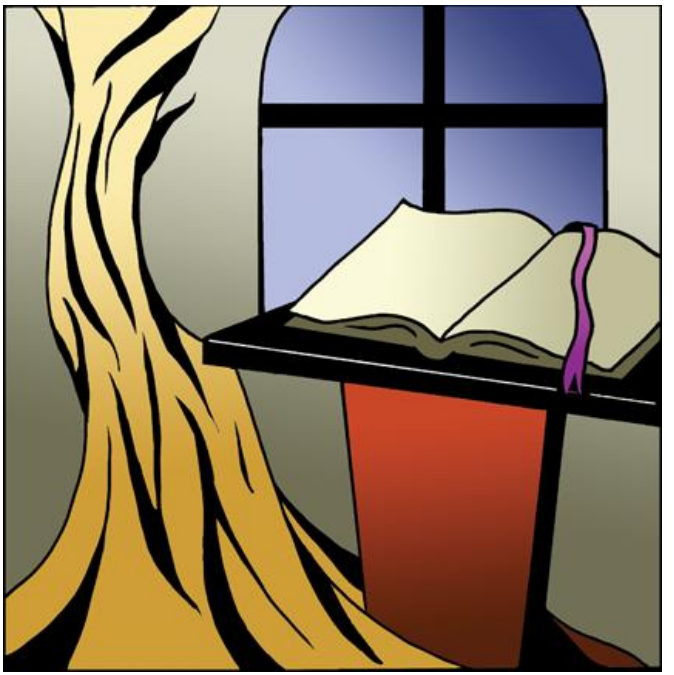
The River

A Blended Worship Service



Lutheran Church of the Cross
October 25, 2026

"Making Jesus Known by Sharing our Gifts"

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Reformation Sunday

Introduction Jesus' summary of the law in today's gospel echoes our first reading from Leviticus. We are called not only to love God with heart, soul, and mind, but also to love our neighbor as ourselves. It is out of such deep care that Paul shares the gospel with the Thessalonian community. In the confession of sins, we acknowledge that we have not loved God, neighbor, and self; yet we gather to hear the word of forgiveness and to be strengthened by word and meal to be signs of God's love and mercy in the world.

We Come Together

PRELUDE: "Lord, I Lift Your Name on High", "Love the Lord"

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREETINGS OF PEACE

OUR CONFESSION, GOD'S FORGIVENESS

GATHERING SONG: "The Heart of Worship"

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

We Hear God's Word

FIRST READING: **Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18**

1 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying:
2 "Speak to all the congregation of the Israelites and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.

15 "You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor. 16 You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand idly by when the blood of your neighbor is at stake: I am the Lord.

17 “You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. 18 You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.”

RESPONSIVE READING: **Psalm 1**

1 Happy are those
who do not follow the advice of the wicked
or take the path that sinners tread
or sit in the seat of scoffers,
2 but their delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law they meditate day and night.
3 They are like trees
planted by streams of water,
which yield their fruit in its season,
and their leaves do not wither.
In all that they do, they prosper.

4 The wicked are not so
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous,
6 for the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.

SECOND READING **1 Thessalonians 2: 1-8**

1 You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, 2 but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. 3 For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, 4 but, just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals but to please God, who tests our hearts. 5 As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed, 6 nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, 7 though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. 8 So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us

GOSPEL SONG: “Good Soil”

GOSPEL: **Matthew 22: 34-40**

34 When the Pharisees heard that [Jesus] had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered
together, 35 and one of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question to test him.
36 "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" 37 He said to him, " 'You
shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your
mind.' 38 This is the greatest and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: 'You shall
love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the
Prophets."

SERMON: Pastor Lisa Ahlness

APOSTLES' CREED

SONG OF THE DAY: "A Mighty Fortress is our God"

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

SHARING OF THE PEACE

OFFERING SONG: "Bind Us Together"

OFFERING PRAYER

WE SHARE THE MEAL

PREPARATION FOR THE MEAL

LORDS' PRAYER

INVITATION TO OUR LORD'S SUPPER

COMMUNION SONG: "Reckless Love",

COMMUNION BLESSING/POST COMMUNION PRAYER

BENEDICTION/SENDING SONG: "Let Us Be the Church"

"THE RIVER" AND "LIVING WATER" WORSHIP MINISTERS

Pastor-Pastor Lisa Ahlness
Scripture Reader-Esther Anderson
Communion Assistants-Mavis Pommerer, Melissa Long, Doug Johnson
Ushers- Larry Jahner, Joel & Suzanne Toso
Altar Guild-Mavis Pommerer, Kathryn Spilman, Ruth Jensen, Suzanne Toso
Faith & Care Group 1- Janet & Troy Bassingthwaite, Annie & Aanen Bergrud
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**-Gerri Sarsten, Eve Kath, Noura Eldredge
- **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**-Joel Crane, Peder Gulleson
- **Accompanist**:-Noura Eldredge
- **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, Heather Martin, Daryl Hodnefield, Jagger Lindsey, Emmett Wolf, Don Becker, Dave Kunze, Marvin Leer, Ken Will, Laurie Stenehjem, Breezy Uffelman, Jim Moore, Mark Doerner, Mike Doerner, Sandy Hyland, Liam Keller, Dezaray Hultin Kitzman, Chuck Rydell, Jordan Sargent, Karen Will, Pat Schmidt, Kennedy Belley

For those dealing with the death of these loved ones:
Noah Miller, Delores Martin

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.
November—The Book Club for Troublesome Women by Marie Bostwick
December— A Happier Life by Kristy Harvey
January—The Things We Never Say by Elizabeth Strout

Our **altar focus for October** is pillows/pillowcases and blankets, which are always in high demand at our shelters and Ministry on the Margins. Blankets may be gently used but should be washed (and washable). Thank you for making life warmer and more comfortable for our neighbors!

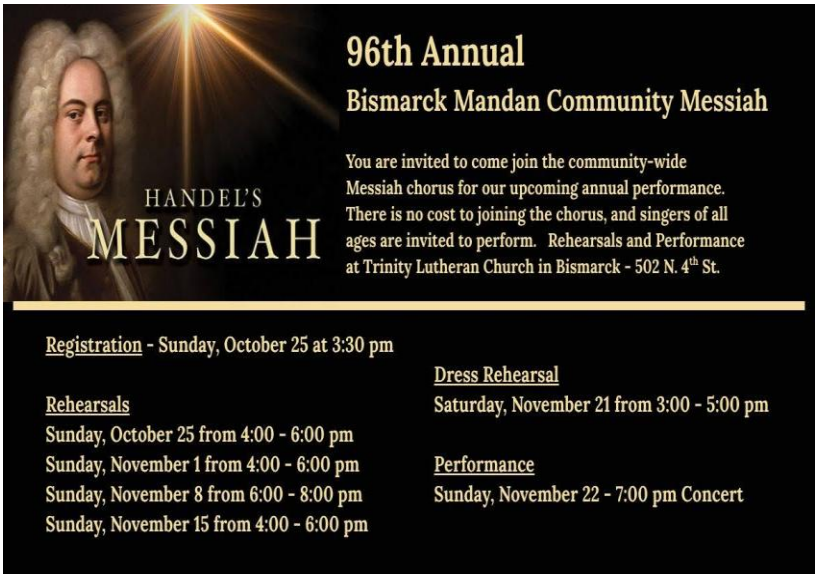
Confirmation / Reformation Sunday October 25th
We have five young people being confirmed TODAY: Keira Collins, Annabelle Ellison, Morgan Hocker, Libby Martin and Nora Nelson. Their small group leader was Jean Kraft.

Today is also Reformation Sunday, when we remember Martin Luther posting the 95 Thesis on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg on Oct. 31, 1517, which helped kick off the Protestant Reformation. Hope you are wearing red!

Dia de los Muertos + Taize
November 1, 2026
5 pm Dinner & Day of the Dead Program
6pm Taize Worship
at
St. George's Episcopal Church
Celebrating the life of those no longer with us. Everyone is welcome and invited to bring photos of deceased loved ones to display during dinner. Co-hosted by UCC & St. George's Episcopal.

Walk-a-Mile in My Shoes November 18 from 12:00 – 1:00 pm at the Center for Opportunity Homeless Shelter; 1140 S 12 St.

We would love to have you join us for a one mile walk to raise awareness of the challenges individuals experiencing homelessness face as they travel to access shelter, food, and other essential resources. The walk will begin at noon and will be followed by lunch and tours of the Center for Opportunity.



Remember the time change next weekend on November 1.

Join **Missouri Slope** for a burger & brat fundraiser in support of our **Veterans Tribute Event & Garden**. The proceeds will support the creation of a Veterans Tribute Event and Garden along the Wellness Pathway Tuesday, November 10th 10:30 – 6:00 pm. The meals will be served throughout that time in the Butler Bistro

Lutheran Church of the Cross

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Bismarck ND 58501

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Peder Gulleson, **Sunday Worship Coordinator**
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