



The Cross Word

July 2025

We have a guest article this month....

MoMo's Message is the pen name of a lady named Earlene who lived about 1/2 mile from the Mississippi River in southeast Minnesota. She grew up not having many of life's necessary luxuries. She married the love of her life and they spent 54 years together until he recently passed away. Together they raised 2 boys who live close to her. She also has 4 grand daughters and 2 grandsons plus 1 great grandchild on the way. She started writing as a "filler" for her home church newsletter and it has grown to church newsletters in 4 states. Earlene is a cousin to Larry and Tracy Wolf.

The Table / The Lesson

After the death of my husband I began sorting out certain belongings and inquiring if anyone in the family could use them. They chose a few items and then I started the task of finding anyone in need that would appreciate them. The remainder was donated to charitable thrift shops. It was difficult for the family to see this. I decided to share my story in the hope that it would help alleviate some of their sadness.

Our sons had graduated from the highchair and we desperately needed a dining room table. Without two nickels to rub together I gathered the courage to ask papa if I could have the drop leaf pine table that stood on a cold back porch. It was laden with boxes of tools and "junk". I had never asked anything from him but my request was denied. His answer may have been based on the years that he lived during The Great Depression or otherwise it was meant to teach me a lesson. He missed my smile that day.

A few weeks went by and I was able to adopt a rickety table at a garage sale. The adoption fee was \$1.00. I proudly took it home and gave it a thorough cleaning. Fork marks were noted in the soft pine along with what appeared to be teething marks on the edges. The dining room floor was uneven and so were the legs. A home remedy solved that — folded matchbooks or pieces of cardboard.

Most days I attempted to disguise that table's imperfections with a colorful cloth but that did not last long. The boys much preferred watercolor paint and playdough for decoration. The table had been given a new lease on life and had a sense of belonging, warmth and closeness. It had become a table of love and a life connection.

The magic of little hands racing their cars across the top made it tickle. The table listened in loving silence to the laughter of birthday celebrations and ignored the smeared frosting. The boys clamoring on top to sit and decorate cookies made it creak with joy and when one of the boys would bump his head into the corner of the table it groaned with sadness. Puzzle pieces, Go Fish and Hangman were part of the daily routine and it laughed along with all the giggles, feeling love and being needed.

Papa would share in all the family celebrations and family dinners but was oblivious about the table and never remarked about its tottering condition. It was to reside there for a number of years until we saved up enough to replace it.—Replace it physically but always remembering every dent, scratch or chip, for it had a story to tell.

I carried that pine table from papa's back porch quite a while after his funeral but I no longer needed it and it was placed in storage. →

The lesson here is: give while you can, what you can and watch the smiles that come back to you.

“You cannot separate the old furniture from the memories and the memories from the old furniture.”
M Ilday

“A table with children’s hungry faces around it ceases to be a mere table, it becomes an altar.”
Anon.

Book Club Meets the 2nd Wednesday at 1:30 in the Library.

July — The Paris Library by Janet Skeslien Charles

August—James by Percival Everett

September—Frozen River by Ariel Lawhon

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.

In the Footsteps of Paul tour coming in April 2026!

We have many tools to help Bible stories come alive for us: maps, study guides, commentaries, different translations. But nothing brings more aha! moments and enhances understanding better than traveling to the places and getting to know the context that surround and shapes the story. Pastor Lisa will be leading a group to Greece and Turkey, to some of the places where Paul preached and ministered, shortly after Easter in 2026.

The plan is to visit Istanbul, Thessaloniki, Philippi, the Meteora monasteries, Delphi, Athens, a 4-day cruise excursion take us to Mykonos, Ephesus (Turkey) Patmos, Rhodes, Crete, and Santorini; and Corinth, before returning to Athens for departure. A 2-1/2 day extension to Istanbul can be added if you are interested. The cost of the trip is approximately \$5000. Friends and family are welcome; Pastor Gretchen and our UCC neighbors have also expressed interest in joining us on this tour. Let Pr. Lisa know if you are interested in hearing more about it or know someone who might like to go!

Scripture Circles

U.S. Jones II, a student and teacher of Scripture and friend of Rabbi Noah, has been leading Scripture Circles in Bismarck for the last few months. Our confirmation students, parents, and leaders even had the chance to experience one! The July Scripture Circle will be held on Thursday, July 17 at McCabe Methodist Church. A light dinner will be served at 5 pm, with study to start about 5:45 pm. Come experience Bible study in a whole new way! All are welcome. Likely Bibles are available at the church, but feel free to bring your own.

VBS and Neighborhood Block Party!! Vacation Bible School will be once again hosted by our talented neighbors at the United Church of Christ. The theme is “exercise your faith” – and they have all kinds of fun ways to help children ages 3 through 5th grade explore this theme. There are registration sheets in the narthex. VBS will be Sunday – Wednesday evenings, August 10 – 13, concluding with a brief program that will lead right to joining in with the neighborhood block party on Wednesday the 13th! There is also a sign-up for adult volunteers. Join the fun!

And speaking of the Neighborhood Block Party – mark your calendars for Weds, August 13th! We will begin with grilled hot dogs and potluck at the UCC church and enjoy fellowship in their shady side yard starting at 5:30 pm. Then, all are invited to amble over to LCC for a bounce house, yard games, hopefully face painting for kids – and dessert for all. Pastor Lisa will be walking our half of the Highland Acres putting invitations on doors – let her know if you’d like to help!

Historians needed

This is the 70th year of LCC's existence! When we turned 50, Gladys Bain and others put together a written history of the congregation (a copy of which is in our library) - a wonderful document to have! We would like to update this history to add the happenings of the last 20 years. Would you like to be part of a small committee working on this? Let Pastor Lisa or the office know!

Call Committee Update

You might be wondering, "Didn't we used to have a pastor AND a deacon? What is happening with that second pastoral position?" LCC has had paperwork in to call a second pastor or deacon for a couple of years now. However, these rostered leaders are not "thick on the ground", as my grandfather would say. We feel lucky to have had initial zoom interviews with three candidates over the last 18 months or so, and further interviews with one of them. However, all three candidates were called elsewhere. Thank you for keeping this process in your prayers, and for all the ways you step up to help and to care for one another at LCC. We are sure the Holy Spirit will continue to lead us and has the right person in mind!

Summer Worship

Our second summer Wednesday worship is next week, July 9th! Hopefully the weather will continue to be glorious – otherwise, we will move inside. We will grill chicken breasts, hamburgers and hot dogs – the church will provide meats, buns, beverages, and all paper products. Bring something to share if you can, but please come and enjoy some summer fellowship and a brief worship service! Picnic will begin at 5 pm and worship at 6 pm. Council will meet at 7 pm.



Speaking of Generosity – Opportunities for Giving

At worship you often hear me thank you for your generosity. We are grateful! Our many ministries here at LCC and those we support in the community and wider world could not do it without you! Here are some ways you can give at and through LCC. Choose which fits your lifestyle best!

Offering envelopes: These are found on the oak cabinet in the narthex, far right side (or ask treasurers Art Wheeler or Sarah Dahl, if there are none). You can put cash or checks in these and as long as your name is on it (or treasurers are aware of your envelope number), your offering will be recorded for you.

Online: we use Vanco for our other forms of giving. All the options are linked, so you can give through any of the following ways, and they will all be recorded for you. The treasurers send statements a couple of times per year.

Website: you can easily set up an online giving account on our website – then you don't have to do it each time you go online. You can also set recurring gifts if you like, and choose various funds to give to, through the website.

Text: You can also give by text! I know – the world these days! Many people no longer carry cash – but almost everyone carries their smart phone. So, you can use the Vanco Mobile app, OR you can simply send a text to our dedicated number: 701-969-7030. Just put a number in the message – 20 if you'd like to give \$20, etc. It will prompt you to sign in or set up a Vanco account (which would have your credit, debit or checking account number, which is where the money would come from in any of these cases – all safely encrypted, of course. This is the same account used for the other methods.). You can test this by giving a \$1 donation, say, and if you find it simple – maybe this will be your choice for giving!

Vanco Mobile App: you can download the Vanco Mobile app on your phone. This will link to the same account, if you've set one up on the website, or you can give only through the app if you like. Just make sure to choose OUR Lutheran Church of the Cross, as there are others in other cities/states!



Summer Altar Focus: Items for LWR Baby Care Kits & School Care Kits

Baby kits will contain:

TWO lightweight cotton t-shirts (no Onesies ®)

TWO long- or short-sleeved gowns or sleepers (without feet)

TWO receiving blankets, medium-weight cotton or flannel, or crocheted or knitted with lightweight yarn, between 36" and 52" square

FOUR cloth diapers, flat fold preferred

ONE jacket, sweater or sweatshirt with a hood, or include a baby cap

TWO pairs of socks

ONE hand towel, dark color recommended

TWO or three bath-size bars of gentle soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping; no mini or hotel size bars

TWO diaper pins or large safety pins

School Care Kits contain:

4 -70 sheet notebooks

5 unsharpened #2 pencils w/erasers

1 16 or 24 crayons

5 black or blue ballpoint pens

1 pencil sharpener

1 2 ½" eraser

1 12 inch ruler

1 blunt scissors

Calling all 3rd and 4th graders!

You will receive a Bible this fall, so we want to make sure not to miss anyone! Let Pastor or Connie in the office know of the 3rd/4th graders in your family!

Calling all 6th graders!

We are gearing up for confirmation in the fall and again, don't want to miss anyone! Call the church office at 701-223-1001 to let us know your 6th grader will be part of confirmation this fall!

More Fun and Fellowship Coming – Want to Help?

Getting organized for two new opportunities this fall: one will be a “getting together for home dinner” fellowship. And, we haven't had a group especially for seniors in a while. Let's get together for fun, fellowship, excursions, presentations, etc. Would you like to be on a small “steering committee” for either of these? (But only if you like food or fun!) Let Pastor Lisa know!

New Member Class coming in September


We look forward to welcoming new members this fall. Watch the calendar for date, and let Pastor Lisa know if you're interested!

Many Thanks

-to all those who filled in and kept the church looking terrific while Doug was away – we appreciate you!

-to those who worked hard to clean up and plant and beautify around the building outside – it looks wonderful!



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
July 2025 Altar Focus: School Care Kits, Baby Care Kits, Emergency Food Pantry		1	2	3 AA Mtg 8pm	Office closed 	5 Men's Bible Study 10am
6 9:00 Practice 10:00 River Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour	7 Needlework Group 9am	8 W & Music committee 7:30	9 10 5pm Picnic 6pm Worship 7pm Church Council River practice 7pm	10 AA Mtg 8pm	11 Wired Word 1:30pm	12 Men's Bible Study 10am
13 9:00 Practice 10:00 River Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour	14 Needlework Group 9am	15	16 Book Club 1:30 River practice 7pm	17 AA Mtg 8pm	18 Wired Word 1:30pm	19 Men's Bible Study 10am
20 9:00 Practice 10:00 River Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour	21 Needlework Group 9am	22	23 River practice 7pm	24 AA Mtg. 8pm	25 Wired Word 1:30pm	26 Men's Bible Study 10am
27 9:00 Practice 10:00 River Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour	28 Needlework Group 9am	29	30 River practice 7pm	31 AA Mtg 8pm		31 Men's Bible Study 10am



1004 E Highland Acres Rd
Bismarck ND 58501

701.223.1001
churchsecretary@midconetwork.com

E-News

Worship Times:

Wednesday Worship

6:15pm (School year)

Sunday Worship

The River Service

10:00am

Lisa Ahlness, Pastor

Office Hours:

M -TH 8-4pm

Fri. 8-noon School Year

Summer Hours 8—noon

Mon.—Fri

Making Jesus Known by Sharing our Gifts