn without being defeated by our mistakes. When something does not go as planned, pause, learn from it, and begin again. God's love is not based on our performance, and our worth is greater than any grade, achievement, or failure.

Build One Good Habit

Large goals are usually reached through small, repeated actions.

Preparing your backpack the night before, reading for a few minutes each day, completing one assignment at a time, praying before school, or going to bed at a healthy time may seem like small choices. Yet these habits gradually shape the direction of an entire semester.

Do not worry about changing everything at once. Choose one good habit and practice it faithfully.

Help Someone Else Begin Well

A new semester can feel especially difficult for someone who is lonely, uncertain, or struggling to adjust.

A smile, an invitation to sit together, a kind word, or an offer to help can make a meaningful difference. When we welcome others, we reflect the love of Christ and help create a school community where everyone knows they belong.

Family Practice: 3 Minutes at Dinner

"A New Season" Conversation

Invite each family member to answer these questions:

1. What is one thing you are looking forward to this semester?
2. What is one concern you would like your family to pray about?
3. What is one habit that could help you begin the semester well?

After everyone has shared, take a moment to pray together. Ask God to provide wisdom, patience, courage, and kindness for the new season.

Student Challenge

The Fresh Start Challenge

Choose one activity each day this week:

- **Prepare for Tomorrow**

Organize your school materials, clothes, or schedule before going to bed.

- **Encourage Someone**

Say something kind to a classmate, teacher, family member, or staff member.

- **Ask for Help**

Speak with a trusted adult when you do not understand something or feel overwhelmed.

- **Spend Time with God**

Read a short Bible passage and ask God to guide your thoughts, words, and choices.

- **Try Again**

Return to something that was difficult and take one more step instead of giving up.

- **Welcome Someone**

Include a person who may feel new, quiet, or left out.

- **Practice Gratitude**

Write down three good things from your day and thank God for them.

Remember, a strong beginning does not mean doing everything perfectly. It means being willing to take the next faithful step.

A Blessing for You

May the Lord fill your heart with hope as this new season begins.

May He give students courage to learn, teachers and staff wisdom to lead, and families patience to support one another.

May our classrooms be places of curiosity and compassion, our hallways be filled with kindness, and our Sterling community continue to grow in faith, unity, and love.

When challenges arise, may you remember that God's mercy is new every morning. May He guide each step you take and remind you that you never walk into a new season alone.

As always, if you or your child need encouragement, support, or prayer, my door is always open.

Blessings,

Chaplain David Park

All newsletters and monthly messages are available on Sterling's Chaplain homepage.