

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:

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2024 Church Council Members

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“Making Jesus Known By Sharing Our Gifts”

The River

A Blended Worship Service



Lutheran Church of the Cross
December 8, 2024

10:00am

“Making Jesus Known By Sharing Our Gifts”

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS
“The River” Worship Service
December 8, 2024

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: “Hope for Everyone”, “Prepare a Place“, “Oh Come, Oh Come Emmanuel”

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SONG: “Light One Candle to Watch For Messiah”

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE Blanchard family

GREETINGS OF PEACE

PRAYER OF THE DAY

OUR CONFESSION, GOD’S FORGIVENESS

GATHERING SONG : “Prepare the Royal Highway” ELW 264

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

WE HEAR GOD’S WORD

FIRST READING: Malachi 3:1-4

¹ See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; ³ he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

Altar Focus: The tree is already set up for **Carrie’s Kids**. Boys jeans seem to be in high demand. Whether you take a “pant hanging ornament” off of the tree or not, all sizes are needed in regular, slim and husky. You needn’t wrap them. The bag you purchase them in is sufficient or no bag at all. Thank you for your generosity with this ministry that LCC supports. **Our second Altar Focus for December is Good Gifts**, which is a program of our denomination, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We have catalogs available on the table in the narthex and ornaments on the small tree You can choose something, make the appropriate donation to LCC and memo it “Good Gifts” (there are cute cards on the table for you to send the recipient as well), or you can do everything online at www.elca.org/goodgifts

Poinsettia Order Forms You can participate in beautifying the altar area and whole sanctuary with poinsettias at Christmas. The poinsettia order forms are at the back of the church and placed throughout the narthex. 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. Cost is \$18/plant and the forms need to be turned in by December 18.

You will find **posters** located throughout the building showing various **styles of apparel** that may be ordered with the LCC logo on them. The ordering is online only thru Dec. 2—16 and again later in the spring. The link/portal will be functional only during those times. This opportunity is in conjunction with Rally Day 2025 and the 70th Anniversary of LCC! (We will advertise the second ordering date again in the spring.)

Christmas Caroling Dec.22nd, 2 pm

Please sign up in the narthex to join together for an hour or so of Christmas caroling to the homes of some of our members who can’t come to church. We will meet in the fellowship hall at 2pm on Sunday, Dec. 22nd, split into groups, and go to about three places each depending on how far apart they are. You are welcome to come spontaneously, but if you sign up ahead, we will be better able to plan groups and stops. Music will be provided. Come give an hour and spread some joy! If you don’t sing but would be willing to take Christmas cookies to a house or two, please let Sally Grenz know!

The **Cookie Walk and the Children’s Program** are next week! Looking forward to the delicious baked goods and watching the excited children perform for the audience.

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: The Wish Book Christmas by Lynn Austin
January: What She Left Behind by Ellen Marie Wiseman
February: Montana 1948 by Larry Watson

Thanks to the Blanchard’s for being a part of the Advent candle lighting this morning.

You will find the **sign up calendars** for “Heat the Church” on the round table.

Wanting more from LLC? Adult education committee is seeking interests in The Chosen Series- This drama about the life of Jesus Christ introduces Jesus and the calling of his initial disciples, with a discussion after each episode. Sign up is located in the Narthex. Watch groups and discussions start February 2025!

There will not be a “Blue Christmas” Service as was planned.

Advent Meals and Worship Wednesdays in Advent—only three this year, will feature homemade soups plus bread and desserts. Our confirmation students will assist in serving, and freewill offerings will go to help them attend Bible camp in the summer! Come join in for some lovely warming food, fellowship and worship. Supper begins at 5pm—come when you can, until close to 6pm. Just two left to come and try the great tasting soups!
Dec. 11th: Knoepfla Soup cookoff—let’s try them all! - 7th graders assist
Dec. 20th: Beef Barley Vegetable Soup by Lady J’s - 8th graders assist

Our Advent worship begins at 6:15pm on these Wednesdays, and features the very lovely sung liturgy called Holden Evening Prayer, which will be led by our Living Water worship team. These brief services will not include the same sermon as Sunday, but scripture and a reflection on our Advent theme of Grace. Join us at 6:15pm each Wednesday! Happily, these services will also be livestreamed.

RESPONSIVE READING: Luke 1:68-79

⁶⁸Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

⁶⁹**He has raised up a mighty savior for us
in the house of his servant David,**

⁷⁰as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,

⁷¹**that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who
hate us.**

⁷²Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,
and has remembered his holy covenant,

⁷³**the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,**

to grant us ⁷⁴that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,
might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵**in holiness and righteousness
before him all our days.**

⁷⁶And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

⁷⁷**to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.**

⁷⁸By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us,

⁷⁹**to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace."**

SECOND READING: Philippians 1:3-11

³ I thank my God every time I remember you, ⁴ constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, ⁵ because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷ It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸ For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. ⁹ And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight ¹⁰ to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, ¹¹ having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: "Glory to God"

GOSPEL READING: Luke 3:1-6

¹ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

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

⁵ Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;

⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'

WEEKLY CALENDAR of December 8, 2024

Today, December 8:

**River Service 10:00am
Pancake & Sausage Breakfast**

Monday, December 9:

Needlework Group 9am

Tuesday, December 10:

Wednesday, December 11:

**Book Club 1:30pm
Advent Supper
Living Water Service
Church School, Confirmation**

Thursday, December 12:

**AA Meeting 8pm
Church Council 6:30pm**

Friday, December 13:

Wired Word 1:30pm

Saturday, December 14:

Men's Bible Study 10am

Sunday, December 15:

**River Service/Christmas program 10:00am
Cookie Walk 11:00am**

Upcoming Events

Online Apparel Store Dec. 2-16

Advent Suppers Dec 18

Caroling Dec. 22

Annual Mtg January 12, 2025

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:

Tracy Martinson, Ann Hillesland, Arlene Wolff, Earl Larson, Nancy Dockter, Lori Marx, Hattie Martinson, Carter Weigel, Josey Hanson, Heidi Renner, Kristy Forrest, JoDee Saylor, Arvid Mugaas, Diane Klein, Libby Martin, Kira Willadsen, Kerry Carpenter, Linda Marson, Lonnie Sunde, Jacob Hynek, Art Wheeler, Reece Fischer, Jeri Mutcher, Lindsey Steiger, Lyndon Jahner, Joel Crane, Paul Kuch, Christ Gerr, Sher Harildstad, Robyn Richter, Carolyn Wegerle, Pr. Phil Leer, Peg Ahlness, Deb Carpenter, Meredythe Bagle, Jeff Thomas

For those dealing with the death of these loved ones—

SERMON: Deacon Janie Hague

SONG OF THE DAY: *“Love Divine, All Love’s Excelling” ELW 631*

APOSTLE’S 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: *Spoken*

INVITATION TO OUR LORD'S SUPPER

COMMUNION SONG: *"Days of Elijah"*

COMMUNION BLESSING/POST COMMUNION PRAYER

BENEDICTION: *"Final Blessing"*

TABLE PRAYER: "Doxology"

SENDING SONG: *"Hark the Glad Sound"* ELW 239

DISMISSAL: *"Hope for Everyone"*

Introduction

Forerunners and messengers advance the advent of our God. While John the baptizer's voice in the wilderness may be the principal focus of the day, Malachi's prophecy could as easily herald the coming Christ as forerunner of the Lord of hosts. Finally all the baptized are called to participate in the sharing of the gospel. In so doing we prepare the way for the coming of Jesus and assist all people in capturing a vision of the "salvation of God."

"THE RIVER" and "LIVING WATER" WORSHIP MINISTERS

Pastor—Pastor Lisa Ahlness

Scripture Reader—Lillian Crook

Ushers—Lee Jensen & Tracy Wolf, Janice & Keven Martin

Communion Assistants—Janice Martin, Roger & Esther Anderson

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

Faith and Care Group 2— Deb & Rod Sargent, Myrtice Behan

River Worship Team—

Sound Board Technicians— Larry Wolf, Francis Greff

Projection Team— Caden Kunze, Jace Kunze, Val 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, Mark Murie, Amanda Sagsveen, John Saylor, Tom Wade, Barb Wilson

Percussionist— Kari Harris

Violinist—Fynn Sagsveen

Flutist—Beth Greff

Accompanists—Luke Weber, Beth Greff, Gerri Sarsten, Jan & Joel Gilbertson

Living Water Worship Team

Living Water Singers—Deb Carpenter, Kerry Carpenter, Caroline Collins, Keira Collins, Joel Crane, Annabelle Ellison, Brandi Ellison, Beth Greff, Amanda Sagsveen

Percussionist—Kari Harris

Guitarists— Kolton Harris, Joel Crane

Accompanist —Luke Weber

Sound—Beth Greff