



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



June 2021

A GLOBAL MINISTRY CHURCH

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

## Love abounds...even in policies

by Rev. Gretchen Deeg, Senior Pastor

Starting on May 23, our updated COVID policies went into effect. These updated policies brought us into alignment with the current CDC guidelines stating that "fully vaccinated people can resume activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required." Bismarck UCC no longer requires masks be worn by fully vaccinated individuals in small group settings or worship.

This is a big deal and it is something to celebrate. However, in our celebrations we cannot forget the most vulnerable among us. In every worship service, we have a number of individuals who are undergoing cancer treatments, have weakened immune systems, and serious health concerns. COVID is a very real and serious concern for them. Yet, being in physical community with others is also essential for everyone's mental and physical health. Bismarck UCC has been a safe place to worship and we ask for your help to keep it that way. If you aren't feeling well, please worship online. If you are not yet fully vaccinated, please wear a mask. If you are more comfortable masking, mask up. If you have a weakened immune system, follow the advice of your doctors.

Although we have updated our policies, we continue to remind each other to keep the health and well-being of others at the forefront of our minds. I support our updated policies and fully vaccinated individuals in their decision to attend church functions without a mask. However, even though I am fully vaccinated, I will continue to mask in worship for some time. Why? Because our kids are not yet fully protected. Our individuals with weakened immune systems are still vulnerable. Not all of our members are fully vaccinated. Some individuals are just starting to resume in-person events and are nervous about being with groups of people.

So to mask or not, this is the question before you. May you make the decision with the words of Christ in your heart... "love one another; as I have loved you."

## Summer Service Inside & Outdoors!

Starting on June 13<sup>th</sup>, we will begin our summer schedule. We are headed outside to worship in nature again. Bring your favorite lawn chair, light jacket, and some sunscreen.

**1st Sunday of the month** - inside the sanctuary with communion

**Remaining Sundays** - outside on the church lawn, weather permitting



## Office Hours

Monday – Friday  
9 AM – 1 PM

Office: 701-223-2915

## Summer Fun

June 26: Nature Walk

July 20: Pool Party & Potluck

*see page 3 for details*

## COVID-19 Vaccine Info

Check out the link below for information on vaccination sites.  
<https://www.vaccines.gov/search/>

**Sunday Worship at 10 AM (in-person & online) | Wednesday at 6 PM (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 powerful messages inspire and challenge us to be caring and compassionate to all – in our church, community, and world, seeking opportunity to go beyond what we think we can do."*

We were blessed to have our new Transitional Conference Minister, Rev. Deborah Blood, lead us in worship and song on May 30! As we begin to re-imagine the future of the Northern Plains Conference, may we do so with courage "to go beyond what we think we can do!"



## Council Corner

by Mike Stein, Moderator

Hello Everyone,

I hope you are enjoying the warmer temperatures. It is hard to believe that I am writing this newsletter for the month of June. We all need to take a deep breath and enjoy these beautiful days.

We had a great discussion at our last Council meeting. The Council met on Thursday, May 13<sup>th</sup>. The main discussion was around the updated CDC new mask guidelines. The new guidelines pertained to vaccinated people. We updated the UCC Covid -19 policies. This updated policy will be posted on the UCC Bismarck website and e-mailed out to congregation members.

Some more good news! We also spent some time discussing the summer block party. We will be looking for people to be part of a committee to help organize this event. If you have an interest to be part of this fun group, please reach out to the church office.

We also spent some time discussing the possibility of a new part-time staff member. This position would be the Director of Education and Mission. Part of the responsibilities would be working with the youth and adult/intergenerational education opportunities.

The Council will be holding a special meeting on June 3<sup>rd</sup> to discuss the first 4 chapters of "Governance and Ministry: Rethinking Board Leadership" by Dan Hotchkiss. You are welcome to read this book with us.

I am very much looking forward to the summer months. The businesses are opening up. People are on the move again.

Let us all pray for rain.

Take care & God Bless!



**June 26 at 9 AM**

Nature Walk along River  
Meet at the Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park Visitor Center. Walk will be ~1 hour in length.

**July 20 at 5:30 PM**

Pool Party & Potluck  
Join us for dinner and swimming at Evan & Tove Mandigo's home (2489 Timberlane Place, Bis). Bring your own chair and a side dish to share.

**August – Stay Tuned!**

Want to be a part of Summer Fun or Neighborhood Block Party Planning? Contact Pastor Gretchen!

# Thank You for Sponsoring a Sunday!

April 25 – Sponsored in Honor of three beautiful children!

Sponsored by Camille Grothier

*Camille's deep faith and positive outlook even through life's challenges are an inspiration to many in our congregation. She currently serves as a Deacon and church Council member and quilts with UCC Threads of Love: Crafting Guild.*



May 16 – Sponsored in Gratitude for livestreamed services.

**"It has been a blessing to stream the service each week and watch with Kris' mom, Jan."**

Sponsored by Scott & Kris Kleinjan

*Scott and Kris have been members of Bismarck UCC for many years. Scott has served as our treasurer for many years and Kris has blessed us with her gift of music in worship. Jan joined us in 2019 from one of our sister UCC churches in Minneapolis after moving to Bismarck to be closer to her daughter, Kris.*

May 23 – Sponsoring in Celebration of their birthdays in May & June.

Sponsored by Myron & Joyce Rosene

*Joyce celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in May and Myron celebrates his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday in June. Happy Birthday Joyce and Myron! Both Myron and Joyce bless us with their creative gifts. Myron makes woodworking projects and Joyce quilts with the UCC Threads of Love: Quilting Guild. Myron also currently serves on the Board of Trustees.*



May 30 – Sponsored in Gratefulness for God's many blessings.

Sponsored by Don Ronsberg

*Don is a regular participant in our Friday Bible Study. His thoughtful faith and ability to listen with an open heart brings depth to every conversation. He also assisted us with the creation of our safe church policies.*

**FINANCIAL STATUS**

January 1 to April 30, 2021

**Revenue**

General Offerings

Actual = \$ 52,798

Other Income (Dedicated, Earned)

Actual = \$ 1,777

**Expenses**

Actual = \$ 19,143

Total Revenue = \$ 54,575

Total Expenses = \$ 47,210

**NET ACTIVITY = \$ 7,365**

**SUPPORT OF OUR MISSION PARTNERS IN 2021**

East Timor Education Fund	\$ 50
Charles Hall Youth Services	\$ 100
Our Church's Wider Mission	\$ 900
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$ 1,118
Strengthen the Church	\$ 100
Neighbors in Need	\$
The Christmas Fund	\$
<b>Total Shared Ministry</b>	<b>\$ 2,268</b>

**It's easy to Sponsor a Sunday.**

Visit [www.uccbismarck.org/donate](http://www.uccbismarck.org/donate) or contact the church office at [office@uccbismarck.org](mailto:office@uccbismarck.org) or 701-223-2915 to get started today. At the time of this writing, all of our Sundays in June and many Sundays in July are available for sponsorship. Sponsorships are \$500 and offset the expenses for a Sunday worship service.

## Greetings from the Deacons

by Camille Grothier, Deacons' Chair

Our last meetings were held on April 13 and May 11. Most of our duties have been drastically impacted due to Covid and, to date, our meetings have all been held online. We have accepted an invitation to have a booth at the Dakota Outright Capital Pride on June 19 from 11am – 5pm on the Capitol grounds. We invite you to take part in this fun and worthy event. We always enjoy the conversations and laughter (a LOT of laughter) at this event while sharing info about our church family. Contact the church office to sign up for a 2 hour shift at the booth table.

We appreciate those who have volunteered to usher and be liturgists and extend an open invitation to all our church family members to consider helping out in this regard. A big thank you to all who have already served in these capacities and who stand ready to welcome others who feel called to fill these important functions.

Our Board will begin searching for ways we can live more fully into our Vision Statement and we welcome any comments or suggestions any of our brothers and sisters in Christ might have.....and as the hymn refrain states....."God be with you till we meet again". God bless you all!

## Ongoing Classes

### Friday Morning Bible Study

This dedicated group meets every Friday at 8:30 AM for Bible Study and fellowship. All are welcome.

### Confirmation – Summer Service!

On June 21 at 10am, all confirmands and youth grades 7 are invited to take part in this month's service project at Ministry on the Margins!



### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are inviting you to assist with our Sunday services as

more and more people become vaccinated. We would love to have more volunteers for

- Liturgy Readers
- Video/Tech Assistants

## Primrose Ministries News

by Darcy Avery, Primrose Ministries Coordinator

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, Dale Carmen led the service and communion to 7 members, plus Dale and I. Upper Room devotionals were provided to those requesting them. On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Darcy will lead the service and communion. On June 30<sup>th</sup>, Camille Grothier will lead the service. Our group meets on the second floor now. Covid restrictions have cautiously eased. We took a few pictures of our accommodations. We so enjoy our Primrose Ministries.



- |                     |                    |                       |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 03 Wanda Benson     | 11 Sara Ripley     | 29 Kira Schemmel      |
| 04 Jenessa Whitmore | 11 Krista Tolstedt | 29 Danielle Neuberger |
| 06 Misty Akovenko   | 14 Barb Gress      | 30 Evan Mandigo       |
| 07 Emily Archer     | 19 Dave Baber      |                       |
| 07 Myron Rosene     | 22 Sofia Augustadt |                       |
| 10 Bill Patrie      | 24 Addison Weil    |                       |

*\*Please contact the church office if you would like your birthday listed in a future newsletter.*

# We're Supporting Superheroes!

by Amber Augustadt, Field Consultant, ND United

On behalf of North Dakota United and its members, I would like to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to the Bismarck-Mandan United Church of Christ and its Stewardship & Mission Committee, along with the Northern Plains Conference of the United Church of Christ. The donation of \$1,150 we received as part of the matching grant in support of COVID-19 frontline workers enabled us to greatly enrich our Everyday Superheroes Campaign.



Teachers, education support professionals, and public employees are some of our state's everyday superheroes even when we are not in the midst of a pandemic, but the COVID-19 virus and its wide range of repercussions have required a response from those individuals on an unprecedented scale.

Phase 1 of our Everyday Superheroes Campaign took six of our ND United members and visually transformed them into comic book superheroes. These images were used in a digital campaign depicting the services our members provide each day utilizing their superpowers (keeping people safe, positivity, the ability to put themselves in their students' shoes, etc.) We also produced two 30-second television ads that ran throughout the 2021 legislative session.

With the donation of the matching grant funds, we were able to enact Phase 2 of the campaign: We placed an all-call for people to nominate the teacher who is their Everyday Superhero and featured the submissions on our social media outlets. As this newsletter goes to print, we will be awarding Visa gift cards to those nominees as a token of our appreciation for all the extra time, sweat, tears, and heart that have gone into the 2020-2021 school year.

Again, thank you for your kindness and generosity in recognition of those who ensure great public schools & great public service each and every day for the state of North Dakota.

Links to the television ads: <https://youtu.be/cKTll7xlufE>; <https://youtu.be/IAQ8kLKZlcv>

#StopTheSpread

Love one another



**Fully Vaccinated?**  
Masks are welcome, but not required.

**Not Fully Vaccinated/  
More Comfortable Masking?**

Please wear a mask. Vulnerable individuals worship here.

**In Every Question**

Make the decision with the words of Christ in your heart, "love one another; as I have loved you."

John 13:34 & 15:12

# Youth News



## Congratulations! 2021 Bismarck UCC Graduates

Elise Smokey – Century High School

Karsten Klein – Century High School

Zander Scheer – Legacy High School

Tiffany Sonnenberg – Legacy High School



## It's Hot Out! I'm Bored!

Looking for something fun to do as a family? How about an ice cream party, with homemade ice cream? No machine necessary!

### Ice Cream in a Bag



1 c. half & half	3 c. ice
2 tbsp. granulated sugar	1/3 c. kosher salt
1/2 tsp. pure vanilla sugar	

1. In a small resealable plastic bag, combine half & half, sugar, & vanilla. Push out excess air and seal.
2. Into a large resealable plastic bag, combine ice & salt. Place small bag inside bigger bag & shake vigorously, 7 to 10 minutes, until ice cream has hardened.
3. Remove from bag & enjoy with favorite toppings!

## WHO IS my neighbor?

### Vacation Bible School

June 6 – 9, 2021

6 PM – 7 PM

Outside Lawn at Lutheran Church of the Cross

Ages: Pre-K to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Register at

<https://form.jotform.com/lccdod/2021vbsregistration>  
or fill out at paper registration form at the UCC.



## Featured Families



### Gail Erickson

I came to this UCC because of Rev. Jack Seville. I was Director of Low-Income Heating Emergency Assistance Program for State and Ron Knutson was my Assistance Director. My husband, Myles, died on January 28, 1997. I was ready to move from LIHEAP after that. Rev. Jack Seville hired me at ND Disaster

Recovery Coordinating Team as the 1997 flood was on. He invited me to UCC, and I stayed! Myles and I went to churches, but nothing worked. I wish Myles and I would have found UCC before. He would have loved it here. Welcoming to all, I am blessed by this. To Rev. Jack Seville up in heaven, I salute you!

Rev. Gretchen, you have sustained me during this pandemic. The ZOOM church services were godsend to me. Blessings to you!

## Share your story

What has sustained you through the past year? What experiences have widened your outlook of life? Is there some family news that you want to share or words of joy and love you want your church family to hear?

Contact the church office to be a featured family in one of our upcoming newsletters! We love hearing from you.



### Sarah and Dave Ripley – from the Missouri to the Mississippi

We miss you all. We are living in Bettendorf, Iowa, just about as far east as one can be in Iowa. We had been considering a move to be closer to family and once we decided to do this humongous thing, life became a whirlwind.

A new diagnosis of melanoma for Sarah, and entering a clinical trial at University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, necessitated an immediate move. We are very happy to report that participating in the trial is showing positive results and Sarah is doing very well and feels great most of the time. Another joy is that our condo is 3/4 of a mile from our son, Will, daughter-in-law, Nikki, and granddaughter, Alexandra. It would be hard to state how welcoming, helpful, and fun they are. Our daughter, Becca, with Kyle, Knox, and Vaughn, live in Montenegro, and, although we remain connected virtually, it has been a hard year to be so far apart. We support each other electronically.

Covid prevented any kind of goodbye gathering and that is a major sadness in our lives. Please consider yourselves hugged goodbye; we can feel the warmth of those embraces. Our "Covid lives" here mirrored yours, we're sure, and the world's. We adjusted to masks, learned to live indoors, became increasingly appreciative and in awe of medical personnel, teachers, parents juggling all those hats, and so many more. Being in a new community we haven't had avenues to meet people, but that's beginning to change. Because we are retired, our routines weren't upset as much as those of others, and, like all of us, we are rejoicing in seeing glimpses of light at the end of the tunnel. We send you all hugs and smiles.

