

Bismarck-Mandan Area

United Church of Christ

1200 E Highland Acres Rd ~ 701-223-2915 ~ office@uccbismarck.org ~ www.uccbismarck.org ~ Like us on Facebook

February 2023

A GLOBAL MINISTRY CHURCH

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Seeking: Honest Questions

by Rev. Gretchen Deeg, Pastor

There are two major seasons of preparation in the Christian calendar – Advent and Lent. We began the Christian year on the first of Advent in preparation for Jesus' birth. Since Christmas, we have been surrounding ourselves with the stories of Christ's light, the blessed waters of baptism, and the call of discipleship. On February 22, Ash Wednesday, we will enter into the season of Lent. This is a time of deep reflection and questions. The Gospel of Matthew tells us that the disciples *immediately* dropped what they were doing and started following Jesus... then the questions started coming: "How can these things be?" "What does this mean?" "Where do you get that living water?" "Surely not I, Rabbi?" Sometimes Jesus answers the questions with more questions. There are so many questions in the gospels, that we can only conclude that questions must be holy ground.

A Blessing for the Seekers

by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed*

Blessed are you who turn your face up to the sky,
who open your arms to feel the wind,
who notice all the things that we should notice.

Blessed are you who are fluent in wonder
and familiar with awe.

Blessed are you who, even now, dream dreams,
who have not lost hope,
who swear the glass is still half-full.

Blessed are you who plant trees
and sing the harmony,
who tell the children how this world can be magic.

Blessed are you who walk and seek
and turn over every stone,

pointing out all the corners and colors
that God lives in.

Blessed are you.

Amen.

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Serve the Banquet - Feb. 11

Help serve the Banquet at the Dream Center. We will need 6 volunteers and plan to serve between 100-125 people.



Ash Wednesday - Feb. 22

This will be the start of our Lenten services following a soup supper. Meal will begin at 5:30pm and Worship at 6:30pm every Wednesday through Lent.



Interfaith Potluck - Feb. 25

11:30 am - 2:00 pm at the Muslim Community Center
214 W. Bowen Ave, Bismarck

Worship with us every Sunday at 10 AM in-person or at www.uccbismarck.org/worship

Vision Statement

Adopted January 2016

The Bismarck-Mandan UCC is a thriving church transforming our lives and community:

- Where all are unconditionally welcomed, affirmed, accepted and loved;
- Where the good in every person is recognized and their talents are encouraged to be shared;
- Where children, youth, and adults learn that God is love and all are welcome to freely explore spirituality in a safe and nurturing environment;
- Where we can bring our personal needs and struggles and count on support from our church family – which is the loving family we all deserve;
- Where powerful messages inspire and challenge us to be caring and compassionate to all – in our church, community, and world, seeking opportunities to put our faith into action with courage to go beyond what we think we can do;
- Where we embrace the still-speaking God and live in today's world.



LIVING OUR VISION HIGHLIGHT

"Where powerful messages inspire and challenge us to be caring and compassionate to all."

The words and music of powerful speakers filled our hearts at this year's Martin Luther King Jr event on January 16. If you missed hearing the incredible speakers, a link to the recording can be found on the church's FB page. Bismarck UCC is the fiscal agent for the MLK Holiday Commission and UCC members help to plan the annual events.



Council Corner

by Carly Retterath, Moderator

Greetings UCC Bismarck,

I hope everyone has had a great start to the new year. As we move into February, I am reminded of the verse from Colossians 3:14 *"And above all these put-on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony."* So, whether you are a fan of Valentine's Day or not this month is a good time to reflect on the love you are giving to the world and people around you. I know for me this congregation has given my family and I a tremendous amount of love through the years.

Much of the church council's work this past month was focused around preparing for the annual meeting and the year ahead. Based on feedback from the congregation we continue to explore options for a partnership for our church to fill the hole left by Charles Hall Youth Services. We hope to identify a new partner this year. As we work to re-establish our church work post-Covid having a partnership like this will be essential to focus our work, time and finances.

As we discussed at the annual meeting, a major focus for this next year will be addressing the budget deficit that the church is currently experiencing. I would ask that each member takes some time to reflect on how they can be a part of addressing this issue to ensure that our church stays financial healthy and able to carry out its mission. This may mean bringing a friend or new person to church regularly to increase membership, increasing your tithing, volunteering to help secure donations/grant funding, or volunteering your time and talents around the church building. We all have something that we can bring to the table.

I wish you all a healthy and safe month ahead. Before we know it, spring will be here. Let's not let this year get away from us as a church congregation. Let's carry out the good work we are all called to do and make our ideas reality. In closing, *"So be very careful how you live. Do not live like those who are not wise but live wisely. Use every chance you have for doing good, because these are evil times. So, do not be foolish but learn what the Lord wants you to do"* Ephesians 5:15-17.



Brush Strokes for All Folks

A guided paint party for all ages! Bismarck UCC is hosting a paint party on March 28. We'll be painting an Easter themed canvas. All supplies will be provided. Stay tuned for registration information. Invite your neighbors and friends!

*We've raised \$8,258 for the necessary repainting of the building. Our goal is \$9,800.

Gift in Wills: As Easy as 1, 2, 3

Do you have a Will? Is it up-to-date? Even if your children are grown or you do not have children, having a Will with clear instructions to your family is a gift to them in the midst of their grief. Updating your Will to include gifts to your church and non-profits is an opportunity to celebrate the knowledge that your life will continue to have a positive tangible impact on others even after your death. Such generosity will leave a lasting impact on our Christian movement and touch the lives of your neighbors, near and far.

For bequests to Bismarck United Church of Christ, follow these three steps. Your gifts will sustain the ministry of being a church transforming the lives and community for years to come.

1. The majority of estate gifts come as bequests because these gifts can be easily created as part of a will. You can also make a charitable bequest by designating Bismarck United Church of Christ as the "payment on death" (POD) of a bank or stock account. When writing your will, decide if you want to make a bequest as either a percentage of your estate, a specific dollar amount, or contingent on the primary beneficiaries.
 - a. The standard legal wording for percentage bequest is: "I give and bequeath _____ percent (_____%) of my estate to Bismarck United Church of Christ Board (EIN: 45-0341811), having an office at 1200 E Highland Acres Rd, Bismarck, ND 58501 for its uses and purposes."
 - b. The standard legal wording for a specific dollar amount bequest is: "I give and bequeath to Bismarck United Church of Christ (EIN: 45-0341811), having an office at 1200 E Highland Acres Rd, Bismarck, ND 58501, the sum of _____ (\$ _____) for its uses and purposes."
 - c. The standard legal wording for a contingent bequest is: "If any or all of the above-named beneficiaries do not survive me, then I hereby give the share that otherwise would be theirs to Bismarck United Church of Christ (EIN: 45-0341811), having an office at 1200 E Highland Acres Rd, Bismarck, ND 58501 for its uses and purposes."
2. Unrestricted gifts to Bismarck United Church of Christ should be designated: "to support the area of greatest need in the life of the United Church of Christ."
3. Finally, consider sharing your story. We learn generosity from each other. Your story can inspire others to include a planned gift. The amount of your planned gift and the beneficiaries can of course remain anonymous, but other people will be encouraged to make a planned gift by hearing about you, and the hopes and gratitude that led you to make your gift. Once you decide how to make your bequest, consult with your legal and/or financial advisor to make your bequest intention clear.

FINANCIAL STATUS

January 1 to December 31, 2022

Revenue

General Offerings

Actual = \$ 136,619

Other Income (Dedicated, Earned)

Actual = \$ 24,514

Expenses

Actual = \$ 175,538

Total Revenue = \$ 161,133

Total Expenses = \$ 175,538

NET ACTIVITY = \$ (14,405)

SUPPORT OF OUR MISSION PARTNERS IN 2022

East Timor Education Fund	\$ 640
Charles Hall Institute	\$ 140
Our Church's Wider Mission	\$ 2,664
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$ 892
Strengthen the Church	\$ 210
Neighbors in Need	\$ 990
The Christmas Fund	\$ 730
Total Shared Ministry	\$ 6,266

The Giving Plate

by Pamela Clark-Stein, Stewardship & Mission

The pandemic challenged us, and even forced us to find new ways to stay connected as a church family. We are fortunate the pandemic is behind us. However, it's no less important to reach out to each other in little or big ways, with spontaneity or pre-planning. Not unlike electricity and the quality of life it provides, it's easy to take it for granted until there's a power outage. The same holds true for connections and relationships with each other as members of the UCC. We miss those connections and realize how much they really do matter. Our connection with each other is the tie that binds.

At the annual meeting, the Stewardship & Mission Committee introduced the Giving Plate. It's the hope of the committee that this simple ivory-colored plate, this simple gesture of filling it with goodies of your choice — and passing it on to another UCC member — can go a long way to brightening someone's day and letting them know you're thinking about them. It can be for a specific reason or it can be for no reason at all. And hey, the goodies you choose for filling the Giving Plate can be a package of Oreo double-stuffed cookies, homemade cookies or bars, or even cheese and crackers. (To share a little secret with you all, Hubby Mike didn't marry me for my cooking and baking skills so a no-fail choice from our household may well be Oreo cookies).

Share

This plate has no real owner
 Its journey never ends
 It travels on a spontaneous path
 To neighbors ... family ... friends.
 It carries love from home to home
 With treats for all to share
 Just a little pick me up
 Hello, thinking of you, I care!
 Please enjoy what's on this plate,
 Then fill it up once more
 And pass it on to someone new
 That's what the Giving Plate is for!



“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another,

Ongoing Classes

Monday Evening Bible Study

Using video clips from *The Bible Project*, this class is for both entry-level and experienced Bible readers. Meets on Mondays (Feb. 6, 13, and 27) at 6 pm in-person and online.

Caffeine & Christianity

A group of middle & high school youth. Gathers on Wednesdays at 6 pm for conversation and fun. See page 6 for upcoming events.

Friday Morning Bible Study

A group for the lectionary lovers! This dedicated group meets every Friday at 8:30 am in the church library to study the weekly scripture reading and fellowship. All are welcome.

Sunday School

Classes for the youngest kids to middle school aged are held on Sundays at 10:20 am. See the youth page for details.

Confirmation

A program for our 7th – 12th grade spiritual explorers. Meets twice a month on Sundays from 2 - 3:30 pm. Already confirmed youth are welcome to continue attending. Contact Pastor Gretchen if you are interested in affirming your faith.

Have an idea for a class? Contact Pastor Gretchen (223-2915) or Christian Ed with your ideas.

Just For Fun

Thursday Game Nights

Dust off your board games and join others from the general public and our church for the UCC hosted game night. The games begin the first Thursday of every month at 7 pm. Bring board games and a snack to share, if you wish. Next game nights: **Feb. 2 & March 2.**

Ministry & Fellowship Groups

UCC Choir

Choir sings in worship about three times a month and they are a beautiful addition to the worship experience! The choir would happily welcome anybody who is interested in joining. The choir meets for practice on **Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm (Sept. – May)**

Mayflower Circle

Mayflower Circle leads various ministries throughout the year including funeral luncheons, annual rummage sale, numerous fundraisers, and others. Contact Jane Thomson to learn more.

Threads of Love

Knit, quilt, tell stories, and have a great time with this group of crafters. Bring your own project, knit a prayer shawl to be blessed and gifted to another, or focus on your quilting. All are welcome to come join us at our **Tuesday gatherings from 1 to 3 pm, or later**. Experience or participation sewing, quilting, knitting, crafting, crocheting, are NOT required—we LOVE to fellowship with any and all. Hope to see you soon!

Haycreek Ministry

Have a passion for serving those in care centers? This team preaches and leads worship services at Haycreek Lodge Retirement Community on College Dr on various Wednesdays throughout the year. Talk with Darcy Avery with interest in joining this group of worship leaders.

Capital Pride: New Location

by Camille Grothier, Deacons

This is being written following our January Deacons meeting. One of the items we discussed is Dakota Outreach's Capitol Pride program for 2023. We are invited to bring a booth to the event and spread the word about the welcome of Bismarck UCC. The venue has changed and will be held INDOORS on BSC Campus in the NECE Building (Praise the Lord). What a welcome relief from the times we roasted in the outdoor sun. That's the good news... the other news (refuse to use the word Ba_) is it will cost more than in previous years (~\$100). I am offering the congregation an opportunity to participate with monetary donations to this cause. If you are willing to donate, please give me a call at 425-4256. Thank you and bless you for your consideration!

Haycreek Lodge News

by Darcy Avery, Haycreek Lodge Coordinator

Allan and Marcia Lerberg donated money to Haycreek Lodge in memory of Pat Lerberg. The Upper Room yearly subscription for 6 large print magazines would be possible for several years. Residents were informed that the Upper Rooms were a memorial from the Lerberg family. The residents were so appreciative. Pat loved her church services and devotions. The Upper Rooms were distributed January 4th at our first Haycreek Lodge service.



Thank You for Sponsoring a Sunday!

In Loving Memory of Herbert & Lilian Wilson



The children of Herbert and Lilian Wilson sponsored Sunday, January 15 in honor of their parents for what would have been their 78th wedding anniversary on January 20th. They were married on the Isle of Wight, England, in 1945.

Sponsored by: Fran, Joss, Paul, Penny, Kate, and Herb

*It's easy to Sponsor a Sunday by calling the church at 701-223-2915 or visiting www.uccbismarck.org/donate. Sponsorships are \$500. Most Sundays in 2023 are currently available for sponsorship.

Youth & Young at Heart News



Youth Group: Caffeine & Christianity

Wednesday, Feb. 1 from 6pm – 7pm at Bismarck UCC

Wednesday, Feb. 8 from 6pm – 7pm at Bismarck UCC

Wednesday, Feb. 15 from 7pm – 8:15pm at Lutheran Church of the Cross (1004 E Highland Acres Rd)

Service Project making Plastic Sleeping Mats for Homeless. These mats will be used at Ministry on the Margins and by people in Bismarck.

Wednesday, Feb. 22 from 6pm – 7pm at Bismarck UCC

We'll help serve the Lenten Soup Supper and participate in a 30 minute Lent Worship

Wednesday, Mar. 1 from 7pm – 8:30pm at Lutheran Church of the Cross (1004 E Highland Acres Rd)

Traveling Hebrew Scholar. Gather with youth from other churches as we learn together.

Sunday School

We will have family worship on the first Sunday of every month and we will offer Sunday School at 10:20am on:

Feb. 12

Feb. 19

Feb. 26



With us having greater numbers of children regularly, which is absolutely wonderful, we could use more adults to help with the children. If you would be interested in helping out with Sunday School please contact the church office or any member of Christian Ed.



Class & Service

Sundays from 2 PM - 3:30 PM

Confirmation is open to all youth grades 7th – 12th. Already confirmed youth are also welcome to attend and further develop their faith knowledge.

Confirmation meets twice a month on Sunday afternoons and incorporates a mix of education, games, and service opportunities.

Our upcoming class & service project dates are:

Feb. 12 & 26 – Class

Class from 2pm – 3:30pm at Bismarck UCC

JOIN US FOR AN
Interfaith Potluck
 Bring a dish from your culture to share

Saturday, Feb. 25, 2023
 11:30am - 2:00 pm
 Muslim Community Center
 214 W. Bowen Ave, Bismarck

We will hold a conversation about religious fasting in various traditions.

We will collect baby supplies for Youthworks families: especially blankets, formula, larger sized diapers and baby wipes

Sponsored by the Bismarck Interfaith Group
 Direct questions to hvanorny@gmail.com

Thankyou

for all your support and your churches support to this annual event. We appreciate you!

MLK Holiday Commission



Feb. 22 to Mar. 29 – Lent Worship
 Every Wednesday at 6:30pm. (Soup supper served at 5:30pm).

April 2 – Palm Sunday
 Pancake breakfast and egg decorating after worship!

April 6 – Maundy Thursday
 Soup supper at 5:30pm.
 Worship at 6:30pm.

April 9 – Easter Sunday & Egg Hunt
 Sunrise worship, 10am intergenerational Easter worship, and an Egg Hunt at 11am.

Oct. 13-14 – NPC Annual Gathering at Camp of the Cross in Garrison

*Happy Birthday to our beloved members and friends!
 May God's gift of life be a blessing to you and may your life be a blessing to others all year long.*



- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 03 Carrie Mandigo | 19 Karsten Klein |
| 07 Tiffany Sonnenberg | 20 Aiden Meidinger |
| 08 Lucille Ritz | 23 Delani Berger |
| 09 Ella Kraft | 24 Amber Augustadt |
| 11 Eugene Weekes | 25 Priscilla Sauer |
| 16 Ashley Leier | 28 Elise Smokey |

**Please contact the church office or sign up in the narthex if you would like your birthday listed in the newsletter.*



BISMARCK UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

“A Global Ministry Church”
www.uccbismarck.org

2023

**Sunday
Sunday**

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday



5

6

7

8

9

10

11



10am Worship & Communion
 11am Fellowship
 12pm Online Fellowship

6pm Bible Study

Church Office Closed

1pm Quilting/Knitting



6pm Christian Ed

6pm Caffeine & X-ianity
 7pm Choir Practice
 8pm NA Meeting



6:30pm Deacons

8:30am Bible Study

Serve the Banquet

12

13

14

Happy Valentine's Day!

15

16

17

18

10am Worship
 10:20am Sunday School
 11am Fellowship
 12pm Online Fellowship

6pm Bible Study

1st Sunday in Lent

1pm Quilting/Knitting

7pm Caffeine & X-ianity

8:30am Bible Study

Will you sponsor a Sunday? Contact the church office or visit www.uccbismarck.org/donate to get started.