

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

April 2022

A GLOBAL MINISTRY CHURCH

Fragile Blades of Grass

by Rev. Gretchen Deeg, Pastor

As I am writing this, the grass looks dead and the leftover leaves from last fall lie shriveled up on the ground. But, if you look really close, there are barely visible shoots of green starting to break through the dirt. The sprouting grass appears so fragile. It is as if a squirrel runs over them or a bird lands and bends it just a little, that the bright green grass will be done for. Right now, each blade is so thin and tiny that if we had not already lived through decades of springs, we might wonder how they will survive the harsh environment of gusts of wind, trampling feet, beating sun, and dipping temperatures. Yet, despite the grass' weakness and vulnerability, we know that it will grow with great persistence and cover the land. Soon, the brown earth will be concealed and the leftover leaves will be hidden beneath the thickening grass.

For those of us in the northern hemisphere, it is a blessing to get to celebrate Easter at spring, because everything from the blades of grass to the warming weather reminds us of new life. The story of resurrection, of life after death, does not seem so farfetched when we look at the sprouting grass and the budding trees. It wasn't that long ago that the land was covered in a blanket of snow and there was not a single blade of green in sight. We could have looked out at winter and said that the hope for spring was futile. But we did not, because we have been here before. We've been in winter and seen spring come again. Likewise, we have walked through times of death and great loss and found friendship, life, and love again. These are all in the cycles of our life, so the story of Christ's life, death, and resurrection is not so farfetched even if we have not physically placed our own fingers in Christ's wounds or touched his side. We've been here before. Each year we have walked through Holy Week; rejoiced at the triumphant entry of Christ, been fed at the table of God, entered into the anguish of the crucifixion, and experienced the radiant joy of the resurrection. We keep returning to these places each year, because the more we walk in these stories, the more we come to know with increasing certainty that there is always new life after death and that love always has the last word.

****An update, in case you missed it: Masks are recommended, but not required at Bismarck UCC.**

OUR LIFE TOGETHER



HOLY WEEK

Services and Classes

Complete List is on Page 3



Tips for Aging Well

Check out Page 5 for this month's GREAT tips!



Join us for Spring Clean Up

April 23 at 9 AM
Details on Page 7

Worship with us every Sunday at 10 AM in-person or online.

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 children, youth, and adults learn that God is love and all are welcome to freely explore spirituality in a safe and nurturing environment."

Our Sunday School kids have been preparing for the resurrection and new life of Easter by weekly caring for newly sprouting plants and retelling the story of Holy Week through their own creations of the resurrection tomb. Let's all join them by nurturing new life in our homes too!



Council Corner

by Carly Retterath, Moderator

Greetings UCC Bismarck,

I would like to start this month's update with a question, "What if no line existed between sacred and secular?" During this time of Lent I have spent a lot of time reflecting and praying on how I experience God in my everyday world and how the church can transcend the walls of the building and into the everyday life of our community. I would invite each of you to reflect and pray on this idea as we move forward with making our church vision and goals a reality.

Just a quick update on what the church council is working on. At our last council meeting we reviewed the red cards that were filled out with at the annual meeting with the congregation's dreams for the church. We compared these with the previous committee goals that were established pre-pandemic to find common themes. At our next meeting the church council will be having a retreat to explore the Bismarck UCC's vision and values and how we are living those out as a congregation. This process will help us to identify what projects and events we want to prioritize as a congregation for the coming year. We are excited to spend this time as a group and start to examine what we want Bismarck UCC to be known for and how we bring that to life.

I hope everyone is enjoying the warmer temperatures and the promise of spring right around the corner. "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."
(Numbers 6:24-26, NIV)

Blessings!

UCC Shirts for Sale

Did you miss out on the last t-shirt sale? Or maybe you have worn out the first one, or want one in the other color? NOW IS YOUR CHANCE!!

Short sleeve shirts are available to order for \$15. **Order your shirts by Sunday, April 17.**



FINANCIAL STATUS

January 1 to February 28, 2022

Revenue

General Offerings

Actual = \$ 25,198

Other Income (Dedicated, Earned)

Actual = \$ 1,351

Expenses

Actual = \$ 26,001

Total Revenue = \$ 26,549

Total Expenses = \$ 26,001

NET ACTIVITY = \$ 548

SUPPORT OF OUR MISSION PARTNERS IN 2021

East Timor Education Fund	\$ 90
Charles Hall Youth Services	\$
Our Church's Wider Mission	\$ 500
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$ 203
Strengthen the Church	\$
Neighbors in Need	\$
World Vision	\$ 160
The Christmas Fund	\$
Total Shared Ministry	\$ 793



Lenten Centering Prayer – Wednesdays through April 13

From 6 PM to 6:30 PM enter into the practice of being in communion with God and listening for the sacred in our lives. Each time of prayer begins with music and a brief lesson on centering prayer before we enter into 15-20 minutes of silent prayer and 5 minutes of individual reflections.



Maundy Thursday Tenebrae – April 14 (in-person & [online](#))

5 PM Soup Supper

6 PM Worship with choir & instrumentalists

Community Easter Vigil – April 16 (in-person & online)

7 PM Worship (Lutheran Church of the Cross) This service begins outside around a fire, then moves indoors for the majority of the service.

Palm Sunday – April 10 (in-person & [online](#))

10 AM Worship (Intergenerational Worship – No Sunday School)

11 AM Pancake Breakfast & Egg Decorating

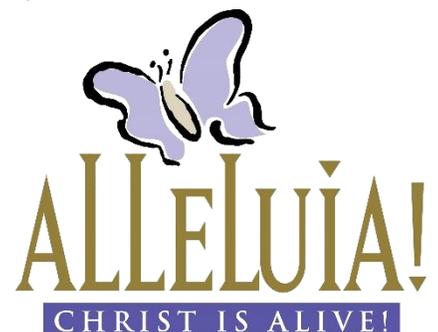
Easter Sunday – April 17

6:30 AM Easter Sunrise Worship (Front lawn at Haycreek Lodge)

10 AM Easter Worship at UCC (in-person & [online](#))

10:20 AM Easter Egg Hunt & Sunday School

*All services are at Bismarck UCC unless otherwise noted. All worship experiences, except Centering Prayer will be available both in-person and online. Centering Prayer is available in-person only.



Sunday Sponsors



March 6 - In Gratitude

In gratitude for the ministry of Bismarck UCC and the return of Spring!

Sponsored anonymously



March 20 - Happy Birthday Clement Weber!

"I'm sponsoring Sunday, March 20 in honor of my dad's 97th Birthday on that day! He's a WWII vet who still enjoys golfing a couple of times a week!"

Sponsored by Maria Roll-Schlecht

Maria is a long-standing member who has been active in various aspects of the church over the years. She was blessed to celebrate with Clement on his birthday!

March 27 - For World Peace

Sponsored by Mike & Pam Stein

Mike and Pam Stein have been active members of the church for many years. Pam has been chair of the Stewardship & Mission Committee for the last few years, and Mike has retired from the position of moderator, but is still serving as a consultant on the Trustees Committee.



April 17 - For Your Service

"Even though we're not members of the church we feel as though we are very close to many of you. We've cherished our friendships with the lovely folks over the Zoom Fellowship Time since the pandemic began. We'd like to honor the members and the staff and thank you for your dedication and service. We pray that the upcoming months bring you happiness."

Sponsored by Carol & Bernie Deeg

Bernie & Carol reside in Ohio and began regularly attending worship services and fellowship times with Bismarck UCC shortly after we began offering online opportunities. They are also active members of a UCC church in Ohio.

Sponsor a Sunday dates are open in April, May and June. This is a great way to celebrate gratitude, honor a grad or the end of the school year, or to just welcome spring and summer. It is \$500 per sponsorship and you can visit www.uccbismarck.org/donate to donate for your sponsorship or sign up on the form in the narthex. Thank you for your inspiring celebrations and generosity!

Ministry & Fellowship Groups

Mayflower Circle

This women's fellowship group is for any age. Mayflower Circle leads various ministries throughout the year including funeral luncheons, annual rummage sale, numerous fundraisers, and others. The next meeting will be on **April 14 at 12 Noon** in-person and online. Contact Jane Thomson or Dawn Archer to join or with any questions.

Haycreek Lodge Ministries

This team preaches and leads worship services at Haycreek Lodge (formerly Primrose) on College Dr on various Wednesdays throughout the year. If you have a passion for serving those in care centers, please contact Darcy Avery to get involved. The next service at Haycreek Lodge will be on **Wednesday, April 6 at 2 PM.**



Threads of Love: Crafting Guild

Do you enjoy visiting with others while crafting, quilting and knitting? Then come and join this fun group on **Tuesdays at 2 PM** in the Fellowship Hall. Experienced and non-experienced alike are all welcome. If you have been wanting to learn a new craft, this might just be the group for you.

UCC Choir

The choir meets on Wednesdays at 7 PM for rehearsal. If you would like to share your singing talents, please contact Craig Devos at 701-226-3860.



Handbell Choir

Handbell Choir is currently on hiatus. They will need at least 5 people to continue in the future. Please contact the church office at 701-223-2915 if interested in joining.

Tips for Aging Well

If you would like to share your "Tips for Aging". It's easy, just write 1 to 3 paragraphs, for the newsletter, including your "Tips for Aging Well." Please include your name, also your age if you like. Email to Donna at office@uccbismarck.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

Tips from Tove Mandigo...

- Try to stay in close contacts with children and other close relatives.
- Try different kinds of exercise. I do Yoga, weight-based exercise and running.
- Have a hobby ... I am a knitter and a "cooker."
- Read a variety of books.
- Enjoy other people through church, neighbors, relatives, and organizations where you can share your talents.
- Share what you have with others.
- Explore new areas where one can learn.
- Keep in contact with a higher power.
- And last, but not least, love others and myself.

Tip from Gene Weekes...

On March 4th, it was snowing and very icy, when I took a 1099 to my accountant who has his office in Tschider and Smiths building. The city had cleaned the streets and put a large pile of ice and snow on the boulevard. I managed to get over it going in, but on the way out I didn't know how I was going to get to the pickup. I sent a quick prayer up and about that time a young lady stopped her car in the street and ran over saying "Take my hand." And she pulled me over to my pickup. I thanked her and asked her name but she just ran back to her car and drove away. I believe it was divine intervention. I sent a thank you prayer up, but God had to provide the name.

In these troubled times we have to keep a positive attitude, and pray. We have much to pray about both people and situations and when we pray, we must believe. We must keep our faith and hope for the future.



Adopt-a-Block
Food Distribution

Community Open House

Sunday, April 24
3-6 pm

1805 Park Avenue
(Go South on 18th St.
from East Bismarck Expy.)

The UCC Jack's Food Pantry partners with Adopt-a-Block for food distribution to hundreds of Bismarck/Mandan families every week! We're invited to the celebration of their new building.



Liturgical Arts Volunteers Needed for Holy Week!

Liturgical Arts committee is looking for volunteers to assist with Holy week preparations and decorations. If you are available or interested in gathering to prepare for the following services, please contact the church office 223-2915 or email Cecilia Tolstedt at ctolstedt@bis.midco.net. We look forward to getting-together in fellowship and preparation for our Holy week services! Anyone is welcome to these decorating times:

In prep for Maundy Thursday: Monday, April 11 from 4 PM to 6 PM

In prep for Easter Sunday: Friday, April 15 from 10 AM to 12 Noon



Christian Education



**Join Us for
Sunday School**
Sundays at 10:20 AM

We invite all children to continue worship with crafts and activities after the Time with Children in Sunday worship.

Caffeine & X-ianity

Calling all church youth 5th grade and up! Join us Wednesdays at 4 PM for our weekly youth group gathering through Wed., May 25.



Confirmation

Next Confirmation Class
Sunday, April 24 @ 2 PM

Confirmation Sunday

May 22 at 10 AM

Join us on this Sunday as we celebrate our youth completing their second year of Confirmation as they renewing their commitments to their faith and the UCC on this special Sunday.



Bible Study

Wednesdays @ 6:30 PM - In-Person & Online
Join us as we dive into the historical and literary context of the New Testament letters.

Fridays @ 8:30 AM - In-Person & Online
Join this dedicated group for a group discussion and fresh perspectives on the weekly scriptures.

(Links for all Bible Studies available on Bismarck UCC's calendar at www.uccbismarck.org/news-events)

Save The Dates



Saturday, June 11 - NPC Summer Party
Sertoma Park Shelter 11 at 11 AM. Potluck with other UCC churches around the Northern Plains Conference.

Thursday, July 14 - Party at the Patrie's
Join us at Bill and Marcia Patrie's home at 5 PM for an evening of family fun.

Thursday, August 11 - Pool Party
Join your UCC family at Evan & Tove Mandigo's home for a fun evening of swimming, relaxing and fellowship. Bring a dish to share!

Celebrating a Graduation?



Does your family have a graduate that you would like to honor this graduation season? If so, please contact us at office@uccbismarck.org with their name, where they are graduating from, their major if in college, where they are headed in the fall if in high school, and a picture. We are excited to help you celebrate by honoring them in the May Newsletter. Deadline for submission: Apr. 15th.

Thank you for the Beautiful Easter Flowers

Harold Karch in memory of Violet Karch and his parents, Edward & Bertha Karch

Camille Grothier in memory of Mary Stala and Libby Mettler, and in honor of Mark & Anna

Frank & Betty Picard in memory of Jim Picard and Brad Bosch

Cheryl Danks in memory of Merle & Eugene Bruce and Samantha Danks

Gail Erickson in memory of Mylee Erickson and parents

Penny Wilson in memory of her parents, Dr. Herbert & Mrs. Lilian Wilson

Michael & Pamela Stein in honor of the People of the Ukraine

Kirby & JoAnn Kruger in memory of Donna Doll & Keith Kruger

Joyce Rosene in memory of Myron Rosene



Spring Clean Up Saturday, April 23 at 9 AM

Lunch will be provided. Please bring your garden gloves, any outdoor yard tools you like, and your favorite cleaning products. We will have tools and cleaning supplies here also.

This is a GREAT opportunity for students who may still need volunteer hours for the year. No need to be a church member to help out!

The outside of the church will be professionally painted this summer, and much of the work will be in preparation for that large endeavor.

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.



02 Rachel McFerran

04 Ken Royse

05 Ty Balliet

06 Brenna Jessen

10 Peg Schemmel

14 Tammie Robinson

14 Allison Volk

16 Sandra Domagala

17 Myrna Detloff

17 Allie VanderLaan

18 Mesa Tollefson

18 Krystal Sonnenberg

23 Tanner Balliet

25 Brandon Domagala

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