

The River

A Blended Worship Service



Lutheran Church of the Cross
October 18, 2026

“Making Jesus Known by Sharing our Gifts”

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21st Sunday After Pentecost

Introduction In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

We Come Together

PRELUDE: "Lead Me, Guide Me"

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREETINGS OF PEACE

OUR CONFESSION, GOD'S FORGIVENESS

GATHERING SONG: "Holy is the Lord"

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

We Hear God's Word

FIRST READING:

Isaiah 45:1-7

¹ Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus,
whose right hand I have grasped
to subdue nations before him
and to strip kings of their robes,
to open doors before him—
and the gates shall not be closed

- ² I will go before you
and level the mountains;
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron;
³ I will give you the treasures of darkness
and riches hidden in secret places,
so that you may know that it is I, the Lord,
the God of Israel, who call you by your name.
⁴ For the sake of my servant Jacob
and Israel my chosen,
I call you by your name;
I give you a title, though you do not know me.
⁵ I am the Lord, and there is no other;
besides me there is no god.
I arm you, though you do not know me,
⁶ so that they may know, from the rising of the sun
and from the west, that there is no one besides me;
I am the Lord, and there is no other.
⁷ I form light and create darkness,
I make weal and create woe;
I the Lord do all these things.

RESPONSIVE READING:

Psalm 96:1-9 (10-13)

- ¹ O sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
² **Sing to the Lord; bless his name;
tell of his salvation from day to day.**
³ Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous works among all the peoples.
⁴ **For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised;
he is to be revered above all gods**
⁵ For all the gods of the peoples are idols,
but the Lord made the heavens.
⁶ **Honor and majesty are before him;
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.**
⁷ Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
⁸ **Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering, and come into his courts.**

9 Worship the Lord in holy splendor;
tremble before him, all the earth.

10 Say among the nations, “The Lord is king!

The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved.

He will judge the peoples with equity.”

11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
let the sea roar and all that fills it;

12 let the field exult and everything in it.

Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

13 before the Lord, for he is coming,
for he is coming to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with his truth.

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

¹ Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy,

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace to you and peace.

²We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers,
constantly ³remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love
and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴For we know, brothers and sisters
beloved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our message of the gospel came to
you not in word only but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just
as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. ⁶And you
became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word
with joy from the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in
Macedonia and in Achaia. ⁸For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only
in Macedonia and Achaia but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that
we have no need to speak about it. ⁹For they report about us what kind of welcome we
had among you and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God
¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who
rescues us from the coming wrath.

GOSPEL SONG: “Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil”

GOSPEL:**Matthew: 22:15-22**

¹⁵ The Pharisees went and plotted to entrap [Jesus] in what he said. ¹⁶ So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one, for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" ¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰ Then he said to them, "Whose head is this and whose title?" ²¹ They answered, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." ²² When they heard this, they were amazed, and they left him and went away.

SERMON: Pastor Lisa Ahlness**APOSTLES' CREED****SONG OF THE DAY:** "My Worth is Not What I Own"**PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH****SHARING OF THE PEACE****OFFERING SONG** "Take My Life That I May Be"**OFFERING PRAYER**

WE SHARE THE MEAL

PREPARATION FOR THE MEAL**LORDS' PRAYER****INVITATION TO OUR LORD'S SUPPER****COMMUNION SONG:** "We Are An Offering", "Seek Ye First"**COMMUNION BLESSING/POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

BENEDICTION

SENDING SONG: “Blessed Assurance”



“Making Jesus Known by Sharing our Gifts”

“THE RIVER” AND “LIVING WATER” WORSHIP MINISTERS

Pastor-Pastor Lisa Ahlness

Scripture Reader-Kathy Morrison

Communion Assistants-Sheila Koffler, Esther & Roger Anderson

Ushers-Debbie Patterson, Eve & Janison Kath

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 Stenehem, 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:

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 on Sunday, October 25th: Keira Collins, Annabelle Ellison, Morgan Hocker, Libby Martin and Nora Nelson. Their small group leader was Jean Kraft. We invite you to celebrate this step with them as they affirm their baptism on the 25th.

That day is also Reformation Sunday, when we remember Martin Luther posting the 95 Theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg on Oct. 31, 1517, which helped kick off the Protestant Reformation. Wear red on Reformation!

Faith Lutheran Church is hosting their annual bazaar Saturday October 24 from 9 – 2 pm.. Come for coffee and rolls. or soup and sandwiches take a walk though their fellowship hall. The aroma of coffee and fresh rolls, muffins, or pie will entice any Lutheran to have a cuppa. Then stroll through the crafts section and find something you've just got to have homemade by one of their members

**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.



**HANDEL'S
MESSIAH**

**96th Annual
Bismarck Mandan Community Messiah**

You are invited to come join the community-wide Messiah chorus for our upcoming annual performance. There is no cost to joining the chorus, and singers of all ages are invited to perform. Rehearsals and Performance at Trinity Lutheran Church in Bismarck - 502 N. 4th St.

Registration - Sunday, October 25 at 3:30 pm

Rehearsals
Sunday, October 25 from 4:00 - 6:00 pm
Sunday, November 1 from 4:00 - 6:00 pm
Sunday, November 8 from 6:00 - 8:00 pm
Sunday, November 15 from 4:00 - 6:00 pm

Dress Rehearsal
Saturday, November 21 from 3:00 - 5:00 pm

Performance
Sunday, November 22 - 7:00 pm Concert

OCTOBER 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				1 Quilting 1p	2 Wired Word 1:30	3 Men's Bible Study 10a
4 9 R. Practice 10 River Service 11 Coffee	5 9a Stitching Grp	6	7 5 p Supper 6:15 Living Water Service 7 School, Confirmation River Practice	8 Quilting 1p Church Council 6:30	9 Wired Word 1:30	10 Men's Bible Study 10a
11 9 R. Practice 10 River Service 11 Coffee	12 9a Stitching Grp	13 Connections 2:30	14 Book Club 1:30 5 p Supper 6:15 Living Water Service 7 School, Confirmation River Practice	15 Quilting 1p Gather Bible Study 10:30	16 Wired Word 1:30	17 Men's Bible Study 10a
18 9 R. Practice 10 River Service 11 Coffee	19 9a Stitching Grp	20	21 5 p Supper 6:15 Living Water Service 7 School, Confirmation River Practice	22 Quilting 1p	23 Wired Word 1:30	24 Men's Bible Study 10a
25 Confirmation 9 R. Practice 10 River Service 11 Coffee	26 9a Stitching Grp	27 W. Synod 7pm	28 5 p Supper 6:15 Living Water Service 7 School, Confirmation River Practice	29 Quilting 1p	30 Wired Word 1:30	31 Men's Bible Study Trunk or Treat-3-4

Life is Change

Drop in Group Support for Life's Transitions

facilitated by Dn. Beth Anderson, certified grief & end of life coach.



Whether you recently lost a loved one or need support when grief wells up over a past loss, you are welcome here.

Join us the first Sunday
of the month.

September 6

October 4

November 8

December 6



Centered Growth
Coaching



CenteredGrowthCoaching.com



701-979-3555

5 pm at
Lord of Life Lutheran Church
(1143 N 26th St, Bismarck)

Lutheran Church of the Cross

1004 E Highland Acres Rd.

Bismarck ND 58501

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Website: www.churchofthecross.org

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

Staff:

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Joel Crane, **Wednesday Worship Coordinator**

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Church Council Members

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