



The Cross Word

October 2025



From Pastor Lisa

There's a story in I Kings 19 about the prophet Elijah, who is fleeing from the wrath of Queen Jezebel. She is intent on his demise. Elijah has been working hard to spread God's message – not an easy job when you're supposed to tell off the people in power for their transgressions! He is completely exhausted and falls asleep underneath a broom tree. (No idea what that one looks like; I just think it sounds neat.) An angel appears and urges him to get up and eat and drink. This part is the subject of some social media memes – think cartoons – saying something like everything is better after a nap and a snack. Which, as far as it goes, is true.

But Elijah is spent, hiding in a cave and talking to the Lord, saying, Listen, I feel like I'm the only one left, and they're after me to kill me! (I don't want to work for you anymore!) There blows up a huge wind that breaks rocks around him. Then an earthquake rumbles through. And finally a whirlwind of fire. With each cataclysm we hear "but the Lord wasn't in" them. After all this, Elijah comes out of the cave and stands before the Lord. And after all that, the Lord does speak to him – depending on the translation – in a "still, small voice" or "in the sound of sheer silence."

I thought of that story this morning as I got into my car. Like many of you, I have rituals – turn on this news program or that music, depending on the time of day, or maybe a favorite podcast. Today I only craved silence. William Wordsworth has a poem that begins "The world is too much with us, late and soon!", and that's how I felt. The world is too much with me. I need to hear God's voice, and I can't hear it in the crashings and cacophony of all the craziness around me, near and far.

I think we all need to find our way to silence, for our mental health, yes – but also to listen to God's Word and discern God's call to us.

Where do you find silence and peace in your life? If the memory of it is dim, how could you find some? Take a walk in nature – without headphones? Work a bit in the garden? Go to the library? Meditate? Listen while you stretch into some yoga positions? It is a brave and healthy thing to stretch yourself into silence as well.

Peace to you as you ponder this, and always. God comes to us at unexpected times, in unexpected ways. May we welcome the Word coming to us.

Blessings! See you in church!

Pastor Lisa

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

October—"The Secret Life of Sunflowers" by Marta Molnar

November—"The Wine Makers Wife" by Kristin Harmel

December—"When Breath Becomes Air" by Paul Kalanihi

January —"All the Colors of the Dark" by Chris Whitaker

February—"The Briar Club" by Kate Quinn

Consider coming to the Book Club. We have interesting and lively discussions of each book. Each book is rated according to each person's likes and dislikes. A variety of subjects are read but usually works of fiction. The comradery within the group has become very important and is the reason many come. Come join us!

Altar Focus for October: Emergency Food Pantry

You all have been doing a terrific job of supporting the Bismarck Emergency Food Pantry, and we appreciate the cereal and proteins that have been coming in. This month we've decided to put on a push for spices: you know, salt/pepper, garlic salt, Italian seasoning, cinnamon – whatever you think is the spice of life and no one should be without! The Dollar Stores are chock full of options at low prices. If you want to go above and beyond, consider staples: flour, sugar, brown sugar. And can openers (Dollar Stores also carry decent ones.) It can be hard to use food pantries if you have no way to open cans. Thank you for your continuing generosity!

Beer and Hymns

For the past several years, we have been getting together in various venues to sing hymns, enjoy fellowship and (optionally) enjoy a beverage together. The current venue is the Mandan Eagles, 1400 N. Collins in Mandan. Join us on Monday, October 20, from 7-9 pm as we sing heartily. The musicians are great, the venue is, too, there is humor involved – and you get to choose the songs! A free will offering is received each time for an area charity, which they tell us about. Hope you can join in the fun!



Open House-All are Welcome—Come On In

This morning I am driving through neighborhoods in my hometown before going to do my weekly shopping. This is fairly usual for me as it evokes nostalgia for years past and paths walked with my sister. We would walk and dream of what our homes would look like when we married. Walking was our only way to get somewhere in town because the bus ride cost \$.10 and we did not have \$.10 between us. Conversation would mention the beautiful homes and we would try to guess if they had lovely rugs, furniture and hot water. None of them had newspapers put over windows like ours did to hide the secret of pinching poverty that lived within.

Today I pay attention to the front doors of many of these homes. Cutesy plaques, family names, elaborate wreaths, floral arrangement and lovely colors grace many doors. Some of the more stately homes have brass mail slots and door knockers.

Upon my return home I paid attention, stood back and really paid attention to my own front door. This door is neither classic nor historic but it is rather unique, white plain jane with its numerous dog scratches and inventive door closure made by a grandson for my husband so he would be able to close the door while in his wheelchair. Most days there are even greasy fingerprints on it from unending farm repair jobs. (The FBI could not have taken better ones.) All these things I mention are my ornaments that I love. I would have it no other way. Today I notice cracks around the door frame. They probably have been there for some years but I doubt it much love could ever seep out.

I think of how this door always waits for me with a warm embrace. There is almost a magical feel of its latch and door knob—it means that I am home.

Behind this door stories linger, spirits soar and our lives chapters unfold. Its hinges remain as an ever wakeful barrier to the unknown. I am reminded each morning that its usual groan and creaks mimic own movements.

Seasons tell their own story and this very door acts as a buffer. Springtime brings April sweet rain waltzes and summer brings dappled sunshine. In autumn, leaves rustle up to its threshold white in winter the wicked cold and snow push on it in a vengeance. I need to remember that early in our marriage it also kept the wolves away.

This door open cheerily to my numerous greetings of: mom, mother, grams, grandmas or granny. Pick one—they are all accurate.

There will come a day when the door will need to be replaced. I will look for the prayers I tucked in between the studs and insulation when it was first installed. May this home be blessed with the laughter of children, the warmth of a close family, hope for the future and fond memories of the past. Amen”

Dear Lord, bless this door and home that welcomes us. Please bless the furry, four legged beings and the many two legged ones that enter. Amen

“Lord, you created this entire universe and it seems so small compared to the life in this home.” anonymous.

“Your home should tell the story of who you are and be a collection of what you love.” anonymous

All Saints Services

All Saints Day is Saturday, November 1st. Join friends from all over Bismarck at a Taize' worship at St. George's Episcopal Church, 601 N. 4th Street, Bismarck, at 6:15 pm on Wednesday, November 5th in remembrance of loved ones. Our confirmation students will be attending that evening to experience a different kind of worship service. There is also a soup supper at 5:30 at St. George's, or join us for supper starting at 5 pm here and then continue on to worship either here or there!

All Saints Sunday is November 2nd. Be sure to join us, live or online, for worship, and in the couple of weeks before, write the names of your deceased loved ones on paper doves which will be placed on our All Saints Banner and carried in during the opening hymn. Please call the office if you'd like us to do this for you!

Bible Sunday October 19/ Wednesday October 22

We will be handing out Bibles to our 3rd and 4th graders, and even some 5th graders on October 19th. ****Please let Pastor Lisa or the office know if you have a 3rd, 4th, or 5th grader who has not yet received a Bible from LCC!**** We do not want to miss anyone!

Note: these Bibles have been backordered for some time. We are hoping to have them by next week. Please call the office and pick up your child's Bible, or do it Wednesday or Sunday when you are here. We'd like to invite you to write a note to your child inside the front cover, and also mark some of your favorite passages for them to read, too. Then bring the Bible with you to be presented to them on Sunday the 19th or Wednesday the 22nd of October during worship!

Do you have a favorite Bible? What's it's history/meaning for you?

You are invited to bring one (or more, if you like) Bible(s) that have meaning for you. Maybe it's an old family Bible, recording deaths and births and baptisms from way back. Maybe it was the one given to you in second grade. And so on! Bring yours to church to display through October (we will put them on tables where the birthday party supplies are right now). Please write a note (large notecards and pens will be provided) to indicate it's provenance and/or why it's special to you. Also, look for the large tree on the wall. You are invited to write your favorite verse on a "leaf" and add it to the tree!

Usher Training—redux 11 am Saturday, October 25!

Sorry that our usher training had to get shifted from September to October! (a few did it themselves, anyway!) Join us if you can on Saturday morning, October 25 at 11 am for a brief run through of safety details. If you're interested in ushering, you are welcome! It is not difficult and oh so important to have those friendly faces greeting folks at the door. We want you to feel comfortable and knowledgeable. Please join us! Don't worry, we will be finished in time for lunch!

Following the Footsteps of Paul – Journey to Greece + Turkey

Join with church friends and others as we travel to places where St. Paul preached and taught, in addition to a boat trip to the Greek Isles, and a trip to Ephesus in Turkey. Pastor Lisa will lead us, along with terrific guides in Greece and Turkey. You can see details by going to Eliastours.com. Click on “Our Most Popular Tours” and then “Journeys of Paul and the Greek Islands.” You should see the trip listed with Pastor Lisa’s name. It will give you the full itinerary, cost and other information.

We will travel from April 19-29, 2026, with the option of a 3 day extension to see Istanbul. (Turkey is amazing!) You are welcome to invite family members, neighbors and friends to join us on this trip. Elias himself will do a zoom call to answer any questions you might have and to give all the information you would like to see. Please send email addresses of anyone who might like to join to Pastor Lisa (lisaahlness@hotmail.com) so I make sure to plug them in for the call!

Study on The Chosen series returns!

Here's a quick recap thanks to our new AI friend, CoPilot: Season 1 of The Chosen introduces viewers to a deeply humanized portrayal of Jesus and the people whose lives he transforms. Set in first-century Galilee, the series follows Mary Magdalene, Simon Peter, Matthew the tax collector, and Nicodemus the Pharisee, each grappling with personal struggles, societal pressures, and spiritual questions. Through their encounters with Jesus, their lives begin to shift in profound ways. The season builds toward the formation of Jesus’ early group of disciples, weaving together biblical events with imagined backstories that add depth and context to the Gospel narrative.

For Season 2, we'd like to introduce a slightly adjusted format. Starting mid-October, we'll start meeting twice a week every other week, on Sunday at 3pm and Tuesday at 5pm. Please plan for about an hour and a half (90 minutes for each session) at the church. Here's the change...everyone is invited to attend whichever session they are able to attend, either Sunday or Tuesday, as their schedules allow on this fixed pace. It may not always be the same people present, but that allows us to hear new voices and insights as well!

We'll watch episode 1 of season 2 on Sunday, October 19th, 3pm, and Tuesday, October 21st, 5pm. Then we'll tentatively tee up S2 episode 2 for Sunday, November 5th, 3pm, and Tuesday November 7th, 5pm (Note: October 26th is Confirmation and Trunk or Treat, so now you can all attend Trunk or Treat!). Our goal this year is to complete two seasons if we are able. Of course we'll still sponsor other sessions or date moves if a date is going to just fall through completely, but everyone is encouraged to keep up/catch up if you can't make a scheduled session. Tom Harris is glad to share the lesson sheets for anyone who wants to read ahead as well! If you enjoyed season 1, you'll absolutely love season 2! One more item, we had planned to host a viewing/sharing on season 1, episode 8, to close out the season and get back in the groove. Unfortunately that was canceled due to weather and is being rescheduled for October 5th, 3pm at the church. Everyone is invited, whether you've seen it or not! This is also a great time to recap what we took away from season 1 and what we're looking forward to for season 2. Come join us!

Trunk or Treat October 26!

Have you noticed Halloween decorations starting to proliferate around town? This is our cue to think about Trunk or Treat! We will once again host trick or treaters by decorating our car trunks and donning costumes to hand out candy, right in our own parking lot (or inside, if weather is horrible). Come one, come all on Sunday afternoon, October 26, from 3-4 for an hour of fun! We will have hot cider and hot chocolate to keep cozy, as well. Sign up on the poster in the narthex to let us know you'll have a "Trunk", or to help with hospitality! Bags of candy are also welcome, as we tend to run short. Tell your friends, neighbors, grandkids to come, too!

Confirmation Service

The three young men confirming their faith this year are Frankie Stankiewicz, Sander Sagsveen and Brady Staloch. They have chosen to be confirmed on Sunday, October 26, at our 10:00am service.

Reformation Sunday

It's been 508 years now since Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg! Wear red on October 27, get ready to sing some favorite songs and hymns, and let's celebrate our beginnings and the church which stays true to its roots in Scripture even as it keeps reforming.

All Saints Services

All Saints Day is Friday, November 1st. Join friends from all over Bismarck at a Taize' worship that evening at St. George's Episcopal Church, 601 N. 4th Street, Bismarck, at 6 pm.

All Saints Sunday is November 3rd. Be sure to join us, live or online, for worship, and in the couple of weeks before, write the names of your deceased loved ones on paper doves which will be placed on our All Saints Banner and carried in during the opening hymn. Please call the office if you'd like us to do this for you!



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
October 2025 Altar Focus: Emergency Food Pantry			1 5pm Supper 6:15pm Worship Church school/ Confirmation	2 Quilting 1pm AA Mtg 8pm W & M 6:30pm	3 Wired Word 1:30pm	4 Men's Bible Study 10am
5 9:00 Practice 10:00 River Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour 3:00pm Chosen S.1 E8	6 Needlework Group 9am	7 W & Music committee 7:00	8 Book Club 1:30 5pm Supper 6:15pm Worship Church school/ Confirmation LG GRP	9 Quilting 1pm AA Mtg 8pm Church Council 6:30pm	10 Wired Word 1:30pm	11 Men's Bible Study 10am
12 9:00 Practice 10:00 River Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour	13 Needlework Group 9am	14	15 5pm Supper 6:15pm Worship NO Church school/ Confirmation	18 Gather Bible Study 10:30am Quilting 1pm AA Mtg 8pm	17 Wired Word 1:30pm	18 Men's Bible Study 10am
19 9:00 Practice 10:00 River Worship Bible Sunday 11:00 Coffee Hour 3pm Chosen Bible Study S2 E1	20 Needlework Group 9am Beer & Hymns 7-9 Mdn Eagles	21 Chosen Bible Study 5pm S2 E1	22 5pm Supper 6:15pm Worship/ Bible Wednesday Church school/ Confirmation LG Grp River practice 7pm	23 Quilting 1pm AA Mtg. 8pm	24 Wired Word 1:30pm Women's Re- treat at COC	25 Men's Bible Study 10am Women's Retreat at COC Usher training 11a
26 Reformation Sunday 9:00 Practice 10:00 River Worship 11:00 Coffee Hour 3-4 pm Trunk of Treat	27 Needlework Group 9am Knitting 4 Oth- ers	28	29 5pm Supper 6:15pm Worship Church school/ Confirmation LG Grp River practice 7pm	30 Quilting 1pm AA Mtg. 8pm	31 Wired Word 1:30pm	



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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