

Weaving the Future

I have been on a quest to understand better the days of old by learning how to master 18th-century living skills long forgotten. My most recent adventure was a class on how to grow flax, spin it into thread, and then weave it into cloth.

It was there at the loom that I found my weaving became a prayerful act, and with each pass of the shuttle, I thought of the series of “The Kingdom of God is like” parables that Jesus shared so long ago.

The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed — the smallest of seeds that grows so great it becomes a haven where birds make their nests among the branches. The Kingdom of God is like yeast that rises into a pillowy loaf of warm bread.

The Kingdom of God is like ...

I mused that if Jesus was at the loom with me, he would begin teaching how the Kingdom of God is like a weaver creating a tapestry with various colors of threads.

The effectiveness of Jesus’ many teachings have always been that he was able to take what was right in front of him and make it a teachable God moment. It was a gift that made God’s Kingdom more accessible to others. There was no secret handshake or password to gain entry. Rather, the Kingdom was and is all around in ways we are often blind to.

Take a look where you are right now. What is a Kingdom of God parable Jesus would speak of?

Chances are you are sitting in a pew, and you think there is no sign of the Kingdom. Look again.

Could it be that the Kingdom of God is like the threadbare cushion you might sit on? Its patted down stuffing testifying to the generational stories of faith that need to be heard and the ones that still need to be told. Or perhaps the Kingdom of God is like a cracked vase that is holding the flowers on the chancel. Once shattered but not discarded. Rather, lovingly restored by hands who still saw its beauty and worth.

The Kingdom of God is like...

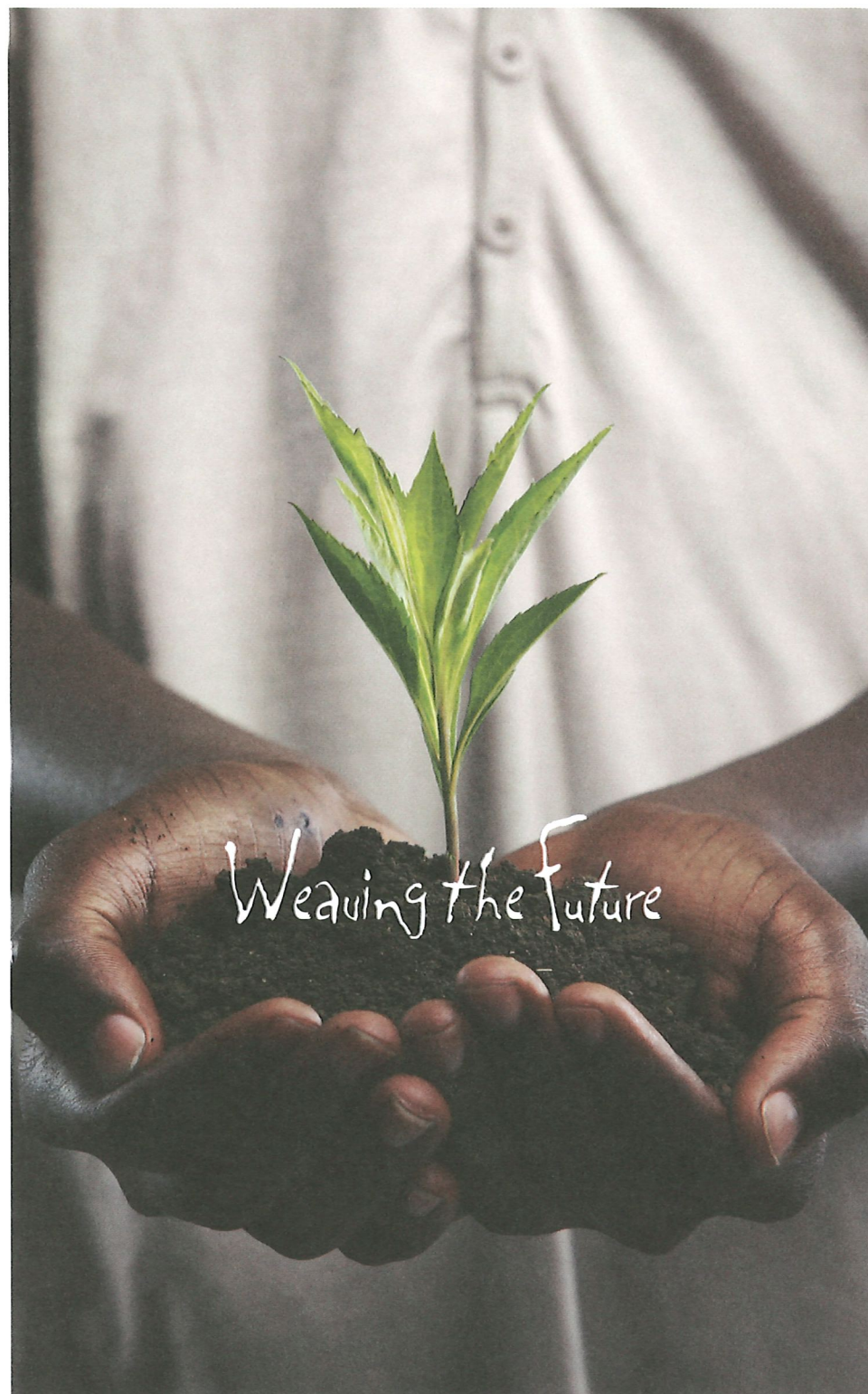
It’s now your turn to see with eyes of faith and make a new parable for today.

Story-telling God, may our voice speak of the parables still needing to be told. May everything we see and savor, touch and taste, remind us of the goodness of Your kingdom that is here on Earth all around us. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today’s Sunday Bulletin.)



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST



Bismarck-Mandan Area
**UNITED CHURCH
 OF CHRIST**



1200 E Highland Acres Rd, Bismarck, ND 58501

701-223-2915 www.uccbismarck.org

July 26, 2026 at 10 AM Worship

Outdoor Worship: Canopy of Creation

Pastor: Rev. Gretchen Deeg | Liturgist: Karol Parker

Music: Dave Augustadt | Video: Kirby Kruger

NO MATTER

Sing! 35

No matter who, no matter what
 No matter where you are on the journey of life;
 You're welcome, welcome in this place.
 Accepted and welcomed by God's grace.

***CALL TO WORSHIP & OPENING PRAYER**

All: I will sing praise to my God as long as I live!

***HYMN Morning Has Broken**

Morning has bro-ken like the first morn-ing;
 blackbird has spo-ken like the first bird.
 Praise for the sing-ing! Praise for the morn-ing!
 Praise for them, spring-ing fresh from the Word!

Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heav-en,
 like the first dew-fall on the first grass.
 Praise for the sweet-ness of the wet gar-den,
 sprung in complete-ness where his feet pass.

Mine is the sun-light! Mine is the morn-ing
 born of the one light E-den saw play!
 Praise with e-la-tion, praise ev-ery morn-ing
 God's re-cre-a-tion of the new day!

SCRIPTURE

Ezekiel 47:1-6, 12

***HYMN**

I Saw a Tree by the Riverside

Refrain on next page

Refrain D D/F# G A D D/F#



"I've got roots grow-ing down to the wa - ter, I've got
leaves grow-ing up to the sun-shine, and the fruit that I bear is a
sign of the life in me. I am shade from the
hot sum-mer sun-down, I am nest for the birds of the heav - en.
I'm be - com-ing what the Lord of trees has meant me to
be— a strong young tree."

A G/A A D G/D A/D G/D Last time D

REMEMBERING

One: We remember the first garden, when God planted a forest of trees.

All: **We remember the gardens and trees of our childhood. The places where we played in the past, when we felt close to Earth and to trees.**

One: We remember and rejoice.

All: **God, thank you for trees and for forests filled with mysteries!**

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION¹

Great Creator, we are sorry. We have become disconnected from the wonder of our childhood. We have let greed and thoughtlessness make decisions for the lungs of the earth. We have ignored the destruction of our forests here and around the world – the death of old-growth giants and species breathing their last. Forgive us and renew wonder within us. Show us the ways to be caretakers in your garden. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

*GLORIA

Glory be to the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Holy Ghost:
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.

WELL, I'LL BE

A Filipino Creation Story²

STORIES FROM PLACERVILLE

Hannab Vanorny, Faith Schwartz, Oliver Gagner

SCRIPTURE

Revelation 22:1-3a

REFLECTION

PRAYER HYMN Put Your Hand on the Ground

Chorus Put your hand on the ground, touch it like a prayer. (x2)

Put your on the ground.

I know it's true

Somebody somewhere is touching it too.

verse 1 People on the streets of Krakow, *touching it too.*

People biking in Jakarta, *touching it too.*

People praying in Somalia, *touching it too.*

People dancing out in Pine Ridge, *touching it too.*

Chorus

verse 2 All the trees that stand upon it, *touching it too.*

All the forests of Siberia, *touching it too.*

The great giants in the Amazon, *touching it too.*

All the baobabs in Kenya, *touching it too.*

Chorus

verse 3 All the palm trees of Tahiti, *touching it too.*

All the pecans in Sonora, *touching it too.*

All the bristlecones so ancient, *touching it too.*

Cottonwoods along the St. Croix, *touching it too.*

Chorus

verse 4 All the feet of all the mothers, *touching it too.*

All the knees of all the mourners, *touching it too.*

All the backs of all the dreamers, *touching it too.*

All the bottoms of the babies, *touching it too.*

Chorus

SENDING

*HYMN You Shall Go Out with Joy sung x3



TEXT: Steffi Geiser Rubin, 1975
MUSIC: Stuart Dauermann, 1975
Text and Music © 1975 Lillenas Publishing Co. (admin. Music Services)

THE TREES OF THE FIELD
Irregular

CARRY GOD'S LOVE

Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from [ONE LICENSE](#), License #732302-A.

¹ Facts from ND Forest Service. "North Dakota Forest Health Highlights." 2025.

² Told to Matthew Fox, reported in *Christian Spirituality*, spring 1995.



Thank You for Worshiping with Us!

Your offerings are essential for the ongoing ministry of this congregation. Donations can be made using this QR code, online at www.uccbismarck.org/donate, mailed to the church, or placed in the offering box.

THIS WEEK'S OPPORTUNITIES: July 26 - August 2

- Sunday:** 11 AM Fellowship & 12 Noon [Online](#) Fellowship
- Tuesday:** 1 PM Quilting/Knitting
6:30 PM Block Party Planning (in-person & [online](#))
- Thursday:** 7 PM Mahjong Game Night
- Friday:** 9 AM Bible Study (in-person & [online](#))
- Sunday:** 10 AM Sunday Worship
11 AM Fellowship & 12 Noon [Online](#) Fellowship
11:15 AM Council (in-person & [online](#))

Sponsored in Celebration and Honor

The end of July has a lot of meaning to us as we will be celebrating our 26th wedding anniversary on the 28th. Jerry's son has a birthday. We also take time to remember & honor our departed parents who gave us very much love and guidance.

Sponsored by Jerry & Laurie Reinisch

Aug. 23 and 30 are available for sponsorship. Contact the church office at 223-2915 or visit uccbismarck.org/donate to sponsor a Sunday.

Sponsorships are \$500.

Upcoming August Events

Bismarck Interfaith Potluck – Aug. 8, 11:30am-1pm

Sertoma Park shelter 9. If you are able, bring a dish to share and donations of school supplies for area students.

Vacation Bible School – Aug. 9-11, 5:30-7:30pm

Held at Lutheran Church of the Cross, 1004 E Highland Acres Rd. For kids ages 4-9. Please register below the bulletin board or online at <https://shorturl.at/aPAwD>.

Block Party & Quilt Raffle – Aug. 12, 5:30pm

Dinner starts at 5:30pm at Bismarck UCC. Desserts are served at 7pm at Lutheran Church of the Cross. Quilt raffle tickets are \$10.

OUR PRAYER LIST

Julie, Family of Camille Grothier, Louise Zuern, Ivan Sadlier (Autum's uncle), Jody Miller, Kayla Bruning, Bella Bruning, Matthew Nitschke, Cooper (Brandon & Tasha Domagala's son), Amanda Wilson, Frank Picard, Carla Christenson (Monica Klein's mother), Fredrick Krause (Kerri Kraft's grandfather), Robyn Richter (Kyle Eisenbraun's aunt), Doretta Reule, Howard Etson, East Timor, Refugees

*Contact the church office to be added to our weekly prayer list.