



If you want to save your life, you will destroy it. But if you give up your life for me, you will find it. Matt. 16:25, CEV

What did Jesus mean when he said, "Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it?" And anyway, how often do we stop to consider the commitment Christ expects? He's not talking about writing a check or checking a box, but living a life whose center is sharing with others that which God has so graciously given to us.

We are soon entering Lent, (on Valentine's Day, in fact!) the six weeks leading up to Easter that offer us a time of self-reflection and opportunities to deepen our faith. Deb Carpenter is once again coordinating a team of actors who will stimulate our thinking with dialogues and monologues at the center of worship each Wednesday evening at 6 p.m. in Lent. We will also share food and fellowship with supper each Wednesday at 5 p.m., before worship.

In the coming weeks, I hope to address some of the questions and ideas above, as we begin a new series on Sundays entitled *Living Generously*. Each week we will see one of a series of brief films that tells the story of the Donovan family as they seek to understand what it means to live the words of Jesus. Each week we will see a glimpse of their journey as they take risks, experience suffering and joy, and find themselves transformed by the call of Christ. You won't want to miss a single Sunday!

In addition to the Sunday service, you are invited to bring your coffee and treats after worship into the multipurpose room for a smaller-group chance to "go deeper" into the lesson for the day. We have 20 participant guides and will share them as needed. J Please come join in the study!

Life is busy, and it is easy for our hearts to be distracted by the demands we face. Each of us has so many blessings, but often our attitudes are less than grateful. It is my sincere hope that this series might prompt us to take an inventory of the blessings God has entrusted to each of us. As we do, I hope we will be inspired with a new awareness of the goodness of God.

What an opportunity for our church family to celebrate God's generosity! I hope to see you each week in Lent. May God grant us insight on this journey!

Pr. Lisa

**Lutheran
Church of the
Cross**

**February
2018**

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February's Altar Focus is Community Action Backpacks for Kids and Bring Home the Bacon piggy banks for World Hunger.

Altar Focus

Katharina & Martin Luther

The Radical Marriage of a Runaway Nun and a Renegade Monk

Book
Review

This biography is a fascinating look at life and marriage in the 1500's. This was a marriage made not of love, but the relationship grew to be a happy, love-filled marriage. Luther spoke of Katharina as an equal which was unusual during those times. The author highlights their relationship and its effect on Luther as a person and his work as a reformer. We get a glimpse of Luther as a husband and father as well as a scholar. This book reads like a work of fiction but the author has well researched her subject and the work has many footnotes. Not only is this a delightful read, but you gain an understanding why there was a need for church reform.



Friday Night at the Movies February 9th 6:30pm. Deb Carpenter will head up organizing the event. A potluck dinner starts the event with an enjoyable movie following the meal.

Friday
Night at
the Movies

Financial Peace University Class Coming Up Soon! Join us!!

What if you could be debt-free with an emergency fund of 3-6 months of expenses saved, all while investing for retirement and planning for your family's future? Sound impossible? It's not! With Dave Ramsey's class Financial Peace University, you CAN take control of your money. If you're interested in learning more about the class, call or message Pr Lisa at 701-220-9011 or lisaahlness@hotmail.com.

We're offering it at Lutheran Church of the Cross starting Sunday, February 11 from 7-8:30 p.m.! It will be nine Sunday evenings - we will take Easter Sunday off. All are welcome: friends, neighbors, family, so invite them to join you! Teens and young adult children are welcome to join their parents. This class comes with a lifetime membership and tools that will truly change your life. There is a cost to the class; call the church office if you'd like to inquire about scholarships. You can also register at: <https://fpu.com/1056798>

Lessons include saving, dumping debt, cash flow planning, the role of insurance, retirement and college planning, real estate and mortgages, credit cards, and generosity. Our last class, with members ranging in age from 30's to 70's, to a person agreed that they gained tremendously from this class. They commend it to you!

"Hello to all of you that are part of the Altar Guild Group and to anyone that would be interested in joining us or finding out more about what we do. We are having our annual meeting on February 10th at 9:30. It will be held in the sanctuary. At this meeting we will review the Altar Guild guidelines and go over any changes that may have come up during the last year. We will also go over the calendar for months that you are working to make sure it still works for you or if you would like to make any changes in months to help.

We welcome anyone that would be interested in joining the Altar Guild group or finding out what we do and how we work together to do it.

See you ALL at the meeting on the 10th of February.

Altar Guild Co-Chairs,
Jean Kraft and Cherie Krueger

Financial
Peace
University

Altar Guild

A Visit with Vincent – Generosity Changes Everything

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Matthew 5:14.

Vincent and his wife worked hard on their farm, saving carefully for retirement. They loved their church and in addition to their congregation, they shared with numerous charities throughout their lifetimes. Thankful for the many ways God blessed them, they shared abundantly and lived a life of contentment. By sharing what God had entrusted to them to help others, they created a legacy of generosity. Toward the end of his life, Vincent asked his pastor, "Pastor, are other people sharing the way my wife and I have? Can you use my example of giving to open their hearts to give? So that they too may know the joy of generosity?"

Thankfulness, happiness and contentment interact, but gratitude holds the key. Develop gratitude, then happiness and contentment follow. It doesn't work the other way around. With prayer, devotion and simple exercises, the Holy Spirit will lead you to deeper spiritual maturity and more happiness.

Here are some ideas for you and your family.

- Pray daily. Ask God to give you a greater sense of thankfulness. And then thank God for all the day's blessings.
- Chart thankfulness. On a big wall calendar mark one thing for which you're thankful to God. Invite other family members to do the same. When you get in the habit of looking for them, you will find blessings everywhere.
- Keep a "blessing list." Write down the things you are grateful for. Then as you say your nighttime and morning devotions, pray over the list: "God, I'm thankful for this, and I'm thankful for that." Revise the list as needed.
- Send out thank-you notes. Buy a box of inexpensive thank you notes and send one every week. Go deep, thanking not only the folks who have given you a present or done a favor for you, but also those whose love, support, friendship, laughter, energy or presence are important to you.
- Make a "thank offering." Express gratitude in a tangible way by contributing to your congregation or favorite church cause. Make the donation "just because," or in honor or memory of a loved one, or on the occasion of a special event or blessing in your life.

Adopt one or more of these exercises as a spiritual discipline and, with God's help, you will develop the attitude of gratitude that will bring more satisfaction, greater happiness, spiritual depth and emotional maturity to your life.

Generosity

2017 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Lutheran Church of the Cross

January 14, 2018

Annual
Meeting
Minutes

Call to Order and Welcome by Ken Will

Pastor Lisa lead us in devotions and singing of hymn "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ"

Circulation of Sign in Sheets by Council Members

Appointment of Parliamentarian - Roger Krueger, quorum was achieved

Approval of Minutes from January 22, 2017 Annual Meeting

Doug Johnson moved approval of the January 22, 2017 annual meeting minutes. Dawn Hutlin seconded the motion.

Motion approved.

Presentation of Reports - All committee and staff reports were included in the 2017 Annual Report provided.

Barb Norby moved to approve all reports as written. Art Wheeler seconded the motion. **Motion Approved.**

Treasurer's Report - It was reported by Art Wheeler that Lutheran Church of the Cross has no indebtedness to American Bank Center. There currently are 22 people who hold promissory notes.

Paul Gurhault moved to approved the Treasure's Report. Al Samuelson seconded the motion. **Motion Approved.**

Building and Grounds Committee Report - Jon Hanson gave a report that the year of 2017 was a year of projects: (1) overlay of parking lot (2) redo front sidewalk cement and eliminated small step to make it handicap accessible (3) automatic door opener at back door (4) beautiful new sign in front of our church (5) interior signage was begun and will be completed in 2018.

The "**Angels Amongst Us**" project was initiated by the Council. Those chosen for January were the Baron Blanchard Family.

Elections of Council Members - It was noted Jon Hanson stated he was willing to serve another term. Heather Martin volunteered for Council position. Ken Will called for nominations from the floor. Hearing none, Carol Samuelson moved to close nomination and to cast a unanimous ballot. Motion was seconded by Roger Anderson. **Motion Approved.**

Nominating Committee - Ken Will called for nominations from the floor. the following members were nominated;

Roger Krueger

Hattie Martinson

Pam Hanson

Carol Samuelson moved to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot. Dawn Hutlin seconded the motion. **Motion approved.**

Appointments:

Missouri Slope Lutheran Care Representative - Lavonne Hutlin

Camp of the Cross Representative - position not filled.

Annual Synod Assembly Representative - Murray Sagsveen volunteered.

2018 Proposed Annual Budget Presentation - Ken Will provided an overview of the proposed annual budget.

Doug Johnson moved to approve the 2018 annual budget. Steve Neu seconded the motion. **Motion Approved.**

Change of Constitution - There was a 50% quorum to accept changes to the Constitution. Deb Carpenter made a motion accept the changes to the Constitution. Cherie Krueger seconded the motion. A paper ballot was cast with final vote as 72 YES and 0 NO to accept changes.

New Business - Discussion was held concerning the call of Steven Dickens for the position of Director of Discipleship. Compensation is based on years of service. Also Steven Dickens is a minister of Word and Service; Pastor Lisa is minister of Word and Sacrament. A motion to call Mr. Dickens was made by Barb Thomas. The motion was seconded by Hattie Martinson. Paper ballot was used for voting whether to issue a call to Steven Dickens for Director of Discipleship. The vote count was: 73 yes, 1 no.

Art Wheeler conveyed on behalf of the congregation our thanks to Ken Will for his leadership, dedication, and time this past year. Seeing no other business before the congregation, Ken Will adjourned the meeting at 12:04 pm.

Closing Prayer by Pastor Lisa.

Congregation said **Table Prayer** before adjourning to the Potluck.

Annual
Meeting
Minutes
continued

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, January 9, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by President Ken Will. Council members present were: Kylie Blanchard, Jeff Thomas, Tom Harris, Brian Johnson, Kim Humann. Jon Hanson was absent.

Staff members present were: Pastor Lisa Alness, Art Wheeler. Connie Werner was absent.

There were no additions to the agenda.

Pastor Lisa led us in devotions.

Motion to approve the December minutes was made by Kim Humann and second by Tom Harris; motion carried. Art Wheeler gave the treasurer report; all bills received by December 31, 2017, have been paid. December bank statements have been reconciled and registries are correct. Motion was made by Brian Johnson, seconded by Kylie Blanchard to approve the report; motion carried.

We are looking at the largest budget for LCC in 2018. The Council is working on a better way to keep track of all income and expenses so as to better keep the members informed.

The Audit, done by Augie Ternes, shows that LCC is in compliance and all the numbers are good. Motion was made by Jeff Thomas, seconded by Kim Humann, to accept the Audit and to pay Augie \$600 for doing the Audit; motion carried.

Pastors report: A gift from the Phyllis Johnson family in the amount of \$2000 was given to the church. A second gift from the Lois Erickstad family in the amount of \$425 was also given to the Church.

Deb Carpenter is once again working on the Wednesday night Lenten service. She always does a wonderful job.

FPU (Financial Peace University) will be starting again on February 11, 2018. We have two couples and one single person signed up as of now. I encourage any one to attend; it is very worthwhile. It runs for nine Sundays from 7 to 8:30 pm.

Also starting in February is the new member classes. Date and time to be determined

**Church
Council
Minutes
January
2018**

Church Council Minutes continued

Director of Discipleship: Compensation package was discussed. The policy of the church is that there is a drug and alcohol test before any staff is employed by Lutheran Church of the Cross.

Building and Grounds: The phone system needs to be updated. No one can call the church and leave a message. Art stated he has the folder which has the information as to who installed the phone system.

Worship and Music: Altar focus for January is for the Salvation Army. They are working on Ash Wednesday service and Holy Week..

Media and IT have been combined with Worship and Music. The streaming equipment is slowly beginning to wear out and will have to be updated.

Christian Education: No Report.

Congregational Nurturing: This Committee will be taking over the "Angels Amongst Us," which began January, 2018.

Nominating Committee: Members of the committee are Lee Jensen, Carol Samuelson, Roger Krueger, and council members, Ken Will and Jon Hanson.

Kim Humann has decided not to remain on the council.

Jon Hanson has decided to continue serving on the council for another term.

If you know of anyone interested in being on the council, please contact a committee member.

Stewardship: John Kraft led the group decorating for Christmas.

Budget Committee: The budget Committee approved the 2018 Budget.

Mission Support: No Report.

Strategic Planning Committee: No Report

Unfinished Business: Annual Meeting is schedule to be held Sunday, January 14th, 2018, following worship service.

Church Council Minutes continued

New Business: the Council Retreat was tabled for now. Also noted that a paper ballot for voting to accept the needed changes to the Constitution. If the members of the congregation want to issue a call to Steve Dickens for Director of Discipleship, a paper ballot must also be used.

Jeff made a formal motion to appoint Art Wheeler as our Treasurer for 2018, Tom seconded; motion carried unanimously.

No further business before the Council, the meeting was adjourned with the Lord's prayer. The next Council meeting will be on Tuesday, February 13th, 2018 at 6:30 pm following C2 meeting which is held at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeffrey L. Thomas, Council Secretary

February Altar Focus

Community Action Program, Region VII, Inc. developed the Backpack for Kids program in December 2006 to address the need for food for children identified as being homeless or at risk of homelessness in the Bismarck/Mandan area. Children are served breakfast and lunch while attending school during the week but some do not have adequate food on the weekends. Backpacks are filled with "kid friendly" nutritious food items and are delivered to the schools where school personnel then distribute the backpacks to children in need. Community Action's Backpack for Kids program serves 35 schools and provides nearly 2,000 bags of food each month.

Kid Friendly Food Items:

Bags of cereal
Microwavable Mac & Cheese/Ramen
Granola/Cereal Bars
Fruit Snacks/Pop Tarts/Individually wrapped crackers
Pop top canned dinners
Peanut Butter & Jelly (plastic containers only)
Fruit Cups/ Pudding Cups

Lent - Easter 2018 Service Schedule

Ash Wednesday Service,
February 14, 6:00pm

Lent Services
Every Wednesday from February 14 -March 21 at 6:00pm
"What's in a Name...Monologues and Dramas"

Lenten Soup Supper served at 4:45 -5:45pm

Sundays during Lent: "Living Generously" a film
series and discussion

Palm Sunday Service, Sunday, March 25 at 10:00am

Maundy Thursday Service, Thursday, March 29 at 7:00pm

Good Friday Service, Friday, March 30 at 7:00pm

Easter Morning Service
Sunday, April 1 at 8:00am and 10:00am
Easter Breakfast (light)
9:00—11:30

**Lent and
Easter
Schedule**

ANGELS AMONG US-JOHN AND JEAN KRAFT

There is a quiet, unassuming couple among us who are completely indispensable in the daily life of Lutheran Church of the Cross! Jean Kraft is one of the co-chairs of the Altar Guild: organizing volunteers and details, preparing communion, ordering flowers and helping decorate the sanctuary and entire church. She also is on the library committee, is frequently a baptismal mentor, has served on the worship and music committee, and is a real asset as a confirmation small group leader and mentor. She notices everything, gives kudos to folks small and large for their good efforts, offers constructive criticism, is full of ideas and energy, and is never seen without a smile.

John Kraft not only serves on the buildings and grounds committee, but keeps constant watch over the building and all its parts. If there is a light-bulb out or an odd noise, he is on it. If there is an electrical-plumbing-heating-dishwashing-furniture moving-painting-you name it issue, he is on it. He changes the altar paraments for each special occasion and as the church seasons change, and helps the Altar Guild decorate and move around all the flowers at Christmas and Easter. He puts up the Christmas trees and wreaths during Advent, which might seem like not a big deal, but the large tree is old and complicated and heavy and lights need to be strung, all of which takes an entire day. John oversees the grounds and knows where every single thing is in the shed (because he has meticulously stored it there), organizes outdoor projects for our cleanup day and pitches in mightily on those as well as massive snow removal last year and making sure the sprinklers are operating correctly in the summers.

If you ever have a question at or about LCC, the Krafts might well be able to answer it. Next time you see John or Jean, give them a pat on the back and your thanks for all they do!

HELP HEAT THE CHURCH

A monthly calendar is available in the entrance hallway for contributors to pick day(s) to help Heat the Church. February will be \$25 per day, March \$10. Please enter your name on the selected date(s), and include if the donation is in memory of someone, or acknowledging a special event or purpose. Donations may be left with the secretary, put in the offering or use electronic giving. Thanks to those individuals or families who have sponsored the heat for January. The Wheeler's, Zinsli's Hewitsons, Tryznka, Riveland's Blanchard's Kunze's, Dolans, Hanson's. Thank you so much for helping to keep the church warm!

Angels
Among
Us

Heat
The
church

A GLIMPSE OF THE 2018 BUDGET

During the recent Annual Meeting, the congregation adopted a General Fund Operating Budget of \$432,588 which now includes the repayment of the promissory notes. Meeting that budget requires monthly contributions & offerings of \$36,049. Through the first three Sundays in January, total contributions were \$21,026.

The Building Escrow account (formerly Building Fund) needs to transfer \$5,700 monthly to the Promissory Note Reserve account. Contributions to the Building Escrow in January will nearly meet that monthly requirement. Any amount short of the \$5,700 will have to be transferred from the General Operating account. Anyone who would like to contribute directly to the Building Escrow account may do so and those amounts would be part of the monthly \$5,700. Memorials have also been part of the Building Escrow account.

To recap the \$30,349 General Funds plus the \$5,700 Promissory Notes repayments equals the \$36,049 monthly funds needed to meet the total Operating Budget for Lutheran Church of the Cross.

An update on contributions will be available in the newsletter. Any questions should be directed to the Church Council.

Budget

Greetings everyone!

You may have noticed in the January service bulletins that after electing new council members, the council saw fit to ask me to step into the role of President. After a considerable amount of thought, I said yes and so here we are.

In all seriousness, I'm excited! I'm excited about the opportunity to give back to the church that so warmly and so quickly adopted us, providing a church family. There is no way Kari, myself, our daughter Kaylyn, or our son Kolton could have truly known how perfect a fit it was destined to be that God brought us to Lutheran Church of the Cross until we had the opportunity to experience it for ourselves. Now I have the opportunity to serve each and every one of you and can only hope that I am adequate to the task, especially as I follow in the footsteps of two gents I greatly admire, Jon Hanson and Ken Will. I will promise you this. Over the next year (and beyond of course!), I will do my utmost to support the church mission, to listen and advise our church leaders, and to learn about how I can better serve God, sharing faith and optimism (I'll do my best!) with each and every one of you along the way.

Lastly, I hope to take advantage of my time with the council to continue to better know the other members of our church family. If we haven't met yet, let's promise each other to try and do so this year. If we have, let's agree to learn something new. Knowing that I cannot convey what I have to offer, but to offer all of it nonetheless, I wish you all the best. If at any time, I need to be contacted, or you have a question, please don't hesitate to call. My email and phone number will be in the church bulletin every week and the monthly Crossword, along with the other council members, and I encourage, you to contact me to share your concerns and recommendations. Thank you for your time and consideration and peace be with you.

Warmest regards,
Tom Harris

Tom Harris,
Council
President

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
February Calendar 2018						
4 9:00 Worship Team Practice 9:15 Church School 10:00 Worship/Baptism 11:00 Coffee Hour	5 Altar Focus: Backpacks for Kids and M&M's for CAR	6 Supper 5p C2 Mtgs 5:30p Church Council 6:30p	7 Supper 5:00-5:45 5:35 Wed. W. Practice Wed. Worship/6p Church School/ Confirmation Large Grp 7p	8 Quilting 1pm 8p AA Mtg.	9 Friday Night at the Movies 6:30pm	10 Altar Guild Mtg 9:30am Book Club 12:30pm 4:30p Optional Sm Group River practice
11 9:00 Worship Practice 9:15 Church School 10:00 Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour 7pm Financial Planning	12	13 Supper 5p C2 Mtgs 5:30p Church Council 6:30p	14 Ash Wednesday Supper 4:45-5:45 5:35 Wed. W. Practice Lenten Worship 6p Church school/ Confirmation Small	15 Quilting 1pm 8p AA Mtg.	16	17 Eunice Sanders Memorial 10am 4:30p Optional Sm Group River practice
18 9:00 Worship Team Practice 9:15 NO Church School 10:00 Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour/ New member class 7pm Financial Planning	19 No School Newsletter deadline	20 ELCA Bible Study 3p Note time change No School	21 6:30a MM Bible Study @ Panera's Lenten Soup Supper 4:45-5:45 5:35 Wed. W. Practice Lenten Worship 6p Church school/ Confirmation: 7p	22 Quilting 1pm 8p AA Mtg.	23	24 4:30p Optional Sm Group River practice
25 9:00 Worship Team Practice 9:15 Church School 10:00 Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour/New member class 7pm Financial Planning	26 Knitting for Others 1pm	27	28 Lenten Soup Supper 4:45-5:45 5:35 Wed. W. Practice Lenten Worship 6p Church school/ Confirmation: 7p Leaders only			

The Western North Dakota Synod is one of many companion synods with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Central African Republic.

We walk together in several ministries:

- ❖ Village Education Project which provides elementary education and schools to students in over 20 villages and towns
- ❖ Emmanuel Health Center in Gallo which provides medical services to a large area
- ❖ Mary Martha Women's Center which provides training in sewing and literacy
- ❖ Spring boxes that help keep water safe for drinking
- ❖ Seminary training
- ❖ Scholarships for young women to attend high school
- ❖ Scholarships for young adults to attend the university in Bangui
- ❖ Motorcycles to provide transportation for church workers

Did you know?

- ❖ The population of the CAR is around 4.6 million.
- ❖ About half of the population was displaced during the recent civil unrest.
- ❖ The average income prior to the unrest was around a dollar a day.
- ❖ The CAR is about the size of Texas.
- ❖ The churches of the Western ND Synod raised over \$30,000 last year (mostly through M&M sales - Sweet Deal for C.A.R. Project) that went directly to CAR ministries.

Please consider taking one or more M&M containers home with you and, during the course of the next month and a half, filling them with quarters. Totally filled containers amounts to \$14. You can return them to the church when filled, or at the end of the period.

C2 and Church Council Meetings



The next Church Council Meeting is at 6:30pm Tuesday, **February 13**. A light supper at 5:00pm is planned. The C2 committees meet at 5:30. Council meetings are open to everyone. If you have an item to come before the Council, please contact Tom Harris prior to the meeting.

**Altar
Focus
For
February**

**C2
Supper
5pm
C2
Committee Mtgs.
5:30
Church
Council
6:30pm**

1004 E Highland Acres Rd
Bismarck ND 58501
Phone:701.223.1001

churchsecretary@midconetwork.com

E-News

Worship Times:
Wednesday Worship
6:00pm

Sunday Worship
The River Service
10:00am

Lisa Ahlness, Pastor

Office Hours:
M -TH 8-4pm
Fri. 8-noon School Year
Summer Hours 9-1
Mon.—Fri

Lutheran Church of the Cross

2018 Church Council

Tom Harris, President	390.9421
Ken Will, Vice President	258.7127
Jon Hanson, Secretary	391.3416
Jeff Thomas	955.3632
Brian Johnson	391-0872
Kylie Blanchard	391.0373
Heather Martin	202.8316

The Church Council and the C2 Committees meet once a month; the second Tuesday, at 5:30pm. The Council meetings (at 6:30pm) are open to the congregation and all are encouraged to attend a meeting or to visit with a Council member if you have questions

Making Jesus Known by Sharing our Gifts