

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

**Phone: 223-1001**

**Website: [www.churchofthecross.org](http://www.churchofthecross.org)**

**Winter Hours: Mon.– Thursday 8–3pm Fri 8 to noon**

**Summer Office Hours: Mon.- Fri. 8:00 am—noon**

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# The River

A Blended Worship Service



**Lutheran Church of the Cross  
March 15, 2026**

“Making Jesus Known by Sharing our Gifts”

“*Making Jesus Known By Sharing Our Gifts*”

# LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS

March 15, 2026

## *Fourth Sunday in Lent*

Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. "I was blind, now I see," declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God's beloved children. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.

## **We Come Together**

**PRELUDE:** "Blind Man", "Cornerstone"

**WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**GREETINGS OF PEACE**

**OUR CONFESSION, GOD'S FORGIVENESS**

**GATHERING SONG:** "Awake O Sleeper Rise From Death"

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

## **We Hear God's Word**

**FIRST READING: 1Samuel 16:1-13** *David is chosen and anointed*

<sup>1</sup> The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." <sup>2</sup> Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the Lord said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.'" <sup>3</sup> Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." <sup>4</sup> Samuel did what the Lord commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?" <sup>5</sup> He said, "Peaceably. I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the

# 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

# March 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> 9a R. Practice 10am River 11am Coffee 5pm L. Water	<b>2</b> Stitching 9am	<b>3</b> Conne- tions 3pm <b>Refresh Mtg</b>	<b>4</b> 5p Lenten Supper 6:15 L. Water 7p Church School Confirmation River Practice	<b>5</b> 1p Quilting 5:30 Worship & Music 6:30 Church Council	<b>6</b> 1:30 Wired Word	<b>7</b> Men's Bible Study 10 am
<b>8</b> 9a R. Practice 10am River 11am Coffee 5pm L. Water	<b>9</b> Stitching 9am	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Book Club 1:30 5p Supper 6:15 Service 7p School, Confirmation River practice	<b>12</b> 1p Quilting	<b>13</b> 1:30 Wired Word	<b>14</b> Men's Bible Study 10 am
<b>15</b> 9a R. Practice 10am River 11am Coffee 5pm L. Water	<b>16</b> Stitching 9am	<b>17</b>	<b>18 Dioramas</b> 5p Lenten Supper 6:15 Service 7p School, Confirmation River practice	<b>19</b> 10:30 Gather Bible Study 1p Quilting	<b>20</b> 1:30 Wired Word	<b>21</b> Men's Bible Study 10 am
<b>22 Dioramas</b> 9a R. Practice 10am River 11am Coffee 5pm L. Water	<b>23</b> Stitching 9am Beer & Hymns 7p	<b>24</b> <b>Refresh Mtg</b> <b>5 pm</b>	<b>25</b> 5p Lenten Supper 6:15 Service 7p School, Confirmation River practice	<b>26</b> 1p Quilting	<b>27</b> 1:30 Wired Word	<b>28</b> Men's Bible Study 10am
<b>29 Palm Sunday</b> <b>Easter Egg Hunt</b> 9a R. Practice 10am River 11am Coffee 5pm L. Water	<b>30</b> Stitching 9am	<b>31</b>				

sacrifice.

<sup>6</sup>When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely his anointed is now before the Lord.” <sup>7</sup>But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him, for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.” <sup>8</sup>Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” <sup>9</sup>Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the Lord chosen this one.” <sup>10</sup>Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen any of these.” <sup>11</sup>Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him, for we will not sit down until he comes here.” <sup>12</sup>He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. The Lord said, “Rise and anoint him, for this is the one.” <sup>13</sup>Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

**RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 23** You anoint my head with oil. (Ps. 23:5)

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup> **He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
he leads me beside still waters;**

<sup>3</sup> he restores my soul.  
He leads me in right paths  
for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> **Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
I fear no evil,  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.**

<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD  
my whole life long.

**SECOND READING: Ephesians 5:8-14** *Awake from sleep, live as children of light*

<sup>8</sup> Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light, <sup>9</sup> for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. <sup>10</sup> Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness; rather, expose them. <sup>12</sup> For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly, <sup>13</sup> but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, <sup>14</sup> for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake!

Rise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.”

**GOSPEL SONG:** “Ancient Words”

**GOSPEL John 9:1-41** *Baptismal image: the man born blind*

<sup>1</sup> As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup> His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. <sup>4</sup> We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. <sup>5</sup> As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” <sup>6</sup> When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, <sup>7</sup> saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. <sup>8</sup> The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” <sup>9</sup> Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.” <sup>10</sup> But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” <sup>11</sup> He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” <sup>12</sup> They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

<sup>13</sup> They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. <sup>14</sup> Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. <sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.”

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. 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!

All Women (young or older) LCC members and friends,  
Topic: **Peace with Nature Devotionals** and enjoy the camp setting!  
All are welcome to join us for: **THE WOMEN’S RETREAT**: scheduled for May 1 & 2, 2026 at Camp of the Cross. Costs: full weekend of staying 1 night including 2 meals on Saturday will be \$85.00 or if you come for Saturday only the cost will be \$40.00 (including meals). Questions? Please call Sally at 701.390.3049 or email [sallygrenz@hotmail.com](mailto:sallygrenz@hotmail.com) to let her know you are coming. Send payment to LCC with Women’s Retreat on the memo line. Please RSVP to Sally Grenz by April 20th!

**"The Chosen" series** based on the life of Jesus in the new testament and detailing his mission is continuing here at LCC. 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! **Season 2 schedule:** Time change for Sunday. Please note.  
**Episode 6 - Unlawful:** March 22nd **(11:30)** and March 24th (5pm)  
**Episode 7 - Reckoning:** April 12th **(11:30)** and April 14th (5pm)  
**Episode 8 - Beyond Mountains:** April 26th **(11:30)** and April 28th (5pm)

**Register now for our Spring Youth Bash 2026 - coming up in April!!**

Open to grades 4-12, with adult chaperones welcomed too, this event is sure to be a great time! This bash is a 3 day, 2 night event packed with Camp fun! Campers will arrive on Friday evening for registration and will launch straight into fun activities through Sunday morning at pick-up time. Activities include, but not limited to: life story bible studies, all camp games, movie night, gaga, delicious meals, crafts, campfire worship, and more! Cost is \$55 April 17-19. Camp scholarships are available. Contact the office.

## 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.

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 Easter flower order blank is at the back of the church and in the narthex.**

The **Lenten C.A.R. Altar Focus M&M tubes** are placed in the back of the church. Take yours and fill it with quarters or a checks to help the peoples of the Central African Republic. Thank you.

**Please note** it was said in our March newsletter our first Easter Service was starting at 8:30. That is incorrect. The first service on Easter Sunday is at 8:00 am. See you there.

### **First Communion Class**

All third graders, and younger children who are expressing interest in communion and with their parents' permission, are invited to join Pastor Lisa for first communion instruction on Saturday, March 28th, from noon til 1:30 pm. We will also bake some communion bread, which will be used the following Thursday, April 2, as these students receive their first communion during the Maundy Thursday service.

Please let Pastor Lisa know your child is coming, so we can plan appropriately for ingredients, and if you have questions. \*\*also, please have your child (you, too, ideally!) watch "Prince of Egypt" before this class.\*\* It is a Disney movie from 1998. You can stream it if you prefer, or the church has 4 copies of the DVD to lend.

<sup>16</sup> Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. <sup>17</sup> So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

<sup>18</sup> The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight <sup>19</sup> and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" <sup>20</sup> His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, <sup>21</sup> but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." <sup>22</sup> His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. <sup>23</sup> Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

<sup>24</sup> So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." <sup>25</sup> He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." <sup>26</sup> They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" <sup>27</sup> He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" <sup>28</sup> Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. <sup>29</sup> We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." <sup>30</sup> The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. <sup>31</sup> We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. <sup>32</sup> Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. <sup>33</sup> If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." <sup>34</sup> They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

<sup>35</sup> Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" <sup>36</sup> He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." <sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." <sup>38</sup> He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. <sup>39</sup> Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind." <sup>40</sup> Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" <sup>41</sup> Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

**SERMON:** Pastor Lisa Ahlness

**SONG OF THE DAY:** “Be Thou My Vision”

**APOSTLES’ CREED**

**PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

**SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**OFFERING SONG:** “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”

**OFFERING PRAYER**

## **WE SHARE THE MEAL**

**PREPARATION FOR THE MEAL**

**LORD’S PRAYER**

**INVITATION TO OUR LORD’S SUPPER**

**COMMUNION SONG:** “Children of the Heavenly Father”

**COMMUNION BLESSING/POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

**BENEDICTION**

**SENDING SONG:** “This is the Day”

## **“THE RIVER” and “LIVING WATER” WORSHIP MINISTERS**

**Pastor**—Pastor Lisa Ahlness

**Scripture Reader**—Tracy Wolf

**Communion Assistants**—Sally Grenz, Kay Koch

**Ushers**—Steve & Cheryl Neu, Larry Jahner

**Altar Guild**—Cherie Krueger, Deb Sargent, Valerie Kunz

**Faith and Care Group 4**—Molly & Ken Traynor, Kelly & Wayne Olson

**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, Janie Hague, George Harris, Ken Will, Laurie Stenehjem, Breezy Uffelman

#### **For those dealing with the death of these loved ones:**

Pr. Tim Johnson