

**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

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The River

A Blended Worship Service



**Lutheran Church of the Cross
July 26, 2026**

“Making Jesus Known By Sharing Our Gifts”

“Making Jesus Known by Sharing our Gifts”

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS

July 26, 2026

Nineth Sunday After Pentecost

Introduction

As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today's gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God's reign, the great surprise is that God's grace finds us first!

We Come Together

PRELUDE: "Build Your Kingdom Here", "This Little Light of Mine"

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREETINGS OF PEACE

OUR CONFESSION, GOD'S FORGIVENESS

GATHERING SONG: "Pass It On"

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

We Hear God's Word

FIRST READING: 1 Kings 3:5-12

Solomon's prayer for wisdom

⁵ At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I should give you." ⁶ And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today.

Gospel PraiSing Fiesta!

Nourish the Body

**Mayas Mexican
Restaurant**



1601 W. Century Ave, Bismarck, ND

Lunch - order off menu
(patron's expense)

Nourish the Soul

SUNDAYS

11:30 AM-1:30 PM

Christian Music
presented by:
Colleen Reinhardt
Julie Ternes
& Guests

May 17 - Kelley Reuer

May 31 - Steve Harmon

June 7 - Brian Saylor

June 28 - David Sorenson/Traci Juhala

July 12 - Debi Rogers

July 26 - Mya Tena

August 9 - On the Brink

August 23 - Gospel PraiSing Festival
with Natalie Layne



Free-will donations in May through August
assist Abused Adult Resource Center (AARC)

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

July 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 Office closed	4 4th of July 
5 9a R. Practice 10am River Service 11am Coffee	6 Stitching 9am	7 Kids Corner 9-10:30	8_ Book Club 1:30 Church Picnic 5:15 Worship 6:15	9	10	11 Men's Bible Study 10 am
12 9a R. Practice 10am River Service 11am Coffee	13 Stitching 9am	14 Funeral for Jerry Hanson	15	16	17	18 Men's Bible Study 10 am
19 9a R. Practice 10am River Service 11am Coffee	20 Stitching 9am	21 Kids Corner 9-10:30	22	23	24	25 Men's Bible Study 10am
26 9a R. Practice 10am River Service 11am Coffee	27 Stitching 9am	28 Kids Corner 9-10:30	29	30	31	

. ⁷ And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?”

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ God said to him, “Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you.”

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 119:129-136

When your word is opened, it gives light and understanding. (Ps. 119:130)

- ¹²⁹ Your decrees are wonderful;
therefore my soul keeps them.
- ¹³⁰ **The unfolding of your words gives light;
it imparts understanding to the simple.**
- ¹³¹ With open mouth I pant,
because I long for your commandments.
- ¹³² **Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as is your custom toward those who love your name.**
- ¹³³ Keep my steps steady according to your promise,
and never let iniquity have dominion over me.
- ¹³⁴ **Redeem me from human oppression,
that I may keep your precepts.**
- ¹³⁵ Make your face shine upon your servant,
and teach me your statutes.
- ¹³⁶ **My eyes shed streams of tears
because your law is not kept.**

SECOND READING: Romans 8:26-39

Nothing can separate us from God's love

²⁶ The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ³⁶ As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Kids Corner at Lutheran Church of the Cross has been a great success!

It will continue on through the summer for babies, toddlers, and their caregivers. Tuesdays 9:00—10:30 am. Parking lot and entrance on the west side. We'd love to see you there!

Altar Focus in July/August will be items for baby care kits and school kits! Watch for rummage sales and school sales! Father the Camp** items are also part of the Altar Focus. See the display and take the list of need supplies.

Who can **HELP usher**, be a **communion assistant** or a **scripture reader** this summer? Volunteer. Call the office. Send an email with the dates you can help. Thank you to those who have volunteered.

The daily devotional; **Christ in our Home**, is in the narthex. Get your copy.

Do you enjoy the **coffee hour** here at LCC? Do you like to eat a cookie or a bar with your coffee? Whether or not you are a baker consider providing a treat for the Sunday Coffee Hour. Sam's Club, Costco and Family Fare all have treats waiting to be devoured by us. Provide the treats, we'll eat them.

The **Gospel PraiSing Festival 2026, August 23rd**, at the ND State Capitol Grounds, will feature **Natalie Layne and her band** from Nashville, TN, as our headlining guest artists **plus seven** really great area bands. Last year about 1,500 people enjoyed the festival. Picture this year ... our beautiful ND State Capitol mall area filled with people from the steps to the boulevard enjoying this heart-lifting music festival, singing along and praising God! Gospel PraiSing Ministries, a 501(c)(3) corporation, events are held for charitable purposes. This festival will benefit Heaven's Helpers and their new ministry "Go Disciples."

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.
August—Hamnet by Maggie O’Farrell

Thank you Pastor Knutson for visiting with us today and for sharing your words of wisdom.

Vacation Bible School August: August 9-11 5:30—7:30

The theme is Exploring God’s Creation in the Alaskan Wilderness. Games, songs, stories and fun filled activities are planned. There is a sign up in the narthex. You may also call the office. Volunteers are needed also for this adventure. It will be held here in conjunction with UCC. *Seamus, the Highland cow will be visiting LCC during VBS.* You’ll want to come out and meet him.

UCC Block Party. August 12 Would anyone like to serve on the Block Party Committee to plan the upcoming party we share with United Church of Christ? Please contact their office at 223.2915 to let them know you are interested.

Willing walkers needed! If you enjoy a daily constitutional, please volunteer to help walk invitations around our church neighborhood the first week of August. Maps are available with the streets we need to do (UCC will do half the neighborhood). Invitations are provided; simply rubber band them to the front door. Take a street or two, enjoy a walk, and invite the neighbors to our block party on August 12!

The **Emergency Food Pantry** appreciates all that you have donated to the pantry. Cereal continues to be a serious need for the summer as children are out of school and in need of breakfast items. Thank you.

GOSPEL SONG:

GOSPEL: A Lamp on a Stand

21 He said to them, “Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don’t you put it on its stand? **22** For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. **23** If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear.”

24 “Consider carefully what you hear,” he continued. “With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and even more. **25** Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”

The Parable of the Growing Seed

26 He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. **27** Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. **28** All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. **29** As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

30 Again he said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? **31** It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. **32** Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.”

33 With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. **34** He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.

SERMON: Pastor Brian Knutson

SONG OF THE DAY: “Every Time I Feel the Spirit”

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

SHARING OF THE PEACE

OFFERING SONG: “Seek Ye First”

OFFERING PRAYER

WE SHARE THE MEAL

PREPARATION FOR THE MEAL

LORD’S PRAYER

INVITATION TO OUR LORD’S SUPPER

COMMUNION SONG: “Word of God Speak”

COMMUNION BLESSING/POST COMMUNION PRAYER

BENEDICTION: “Word of God Speak”

SENDING SONG: “Build Your Kingdom Here”

“THE RIVER” and “LIVING WATER” WORSHIP MINISTERS

Pastor—Pastor Lisa Ahlness

Scripture Reader— Kathy Morrison

Communion Assistants—Sondra Krogstad, Debbie Patterson, Doug Johnson

Ushers—Graham Dahl, Kay Koch, HELP

Altar Guild— Cherie Krueger, Sarah Dahl, Verlaine Jahner

Faith and Care Group 6—Cheryl & Steve Neu, Patty Hanson, Suzanne & Joel Toso

River Worship Team—

Sound Board Technicians— Larry Wolf, Karen Will

Projection Team— 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, Glen Hyland, 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, Eve Kath

Sunday Worship Coordinator—Peder Gulleson

Living Water Worship Team

Living Water Singers—Bria Blanchard, 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:

Earl Larson, Nancy Dockter, Heidi Renner, Diane Klein, Libby Martin, Kira Willadsen, Sher Harildstad, Shirley Holder, Joyce Wahl, Jeff Christianson, Pete Barrette, Heather Martin, Daryl Hodnefield, Jagger Lindsey, Emmett Wolf, Don Becker, Dave Kunze, Marvin Leer, Ken Will, Laurie Stenehjerm, Breezy Uffelman, Jim Moore, Mark Doerner, Mike Doerner, Sandy Hyland, Patty Hanson, Liam Keller

For those dealing with the death of these loved ones: Jerry Hanson, Helen Gelowitz