

**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**

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2026 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, mrladyj2000@gmail.com 471.5600

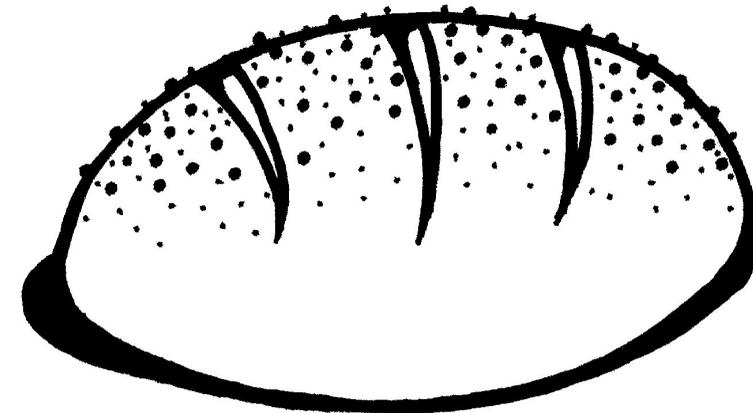
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The River

A Blended Worship Service



Lutheran Church of the Cross

February 22, 2026

“Making Jesus Known By Sharing Our Gifts”

“Making Jesus Known by Sharing our Gifts”

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS

February 22, 2026

First Sunday in Lent

Today's gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. This catechetical focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of our Lenten journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. Hungry for God's mercy, we receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead.

We Come Together

PRELUDE: "Oh How He Loves You and Me", "Turn Your Eyes"

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREETINGS OF PEACE

OUR CONFESSION, GOD'S FORGIVENESS

GATHERING SONG: "We Bow Down"

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

We Hear God's Word

FIRST READING: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

^{3:1} Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'" ² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die, ⁵ for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food

Gospel PraiSing Fiesta!

Nourish the Body

Mayas Mexican
Restaurant



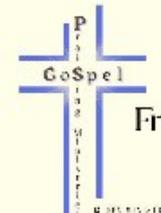
1601 W. Century Ave. Bismarck, ND
Lunch - order off menu
(at patron's expense)

Nourish the Soul

SUNDAYS
11:30 AM-1:30 PM

Christian Music
presented by:
Colleen Reinhardt
Julie Ternes
& Guests

Jan. 4 - Jennifer Braun & Kathy Perkerewicz
January 25 - Shana Klee
February 8 - Clarence Saylor
February 22 - Kimberly Fix & Jennifer Braun
March 8 - DeAnn Bueligen
March 22 - Leon & Alicia Heick
April 12 - Keylee Hertz Barnett



Free-will donations will assist ND Adult & Teen Challenge.

Presented by: Gospel PraiSing (GPS) Ministries
Julie Ternes 701-226-0356

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 1:30 Book Club 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

and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loin-cloths for themselves.

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 32

¹ Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.

² **Happy are those to whom the LORD imputes no iniquity
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.**

³ While I kept silent, my body wasted away
through my groaning all day long.

⁴ **For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah**

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not hide my iniquity;
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"
and you forgave the guilt of my sin. *Selah*

⁶ **Therefore let all who are faithful
offer prayer to you;
at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters
shall not reach them.**

⁷ You are a hiding place for me;
you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with glad cries of deliverance. *Selah*

⁸ **I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.**

⁹ Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding,
whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle,

¹⁰ **Many are the torments of the wicked,
but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the LORD.**

¹¹ Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, O righteous,
and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

SECOND READING: Romans 5:12-19

¹² Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned ¹³ for sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. ¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come.

¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. ¹⁶ And the gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the gift following many trespasses brings justification. ¹⁷ If, because of the one man's trespass, death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. ¹⁹ For just as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so through the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

GOSPEL SONG: "Good Soil"

GOSPEL: Matthew 4:1-11

¹ Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. ² He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. ³ The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." ⁴ But he answered, "It is written,

'One does not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,'

We are ready to continue Season 2 of the critically acclaimed series, "**The Chosen**" based on the life of Jesus in the new testament and detailing his mission. Whether you've watched it already or not, anyone is welcome to join us! We'll be resuming Season 2, starting with Episode 4 based on the below schedule. All showings will be at the church, **(noon-2)** Sundays, with a repeat for anyone needing an alternate time set for Tuesdays at 5pm and includes a discussion afterwards. Hope you can join us! *Please not the time change on Sundays.*

Season 2 schedule:

Episode 4 - *The Perfect Opportunity*: February 22nd **(noon-2)** and February 24th (5pm)

Episode 5 - *Spirit*: March 8th **(noon-2)** and March 10th (5pm)

Episode 6 - *Unlawful*: March 22nd **(noon-2)** and March 24th (5pm)

Episode 7 - *Reckoning*: April 12th **(noon-2)** and April 14th (5pm)

Episode 8 - *Beyond Mountains*: April 26th **(noon-2)** and April 28th (5pm)

Join us beginning at 5 pm each **Wednesday in Lent for a soup supper** catered by Lady J's, followed by worship at 6:15pm. Each following Wednesday, worship will follow our theme, "**Tell Me Something Good: Grounding Ourselves in the Good News**" this Lent. Communion is always offered. These services will also be livestreamed. We hope you can come!

The Altar Focus this time around is the **Stepping Stone Ministries**. Stepping Stone Ministries is a new non-profit founded to provide transitional care for individuals experiencing homelessness who are too ill to return to the streets or shelters but no longer require, or qualify for, acute care or other healthcare destinations in the Bismarck/Mandan and surrounding areas. Some needed items are: All kinds of snack foods are welcome. Nonperishable food donations are welcome, to help with meal preparation. Please see their wonderful website, steppingstoneministries.com, which has an Amazon wish list, volunteer opportunities and how to donate. Brochures are available on the table in the narthex. Let's help this much needed new ministry succeed! Thank you for helping!

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. Anyone is welcome to attend.

Led by Marjo Hewitson followed by her fearless readers.

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

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

Come and add to the **interactive LENT bulletin board** created by Audrey Hoffer and mom, Lyndsey Hoffer. Thank you Audrey for your creativity.

Easter believe or not is coming soon. Anyone want to volunteer to create an Easter Bulletin Board?

and 'On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' ”

⁷ Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ”

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, ⁹ and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

‘Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.’ ”

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

SERMON: Pastor Lisa Ahlness

SONG OF THE DAY: “We All Are One in Mission”

APOSTLES' CREED

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

SHARING OF THE PEACE

OFFERING SONG: “Lord Speak to Us That We May Speak”

OFFERING PRAYER

WE SHARE THE MEAL

PREPARATION FOR THE MEAL

LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION TO OUR LORD'S SUPPER

COMMUNION SONG: “I Want Jesus to Walk With Me”

COMMUNION BLESSING/POST COMMUNION PRAYER

BENEDICTION

SENDING SONG: “Lord I Lift Your Name on High”

“THE RIVER” and “LIVING WATER” WORSHIP MINISTERS

Weekly Calendar of February 22, 2026

Pastor—Pastor Lisa Ahlness

Scripture Reader—Debbie Patterson

Communion Assistants—Mavis Pommerer, Sheila Koffler, Tracy Wolf

Ushers—Kay Koch, Scot & Melissa Long

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,

For those dealing with the death of these loved ones:

Josey Hanson, Pr. Tim Johnson

Today, February 22, 2026:

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

Monday, February 23, 2026:

Stitching Group 9am

Tuesday, February 24, 2026:

Wednesday, February 25, 2026:

**Lenten Supper 5pm
Worship 6:15pm
Church School/Confirmation 7pm
River Practice 7pm**

Thursday, February 26, 2026:

**Quilting 1pm
AA Meeting 8pm**

Friday, February 27, 2026:

Wired Word 1:30pm

Saturday, February 28, 2026:

Men’s Bible Study 10am