

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

May 2021

A GLOBAL MINISTRY CHURCH

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Holy Imagination

by Rev. Gretchen Deeg, Senior Pastor

This month, we welcome our new Transitional Conference Minister, Rev. Deborah Blood to the Northern Plains Conference. You can read more about her background on page 7 and will have the chance to meet her in-person at Bismarck UCC on May 30. As part of the transition our Conference is undergoing, I am joining others in a class on imagination hosted by The BTS Center, formerly the UCC seminary known as Bangor Theological Seminary.

Now imagination is a regular part of my daily life and personal spiritual practices (if your spiritual practices could use more joy or imagination, call me, and let's talk!), but still I, like everyone, sometimes suffer from a lack of imagination. I hear the struggles and injustices in the world around me and enter into despair that we've been circling around the same issues since before I was born. I don't like living in a world where the conviction of Derek Chauvin makes national news, because I don't want live in a world where George Floyd is killed in the first place. Instead, let me tell you about the world I want to live in:

I imagine a world where I see a diversity of skin colors and hear a multitude of languages on my walk to church. I walk straight down the center of the street and hear neighbors from a variety of cultures sharing recipes and stories as the children and others young at heart play a game they made up together in the street. Each neighborhood around town has at least one street opened for community connection instead of vehicles. Rates of isolation have decreased and public places have been created right out in the street for the breaking of bread.

Do you know where this vision comes from? The Biblical story of Pentecost in Acts 2 where people of all skin colors, languages, cultures, economic backgrounds, lifestyles, and even religious traditions stood in the streets and witnessed the Holy Spirit rain down upon the earth.

Ten years from now, what world do you want to live in? Or if you can't imagine still walking this earth in ten years, what world do you want your grandchildren, nieces or nephews, or favorite little ones to live in? You don't need to know how you will get there yet. Just start with that holy imagination that God placed within you.



Saturday, May 1, 2021
9 AM – 11 AM

Join family and friends as we clean up our space, both inside and out, while enjoying long awaited fellowship.

Pentecost Sunday May 23, 2021

10 AM

Worship & Graduate Recognition

11 AM

Ice Cream Social in Parking Lot



**Meet our Northern Plains
Conference Transitional
Conference Minister**

Rev. Deborah Blood

May 30, 2021

10 AM Worship

11 AM Fellowship

Worship: Sunday 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 we can bring our personal needs and struggles and count on support from our church family – which is the loving family we all deserve."

The fellowship hall was full of laughter and stories as Mayflower Circle met in-person for the first time since the start of the pandemic. Masks and distancing couldn't keep this group of ladies from enjoying each other's company and sharing bitter-sweet goodbyes with Kay Royse as she prepares to move to Seattle.



Council Corner

by Mike Stein, Moderator

Hello Everyone,

I hope you are well! As the days are getting longer and as we feel the sun strengthening, let us all pray for rain. Church Council met on April 15 and the main topic was again reviewing protocols for our church. Council decided that starting in June and going through the summer months, the 1st Sunday of every month our church service will be held indoors and the remaining Sundays of the month church service will be held outdoors. If the temperature reaches below 60 degrees or is unbearably hot service will be held inside. Mask wearing and social distancing is still required for services and gatherings.

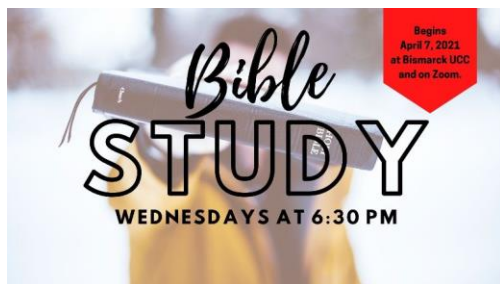
The 1st Sunday of the month which is communion will be held indoors. The Fellowship Hall will be open. We will not be serving coffee or goodies at this time. We would like to encourage everyone if you are planning to socialize, please move into the Fellowship Hall. We need to maintain an open walk way for the people leaving the church.

These protocols will be reviewed monthly. There is a concern about the new variant strains. Once we have a better idea about the vaccines being effective over the new variant strains this could change. Again, safety is our major concern.

Council members are in the process of reading the book "Governance and Ministry, Rethinking Board leadership" by Dan Hotchkiss. One of our goals this year is to review the governance of our church. We need to evaluate how we operate and function as a church. Society is changing all the time. If you would like to follow along with Council and read the book. You can order the book online. If anyone has any questions or concerns and need to reach out to me, please call my cell 701-391-8128. Take care & God Bless!

We need YOUR help!

Have you ever wondered how we run the livestream at church? We'll show you! Contact the church office to set up a tour of our user-friendly equipment and then decide if you want to become one of our livestream techs. **No prior experience needed.**



May 5: Isaiah 40 - 48

May 12: Isaiah 49 - 55

May 19: No Class

May 26: Isaiah 56 - 66

FINANCIAL STATUS

January 1 to March 31, 2021

Revenue

General Offerings

Actual = \$ 42,042

Other Income (Dedicated, Earned)

Actual = \$ 1,245

Expenses

Actual = \$ 19,143

Total Revenue = \$ 43,287

Total Expenses = \$ 32,128

NET ACTIVITY = \$ 11,159

SUPPORT OF OUR MISSION PARTNERS IN 2019

East Timor Education Fund	\$ 50
Charles Hall Youth Services	\$ 100
Our Church's Wider Mission	\$ 755
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$ 1,118
Strengthen the Church	\$
Neighbors in Need	\$
CROP Walk	\$
The Christmas Fund	\$
Total Shared Ministry	\$ 2,023

Strengthen the Church

by Marcia Lerberg, Stewardship & Mission Committee

Strengthen the Church is one of five special offerings taken by local United Church of Christ (UCC) congregations to help national UCC fulfill its commitment to support local congregations. Our UCC is more than the people in the pews or at home who call themselves members of the Bismarck-Mandan UCC. It is also the people who are part of the Northern Plains UCC Conference and the national UCC office. Through the offerings made in local churches, support is given to many local congregations as distributed by the national church through grants to conferences, new church starts, or established churches.

Strengthen the Church is a special offering that specifically supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations. It is an investment in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities. The goal is to strengthen local churches by providing funds to assist in revitalization of communities. This may be supporting new churches or supporting leadership development for youth and young adults or in other ways as proposed by the local UCC congregations.

Strengthen the Church provides a connection between our church and our conference and our national UCC. It is one of many ways that we as a local church can reach out and help fellow congregations, new and old, to be strengthened, to grow, to fulfill the mission of being supportive of people in need.

On or leading up to Pentecost Sunday, May 23, we invite you to participate in the Strengthen the Church special offering using the enclosed giving envelope. This is another way we can care for one another. Thank you.

Sponsor a Sunday

May 9, 2021

In honor of Mother's Day, and all mothers.

Sponsored by Patricia & Marcia Lerberg

Patricia's firm faith and dedication to the church is an inspiration. She holds dual membership at her home church in Parshall and Bismarck UCC and is active in the Primrose Worship Services.

Marcia has been involved in lay ministry in the Northern Plains Conference for many years, leads worship at Primrose, and currently serves on Bismarck UCC's Stewardship and Mission Committee.



We have May 2, 16, 23 and 30 open for sponsorships. This is a wonderful way to recognize a special person or event in your life. Please call the office at 701.223.2915, or email us at office@uccbismarck.org to reserve your day.

Leaving a Legacy

A planned gift to your church is an expression of you and your family's values and commitment to Christian Stewardship. It is a way of saying that after your family and loved ones, these are the causes that matter most, and providing for them is important to you. A gift from your estate to the UCC strengthens our endowment and sustains God's Mission through the mission through the ministry of the church—a lasting legacy and powerful response of God's generosity.

Planned gifts are planned for during the donor's lifetime but not realized by the beneficiary until the donor's death. There are many other ways to plan a gift. There are gifts that pay you income during your lifetime and gifts that help reduce or avoid income and estate taxes. How you make your gift is important, but more important is the impact your planned gift will have on the cause that matters to you most. If you have any questions regarding planned giving, please talk to one of our Trustees.

Primrose Ministries

by: Darcy Avery, Primrose Ministries Coordinator

On April 7, Ken Trana provided the service, continuing the Easter theme. Virginia Luger assisted Ken with communion. A few pictures were taken of the residents, including Ken and I.

On May 5, Ken will lead the service again. We enjoy singing from the Sonshine Songbooks. We enjoy our Primrose community.



Ongoing Classes

Friday Morning Bible Study

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

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

This evening class meets at 6:30 PM and is currently studying the books of Isaiah. See page 3 for class schedule.

Confirmation

Our Confirmation class for grades 7 and up meets monthly throughout the year for class and service projects.

Ministry & Fellowship Groups

Mayflower Circle

This women's fellowship group meets every second Thursday of the month (Sept. – May) at noon on Zoom. Join us this month on **Thursday, May 13th at Noon.**

Knitting Group & Threads of Love

Knit, purl, tell stories, and have a great time with this group of knitters, quilters, and crafters. This group meets on **Tuesdays at 2 PM.** This month's meetings will be on **May 11th and 25th**, in-person in the fellowship hall and online.

Primrose Worship Team

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

Featured Families



Nick & Andrea Crannell

Andrea and I have stayed busy during the pandemic as we are both nurses at CHI St. Alexis Health. Even though we quarantined at home like everyone else, it was very nice to be able to see our coworkers every day and interact with people in person rather than over a screen.

We recently moved into a new home in September and are now neighbors with Kerri Kraft and family! Some exciting news, we will be welcoming our first baby in July of this year. We are not finding out if it will be a boy or a girl, but we are very excited to become parents!



Bunny Malm & Darleen Cairns

Bunny Malm & Darleen Cairns talk regularly with each other through our CONNECTOR calls and when talking about their joys in life realized this past month that the blessings of each day, especially the blessings in nature stirred the most joy within them. They share this joy with you through this joint "Featured Families" submission:

Life with the Covid did not really affect our lives. We pretty much carried on life as usual, only with masks. What truly brought us joy was seeing the sunrise, blue skies, hearing birds singing, and seeing God's beautiful creatures in the yard. Also, it was a joy to see on TV, how families figured things out and solved their own problems. Also, seeing families sharing time in the kitchen and just spending fun time together as a family should. The Lord knows what God's doing. We feel blessed knowing we are in the Lord's hands.



*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.*



- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 06 Joyce Rosene | 24 Mazey Akovenko |
| 07 Caleb Kruger | 25 Melissa Domagala |
| 14 Tove Mandigo | 25 Skylar Benson |
| 19 Linnea Volk | 26 Matthew Archer |
| 20 Case Akovenko | 26 David Augustadt |
| 21 Paul Prince | 28 Gayla Sherman |
| 21 Zayden Bartosh | 30 Luke McCowan |
| 22 Richella Lutz | 31 Loren Knoll |

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

Youth News

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 5th Grade

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



Join us in the parking lot for
single-serve ice cream treats
for all ages!

Word Scramble

P G N R I S

W L O E F R

I N A R

U N S

U D L D E P

Answer Key:
SPRING, FLOWER, RAIN, SUN, PUDDLE

Welcome to our Transitional Conference Minister



Northern Plains Conference has hired a Transitional Conference Minister for 17 months. Rev. Deborah Blood will begin on May 1 to lead our Conference through a time of transition and discernment for the future following the death of our former Conference Minister, Rev. Keith Mills. Deborah is an experienced Conference Minister, she previously served in Maine, and trained spiritual director. She brings a well-grounded spirit and strong listening and leadership skills.

You will have the opportunity to hear Deborah preach at Bismarck UCC on **Sunday, May 30** during worship at 10AM and meet her over fellowship at 11AM. Welcome to Rev. Deborah Blood, and many thanks to all who have been part of the process of God leading her to us!



Join Pastor Gretchen in attending the Virtual Festival of Homiletics

May 17-21, 2021

www.festivalofhomiletics.com/register

This year, in light of COVID-19, the Festival of Homiletics is again moving online. The world needs good preaching as we continue to grapple with a global pandemic. We are making access to the week of sessions and speakers on the website absolutely free! Whether you are clergy, a lay minister, or just want to hear a week of amazing preaching, you are welcome to attend any of the week's events.

All times listed will be presented in UTC – 04:00 (Eastern Daylight Time) Please make note of where this sits in your time zone before you watch!



A SPECIAL VIRTUAL
GENERAL SYNOD 33

Join us July 11 – 18, 2021

Registration opens on **May 1, 2021**
Visitor fee: \$100

General Synod is the national gathering of the UCC. If you have never experienced this bi-annual gathering of UCC delegates and visitors from across the country, this is a great year to attend, because there are NO TRAVEL COSTS!

www.generalsynod.org



BISMARCK UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

‘A Global Ministry Church’
www.uccbismarck.org



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <p>**All events in-person at Bismarck UCC <u>and</u> online on Zoom or website, unless otherwise noted.</p> <p>Daily Devotions on Bismarck UCC's Facebook page.</p>						<p>1 9am—11am Spring Clean Up (in-person)</p> 
<p>2 10am Worship 11am Fellowship 2pm Confirmation</p>	3	4	<p>5 6pm Worship (online) 6:30pm Bible Study</p>	<p>6 6pm Music Committee</p>	<p>7 8:30am Bible Study</p>	8
<p>9 10am Worship 11am Fellowship</p> <p><i>Mother's Day</i></p>	10	<p>11 2pm Quilting/Knitting 6:30pm Deacons</p>	<p>12 6pm Worship (online) 6:30pm Bible Study</p>	<p>13 12pm Mayflower Circle 5:30pm Council (online)</p>	<p>14 8:30am Bible Study</p>	15
<p>16 10am Worship 11am Fellowship</p> <p>STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH</p>	17	18	<p>19 6pm Worship (online)</p>	<p>20 6pm Stewardship</p>	<p>21 8:30am Bible Study</p>	22
Festival of Homiletics (Preaching): Register for free at www.festivalofhomiletics.com						
<p>23 10am Worship 11am Fellowship & Ice Cream Social</p>	24	<p>25 2pm Quilting/Knitting 6pm Trustees</p>	<p>26 6pm Worship (online) 6:30pm Bible Study</p>	27	<p>28 8:30am Bible Study</p>	29 
<p>30 10am Worship Rev. Deborah Blood 11am Fellowship</p>	<p>31  Church Closed</p>				Masks required inside the church.	