

Lutheran Church of the Cross  
1004 E Highland Acres Rd.  
Bismarck ND 58501

Phone: 223-1001

Website: [www.churchofthecross.org](http://www.churchofthecross.org)

Winter Hours. Mon.– Thursday 8–4pm Fri 8 to noon

Summer Office Hours: Mon.- Fri. 8:00 am—noon

**Staff:**

Lisa Ahlness, **Pastor**

Cell: 220.9011 / [lisaahlness@hotmail.com](mailto:lisaahlness@hotmail.com)

Connie Werner, **Secretary** cell 400.5852

Office 223-1001 / [churchsecretary@midconetwork.com](mailto:churchsecretary@midconetwork.com)

Art Wheeler, **Treasurer**

527-9582/ [lcctreasurer@midconetwork.com](mailto:lcctreasurer@midconetwork.com)

Beth Greff, **Worship Coordinator**

400-2087/ [theriver@midconetwork.com](mailto:theriver@midconetwork.com)

Joel Crane, **Wednesday Worship Coordinator**

498-2604/[cranejoel58@gmail.com](mailto:cranejoel58@gmail.com)

Gerri Sarsten, Joel and Jan Gilbertson, Beth Greff **Accompanists**

**2023 Church Council Members**

Mike Humann, President [mknhumann@bis.midco.net](mailto:mknhumann@bis.midco.net) 527.3376

Janice Martin, Vice President [msladyj2000@gmail.com](mailto:msladyj2000@gmail.com) 471.5600

Jessi Karvo, Secretary [jfish321@gmail.com](mailto:jfish321@gmail.com) 426.7439

Cherie Krueger, [cheriekrueger@gmail.com](mailto:cheriekrueger@gmail.com) 226.7514

Mike Geiermann, [mgeiermann12@gmail.com](mailto:mgeiermann12@gmail.com) 471.5122

Sarah Dahl, [sarahdahlmba@gmail.com](mailto:sarahdahlmba@gmail.com) 226.6844

Scot Long, [scotglong@gmail.com](mailto:scotglong@gmail.com) 400.2169

*“Making Jesus Known By Sharing Our Gifts”*

# The River

A Blended Worship Service



Lutheran Church of the Cross  
December 10, 2023

*“Making Jesus Known By Sharing Our Gifts”*

**LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS**  
**“The River” Worship Service**  
**Second Sunday in Advent**  
**December 10, 2023**

*WE COME TOGETHER*

*You are invited to sing with the Worship Team as we gather for worship. All songs and worship liturgy will be projected on the screens for your use.*

**PRELUDE MUSIC**

*“Hope for Everyone”, “Prepare a Place”, “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”*

**WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**SONG:** *“Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah”*

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE**

**GREETINGS OF PEACE**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**OUR CONFESSION, GOD’S FORGIVENESS**

**GATHERING SONG:** *“Prepare the Royal Highway” ELW #264*

**CHILDREN’S MESSAGE** Joyce Wahl

*WE HEAR GOD’S WORD*

**FIRST READING:** Isaiah 40:1-11

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, O comfort my people,  
says your God.

<sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her

that she has served her term,  
that her penalty is paid,

that she has received from the LORD’s hand

The **directory** is out in the narthex with a limited printing. Copies will be made as needed.

**Today is the Cookie Walk and Caroling.** The cookie buying follows the worship service in the multipurpose room and the singing comes at 2pm here. Bring the entire family to both events. Share the Christmas Spirit.

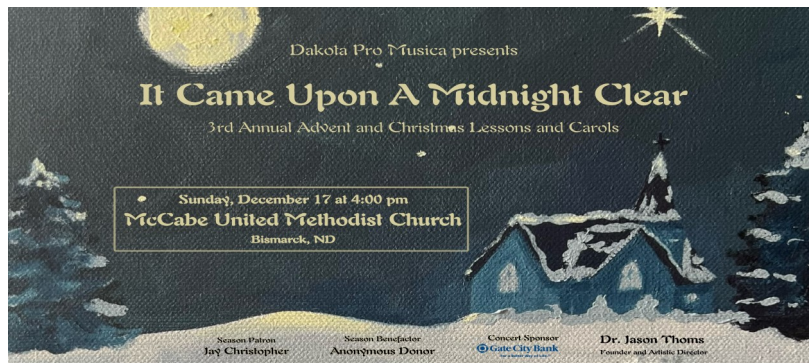
There is a **laundry basket** located out in the annex for our members to donate winter gear for those that go without. Collecting used or new hats, mittens, gloves, & scarves. Thank you for your contribution to our community! The basket will remain in the narthex until warm weather arrives again. Kathryn Spilman takes the donated items and distributes them to the library patrons that go without warm gear.

We will be once again collecting **boys blue jeans for Carrie’s Kids**. The Christmas tree will be put up around Thanksgiving with tags listing sizes that are needed. If you are an early shopper or a late shopper the jeans will be distributed just before Christmas to Carrie’s Kids and also after Christmas. The jeans do not have to be wrapped just placed under the tree. Thank you for your willingness to share your blessings with this ministry.

The **poinsettia order forms** are at the back of the church and next to the church directory/heat the church calendars. Please fill the form out and return it to the plastic bin next to the secretary’s office or place it in the offering plate.



Dakota Pro Musica is partnering with McCabe United Methodist Church in Bismarck to present a special Nine Lessons and Carols service on Sunday, December 17th at 4:00 pm. The service of **Nine Lessons and Carols** was created in 1918 for King's College in Cambridge, and uses scripture readings from the fall of Adam to the Birth of Christ to create a beautiful Advent and Christmas experience. The choir will present various choral anthems and carols that reflect on the scripture readings. There will also be several congregational Carols sung including: "Once In Royal David's City", "It Came Upon Midnight Clear", "Silent Night", and "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing". The service is open to the community, and a freewill donation will be collected. Dakota Pro Musica, is a professional choral ensemble based in Bismarck, and provides "Building Community" concerts across Central North Dakota. The Founder and Artistic Director is Dr. Jason Thoms, who is also the Director of Choral Activities at Bismarck State College. You can find out more about Dakota Pro Musica at [dakotapromusica.org](http://dakotapromusica.org).



Did you notice the beautiful **Advent bulletin board** as you came in the back door? Lillian Crook designed and created the bulletin board. Thank you Lillian.

The church has **two office chairs** for the taking. Call the church office and they are yours.

**Christmas program practice** is at 10am December 16th. See you there!

**Heat the Church** The calendar has been placed on the round table in the narthex. December through February is \$25 day. March \$10 Choose the date(s) that have special meaning in the lives of your families. Donate in the memory of someone, or acknowledge a special event or purpose. Donations may be mailed or one may choose to use electronic giving. Thank you for continuing this tradition.

<sup>3</sup>A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup>Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

<sup>6</sup>A voice says, “Cry out!”

And I said, “What shall I cry?”  
All people are grass,  
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

<sup>7</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades,  
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;  
surely the people are grass.

<sup>8</sup>The grass withers, the flower fades;  
but the word of our God will stand forever.

<sup>9</sup>Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good tidings;  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,  
lift it up, do not fear;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
“Here is your God!”

<sup>10</sup>See, the Lord GOD comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.

<sup>11</sup>He will feed his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms,  
and carry them in his bosom,  
and gently lead the mother sheep.

**RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13**

<sup>1</sup>LORD, you were favorable to your land;  
you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

<sup>2</sup>**You forgave the iniquity of your people;  
you pardoned all their sin.**

**Selah**

<sup>8</sup>Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,  
for he will speak peace to his people,  
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.

<sup>9</sup>**Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,  
that his glory may dwell in our land.**

<sup>10</sup>Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;  
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

<sup>11</sup>**Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,  
and righteousness will look down from the sky.**

<sup>12</sup>The LORD will give what is good,  
and our land will yield its increase.

<sup>13</sup>**Righteousness will go before him,  
and will make a path for his steps.**

**SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a**

<sup>8</sup>Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. <sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Welcome to Lutheran Church of the Cross, and to “The River” Blended Worship Service this morning!** If you are visiting with us today, please take a moment to sign the guestbook in the narthex.

**Book Club Choices:** Meets the 2nd Wednesday at 1:30pm in the Library.  
December: Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Gamus  
January: The Reading List by Sara Nisha Adams  
Consider coming to the Book Club. We have interesting and lively discussions of each book. A variety of subjects are read but usually works of fiction.

The **reports for the Annual Meeting** scheduled for Jan. 21 are due January 10 by noon. Send them electronically to churchsecretary@midconetwork.com. The Annual Report booklet needs to be handed out one week prior to the scheduled event.

**THANK YOU** to all of the volunteers and eaters as well that participated in donating your time/food items plus the financial gifts of money. \$28,010 was raised towards the purchase of the tractor for Camp of the Cross. **Hallelujah!!** Check out the photos of the event in the narthex.

**Faith and Care** is a vital ministry of this church. When loved ones' pass, the church tries to wrap its arms around the grieving ones through prayer, food, and hospitality during the time leading up to and after the funeral/memorial service. To that end we have divided the church families into 6 groups called Faith and Care Group 1, 2, etc. Each group is assigned a two-month period to be responsible for making desserts and serving the luncheon. In addition to funerals, our Lenten Soup suppers and all other events are also important for fellowship and getting to know your church family. Your help and your commitment to this ministry is essential to the functioning and life blood of this church. You are needed.

Faith and Care is now in a transition period until the end of August 2024. By that we mean the groups will continue functioning as a Faith and Care group through August 2024. The groups' responsibilities will remain the same. A booklet will be produced and distributed to the leaders of each group.

Starting with September 2024 the Faith & Care year will run from Sept 1 to August 31. The purpose of this transition is to reflect the new start each fall of getting back into the congregational life of this church. We will have an organizational meeting prior to September 1.



## WEEKLY CALENDAR of December 10, 2023

<b>Today, December 10:</b>	<b>River Service 10:00am 11:00am Cookie Walk 11:00am Coffee Caroling 2pm</b>
<b>Monday, December 11:</b>	<b>Stitching Group 9am</b>
<b>Tuesday, December 12:</b>	
<b>Wednesday, December 13:</b>	<b>Book Club 1:30 pm Supper 5:00pm Worship Service 6:15pm Church School 7:00pm River practice 7pm</b>
<b>Thursday, December 14:</b>	<b>AA Meeting 7:30pm</b>
<b>Friday, December 15:</b>	<b>Wired Word 1:30pm</b>
<b>Saturday, December 16:</b>	<b>Men's Bible Study 10:00am <u>Christmas Program practice 10am</u> River practice 4pm</b>
<b>Sunday, December 17:</b>	<b>River Service 10:00am Christmas Program New member Sunday Coffee 11:00am</b>

### **Future Events**

**December 24 4:30/5:00pm Christmas Eve**

<sup>11</sup>Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, <sup>12</sup>waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? <sup>13</sup>But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

<sup>14</sup>Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; <sup>15a</sup>and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: "Glory to God"**

**GOSPEL READING: Mark 1:1-8**

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

<sup>2</sup>As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way;

<sup>3</sup>the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight,'"

<sup>4</sup>John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

**SERMON** Pastor Lisa Ahlness

**SONG OF THE DAY:** *“Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)”*

**APOSTLES’ CREED**

**PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH:** *“Let Us Pray for Peace”*

**SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**OFFERING:** *“Christmas Offering”*

**OFFERING PRAYER**

*WE SHARE THE MEAL*

**PREPARATION FOR THE MEAL**

**LORD’S PRAYER** *“Lord’s Prayer”*

**INVITATION TO OUR LORD’S SUPPER**

**COMMUNION SONG:** *“Blessed Be Your Name”*

**COMMUNION BLESSING/POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

**BENEDICTION:** *“Final Blessing”* (Holden Evening Prayer)

**SENDING SONG:** *“Love, Divine, All Loves Excelling”* ELW #631

**DISMISSAL:** *“Hope for Everyone”*

**Introduction:** John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord’s coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, “See, your God is coming!” We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

## **“THE RIVER” WORSHIP MINISTERS**

**Pastor**—Pastor Lisa Ahlness

**Scripture Reader**—Mike Humann

**Greeters**—Tracy Wolf & AJ Marx

**Ushers**—Lee Jensen, John Kraft, Floy Marx

**Communion Assistants**—Tracy Wolf, Janice Martin, Ruth Jensen

**Faith & Care**— Kim & Mike Humann, Deb & Rod Sargent

**Altar Guild**—Jean Kraft, Donna Belisle, Cheryl Neu, Cherie Krueger

**River Worship Team**—

**Sound Board Technicians**— Larry Wolf

**Projection Team**— Caden Kunze, Jace Kunze, Rod Sargent, Art Wheeler

**Streaming Team**— Mark Kunze, Karen Will

**River Singers**— Deb Carpenter, Kerry Carpenter, Marlene Grabow, Sally Grenz, Paul Gurholt, Doug Johnson, Cherie Krueger, AJ Marx, Amanda Sagsveen, John Saylor, Tom Wade, Barb Wilson

**Guitarists**—Tom Wade

**Percussionist**— Kari Harris

**Violinist**—Fynn Sagsveen

**Flutist**—Beth Greff

**Accompanists**—Jan & Joel Gilbertson, Gerri Sarsten, Beth Greff

### **Prayers, Births, Deaths, Concerns**

Please contact Connie in the church office if you have a prayer request, or if you will be entering the hospital and would like a pastoral visit.

### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

*(We encourage you to take this list home and pray for these people.)*

### **For those struggling with health and other concerns:**

Reece Fischer, Tracy Martinson, Ann Hillesland, Erwin and Linda Marson, Arlene Wolff, Bob Roesler, Earl Larson, Nancy Dockter, Lori Marx, Hattie Martinson, Carter Weigel, Kerry Carpenter, Josey Hanson, Mary Ternes, Jeff Thomas, Jean King, Jim Miller, Heidi Renner, Peg Ahlness, Jacob Walby, Kristy Forrest, JoDee Saylor, Colter Lee

### **For those dealing with the death of these loved ones—**