

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

Phone: 223-1001
Website: www.churchofthecross.org
Winter Hours: Mon.– Thursday 8–3pm 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, **Co-Treasurers**
527-9582/ lcctreasurer@midconetwork.com
Sarah Dahl, 226.6844/sarahdahlmba@gmail.com

Peder Gulleson, **Sunday Worship Coordinator**
680.8787/theriver@midconetwork.com

Joel Crane, **Wednesday Worship Coordinator**
498-2604/cranejoel58@gmail.com

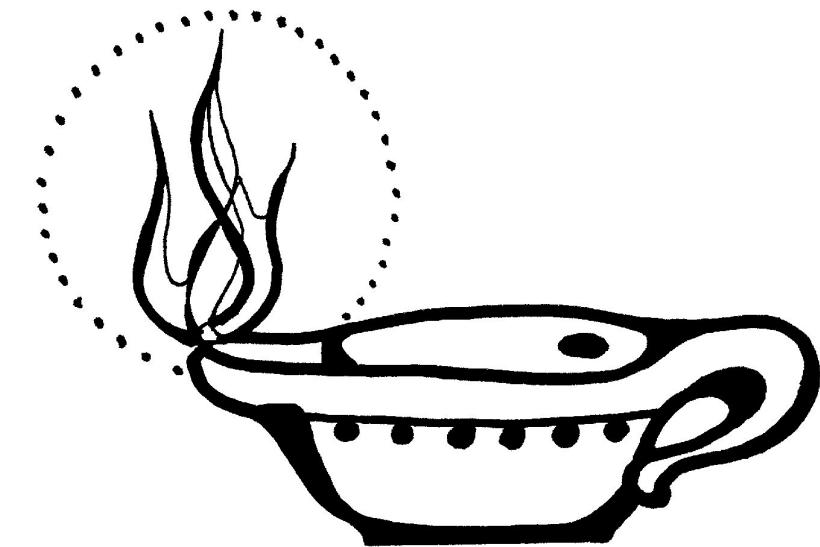
2025 Church Council Members

Mike Geiermann, President, mgeiermann12@gmail.com 471.5122
Rod Sargent, Vice President, randdebsarge@beu.midco.net 880.8238
Kathryn Spilman, Secretary, healthandskinbykathryn@gmail.com 527.6867
Janice Martin, msladyj2000@gmail.com 471.5600
Molly Traynor, mktraynor@hotmail.com 202.0891
Eve Kath, evekath20@gmail.com 516.3891
Luke Toso luke.toso@gmail.com 651.925.7267

“Making Jesus Known By Sharing Our Gifts”

The River

A Blended Worship Service



**Lutheran Church of the Cross
February 8, 2026**

“Making Jesus Known by Sharing our Gifts”

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS

February 8, 2026

Fifth Sunday After Epiphany

Light shines in the darkness for the upright, the psalmist sings. Isaiah declares that when we loose the bonds of injustice and share our bread with the hungry, the light breaks forth like the dawn. In another passage from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, the light of the world, calls his followers to let the light of their good works shine before others. Through baptism we are sent into the world to shine with the light of Christ.

We Come Together

PRELUDE: "Our God", "Come As You Are"

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREETINGS OF PEACE

OUR CONFESSION, GOD'S FORGIVENESS

GATHERING SONG: "This Little Light of Mine"

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

We Hear God's Word

FIRST READING: **Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12)**

¹ Shout out; do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.

² Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;

"THE RIVER" and "LIVING WATER" WORSHIP MINISTERS

Pastor—Pastor Lisa Ahlness

Scripture Reader—Tracy Wolf

Communion Assistants—Mavis Pommerer, Sheila Koffler, Art Wheeler

Ushers—Suzanne & Joel Toso, Graham & Sarah Dahl

Altar Guild— Jean Kraft, Sarah Dahl, Cherie Krueger

Faith and Care Group 3—Melissa & Jay Volk, Marylee Gregware & Daniel McKinney

River Worship Team—

Sound Board Technicians—Larry Wolf, Karen Will

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

Streaming Team—Mark Kunze, Karen Will, Art Wheeler

River Singers—Joel Crane, Mike Geiermann, Marlene Grabow, Sally Grenz, Paul Gurholt, Doug Johnson, Cherie Krueger, AJ Marx, Kathy Morrison, Mark Murie, Deb Patterson, Amanda Sagsveen

Percussionist—Kari Harris

Violinist—Fynn Sagsveen

Accompanists—Luke Weber, Gerri Sarsten, Jan & Joel Gilbertson, Eve Kath

Sunday Worship Coordinator—Peder Gulleson

Living Water Worship Team

Living Water Singers—Caroline Collins, Keira Collins, Joel Crane, Annabelle Ellison, Brandi Ellison, Amanda Sagsveen

Percussionist—Kari Harris

Guitarists—Kolton Harris, Joel Crane, Peder Gulleson

Accompanist—Luke Weber

Sound—Peder Gulleson

Wednesday Worship Coordinator—Joel Crane

Prayers

For those struggling with health and other concerns:

Tracy Martinson, Earl Larson, Nancy Dockter, Hattie Martinson, Heidi Renner, Diane Klein, Libby Martin, Kira Willadsen, Sher Harildstad, Shirley Holder, Jerry Hanson, Joyce Wahl, Jeff Christianson, Arvid Mugaas, Pete Barrette, Heather Martin, Daryl Hodnefield, Lorna Mathais, Jagger Lindsey, Emmett Wolf, Don Becker, Connie Werner, Dave Kunze, Marvin Leer, Jim Kennedy, Janie Hague, George Harris, Ken Will, Laurie Stenehjem, Elias Zachary Werner, Tonya Werner

For those dealing with the death of these loved ones:

Josey Hanson, Katie Leer, Peg Ahlness

February 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9a R. Practice 10am River 11am Coffee 5pm L. Water practice	2 Stitching 9am	3	4 5p Supper 6:15 L. Water 7p Church School Confirmation River Practice	5 1p Quilting 6:30 Church Council	6 1:30 Wired Word	7 Men's Bible Study 10 am
8 9a R. Practice 10am River 11am Coffee 5pm L. Water practice	9 Stitching 9am	10	11 Book Club 1:30 5p Supper 6:15 Service 7p School, Con- firmation	12 1p Quilting	13 1:30 Wired Word	14 Men's Bible Study 10 am Valentine's Day
15 9a R. Practice 10am River 11am Coffee 5pm L. Water practice	16 Stitching 9am President's Day	17	18 Ash Wednesday 5p Lenten Supper 6:15 Service No school, or confirmation River practice	19 10:30 Gather Bible Study 1p Quilting	20 1:30 Wired Word	21 Men's Bible Study 10 am
22 9a R. Practice 10am River 11am Coffee 5pm L. Water practice	23 Stitching 9am	24	25 5p Lenten Supper 6:15 Service 7p School, Con- firmation River practice	26 1p Quilting	27 1:30 Wired Word	28 Men's Bible Study 10am

they ask of me righteous judgments;
they want God on their side.

³ "Why do we fast, but you do not see?

Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?"
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day
and oppress all your workers.

⁴ You fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today
will not make your voice heard on high.

⁵ Is such the fast that I choose,
a day to humble oneself?

Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Will you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the LORD?

⁶ Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you;
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

^{9a} Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, "Here I am."

^{9b} If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

¹⁰ if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness

and your gloom be like the noonday.

¹¹ The LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your needs in parched places and make your bones strong, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water whose waters never fail.

¹² Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 112:1-9 (10)

¹ Praise the LORD!

Happy are those who fear the LORD, who greatly delight in his commandments.

² Their descendants will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.

³ Wealth and riches are in their houses, and their righteousness endures forever.

⁴ They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright; they are gracious, merciful, and righteous.

⁵ It is well with those who deal generously and lend, who conduct their affairs with justice.

⁶ For the righteous will never be moved; they will be remembered forever.

⁷ They are not afraid of evil tidings; their hearts are firm, secure in the LORD.

⁸ Their hearts are steady; they will not be afraid; in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.

⁹ They have distributed freely; they have given to the poor; their righteousness endures forever; their horn is exalted in honor.

¹⁰ The wicked see it and are angry; they gnash their teeth and melt away; the desire of the wicked comes to nothing.

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. Led by Marjo Hewitson followed by her fearless readers.

February—The Briar Club by Kate Quinn

March—The Quiet Librarian by Allen Erskin

April—Theo of Golden by Allen Levi

May—The Correspondent by Virginia Evans

June—Wild Dark Shores by Charlotte McConnaghy

July—Atmosphere by Taylor Jenkins Reid

August—Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell

Communion Assistants, Ushers, Scripture Readers. You are needed! Fill out the schedule that's in the narthex.

The Annual Report, Audit Report and Budget documents are available in the narthex for your taking. As well as the **2026 Directory**.

Looking for a new way to participate in the life of this church? Tracy Geiermann is establishing **CONNECTIONS**. CONNECTIONS is a time where Christians can come together and share their experiences and talents with others. A time to get out and connect with other individuals and hopefully take back something positive, exciting and new when you leave. We will meet on the first Tuesday of the month from 2-4 at the church. We will have coffee, goodies, and a different activity or speaker each month for those that want to participate. If not, you are welcome to just come and visit. On March 3rd we will be playing Bingo for an ice breaker to start out the program. A different program will be chosen every month. If you would like to join us but do not have a ride, please contact Connie, Lisa or myself at the church and we will compile a list. If you are an individual that would be available to pick someone else up, please also call us and we will be happy to make that CONNECTION. I hope that you will be as excited as I am about this new opportunity. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out. God's love to you all!

Tracy Geiermann FCN

Weekly Calendar of February 8, 2026

Today, February 8, 2026:

River Practice 9am
River Service/ Church School 10 am
Coffee Hour 11:00am
Living Water practice 5pm

Monday, February 9, 2026:

Stitching Group 9am

Tuesday, February 10, 2026:

Wednesday, February 11, 2026:

Book Club 1:30pm
Supper 5pm
Worship 6:15pm
Church School/Confirmation 7pm
River Practice 7pm

Thursday, February 12, 2026:

Quilting 1pm
AA Meeting 8pm

Friday, February 13, 2026:

Wired Word 1:30pm

Saturday, February 14, 2026:

Men's Bible Study 10am

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)

¹ When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the testimony of God to you with superior speech or wisdom. ² For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³ And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. ⁴ My speech and my proclamation were made not with persuasive words of wisdom but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

⁶ Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are being destroyed. ⁷ But we speak God's wisdom, a hidden mystery, which God decreed before the ages for our glory ⁸ and which none of the rulers of this age understood, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹ But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the human heart conceived,
what God has prepared for those who love him"—

¹⁰ God has revealed to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹ For what human knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. ¹³ And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.

¹⁴ Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God's Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else's scrutiny.

¹⁶ "For who has known the mind of the Lord

so as to instruct him?"

But we have the mind of Christ.]

GOSPEL SONG: "Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil"**GOSPEL: Matthew 5:13-20**

[Jesus said:] ¹³"You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

¹⁴"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

¹⁷"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

SERMON: Pastor Lisa Ahlness**SONG OF THE DAY:** "We are Marching in the Light"**APOSTLES' CREED****PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH****SHARING OF THE PEACE****OFFERING SONG:** "What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine"**OFFERING PRAYER****WE SHARE THE MEAL****PREPARATION FOR THE MEAL****LORD'S PRAYER****INVITATION TO OUR LORD'S SUPPER****COMMUNION SONG: "Christ Be Our Light"****COMMUNION BLESSING/POST COMMUNION PRAYER****BENEDICTION****SENDING SONG: "You Shine"**