

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

Phone: 223-1001

Website: 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

Connie Werner, **Secretary** cell 400.5852

Office 223-1001 / churchsecretary@midconetwork.com

Art Wheeler, **Treasurer**

527-9582/ lcctreasurer@midconetwork.com

Beth Greff, **Worship Coordinator**

400-2087/ theriver@midconetwork.com

Joel Crane, **Wednesday Worship Coordinator**

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

2023 Church Council Members

Mike Humann, President mknhumann@bis.midco.net 527.3376

Janice Martin, Vice President msladyj2000@gmail.com 471.5600

Jessi Karvo, Secretary jfish321@gmail.com 426.7439

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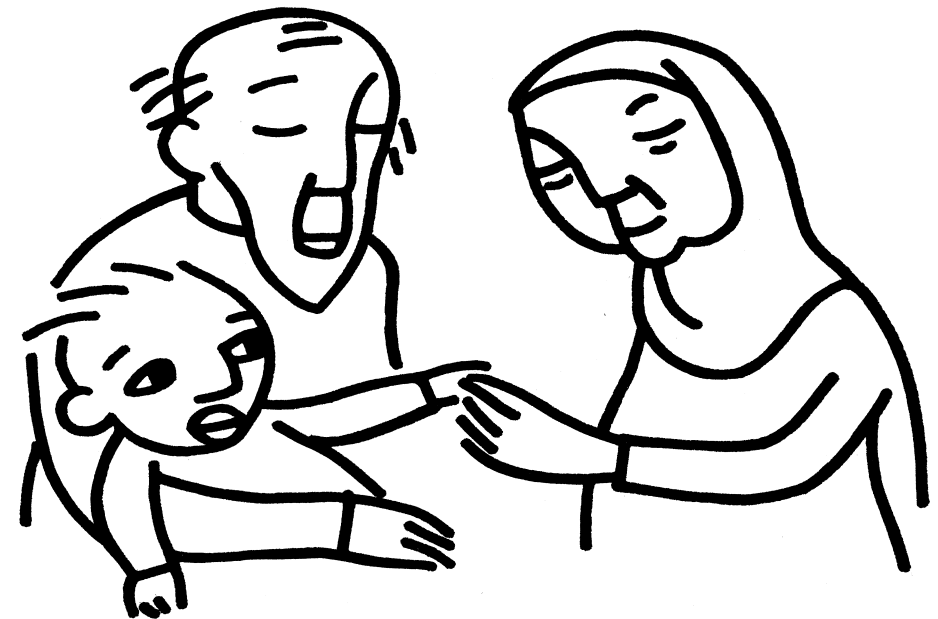
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“Making Jesus Known By Sharing Our Gifts”

The River

A Blended Worship Service



Lutheran Church of the Cross

December 31, 2023

10:00am

“Making Jesus Known By Sharing Our Gifts”

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS
"The River" Worship Service
December 31, 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

*"Let There Be Peace on Earth", "Your Little Ones Dear Lord" ELW #286,
"Angels We Have Heard on High" ELW #289*

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREETINGS OF PEACE

PRAYER OF THE DAY

OUR CONFESSION, GOD'S FORGIVENESS

GATHERING SONG: "What Child is This" ELW #296

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:10-62:3

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

The **directory** is out in the narthex. Copies will be made as needed.

Thank you to all who donated the lovely poinsettias which make the sanctuary so beautiful.



The church has **two office chairs** for the taking. Come get them anytime.

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.



^{62:1}For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.

²The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.

³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Responsive Reading: Psalm 148

¹Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!

²**Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his host!**

³Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all you shining stars!

⁴**Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!**

⁵Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for he commanded and they were created.

⁶**He established them forever and ever;
he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.**

⁷Praise the LORD from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deeps,

⁸**fire and hail, snow and frost,
stormy wind fulfilling his command!**

⁹Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars!

¹⁰**Wild animals and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds!**

RESPONSIVE READING continued:

¹¹Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all rulers of the earth!

¹²**Young men and women alike,
old and young together!**

¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven.

¹⁴**He has raised up a horn for his people,
praise for all his faithful,
for the people of Israel who are close to him.
Praise the LORD!**

SECOND READING: Galatians 4:4-7

⁴When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: *"All Hail King Jesus"*

GOSPEL READING: Luke 2:22-40

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Joseph and Mary] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

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.
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.

A **letter** was sent about some Constitutional changes to be voted on during the Annual meeting; January 21, 2024. Copies are available near the front and back doors.

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.

Greeters, Ushers, Readers and Communion Assistants, Barb Norby would like to know whether or not you want to continue on volunteering for these positions as she is preparing for the schedule for 2024. New members, would you like to participate in one of these vital missions of the church? Give her a call at 220.4058 and she can fill you in on the details of each volunteer task.

WEEKLY CALENDAR of December 31, 2023

Today, December 31:	New Years Eve River Service 10:00am Coffee 11:00am
Monday, January 1:	New Years Day Office closed
Tuesday, January 2:	Needlework Group 9:00am
Wednesday, January 3:	No Church activities
Thursday, January 4:	AA Meeting 7:30pm
Friday, January 5:	No Wired Word
Saturday, January 6:	Men's Bible Study 10:00am River practice 4pm
Sunday, January 7:	River Service 10:00am Coffee 11:00am

Future Events

Annual Meeting January 21, 2024

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

³³And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

SERMON: Bishop Craig Schweitzer

SONG OF THE DAY: *“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”* ELW #272

APOSTLES' CREED

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH: *“Open Our Eyes”*

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: *“Beautiful Savior”*

COMMUNION BLESSING/POST COMMUNION PRAYER

BENEDICTION: *“The Lord Be With You”*

SENDING SONG: *“The Bells of Christmas”* ELW #298

DISMISSAL: *“Go Tell It On the Mountain”* ELW #290

Introduction

The psalmist calls on the natural world, celestial bodies, fire and earth, creatures, and all humanity, to praise God. The voices of Simeon and 84-year-old Anna join the chorus today, recognizing what God is doing in Jesus. Simeon's song is often sung after communion, for we have seen God's salvation in the assembled community and have held Jesus in our hands in the bread. Then, like the prophet Anna, we tell of Jesus to all who look for the healing of the world.

“THE RIVER” WORSHIP MINISTERS

Pastor—Pastor Lisa Ahlness

Scripture Reader—Sally Grenz

Greeters—Darryl Hodnefield & AJ Marx

Ushers—Suzanne & Joel Toso, Floy Marx &

Communion Assistants—Sheila Koffler, Donna Belisle, Heather Martin

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

River Worship Team—

Sound Board Technicians— Larry Wolf, Francis Greff

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

Streaming Team— Mark Kunze, Karen Will, Art Wheeler

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, Kolton Harris, Joel Crane

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, Arvid Mugaas

For those dealing with the death of these loved ones—