

Bismarck-Mandan Area

United Church of Christ

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

September 2020

A GLOBAL MINISTRY CHURCH

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Guided by *Agape*

by Rev. Gretchen Deeg, Pastor

Take a deep breath.

What anxieties are you holding today? What fears are controlling your decisions and interactions? Name them aloud. Let them go.

Take a deep breath.

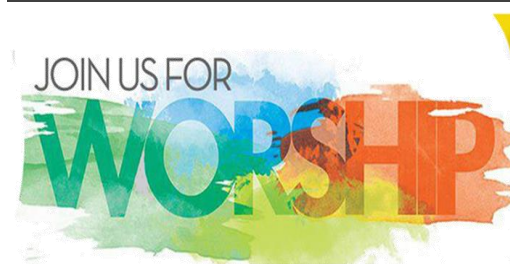
What blessings are in your life today? Where is *agape*, the Greek word for the love which indiscriminately seeks another's greatest good, guiding your decisions and interactions? Name them aloud. Thank God.

We live in dangerous times. It is not because we live in a pandemic, although that certainly contributes. We live in dangerous times, because we are often allowing ourselves to become polarized and in doing so we forget to be guided by *agape*.

I have been asked numerous times if I personally know people who have contracted COVID-19. The answer is yes. I know people here in Bismarck and around the country who have gotten ill from COVID-19. I know people who are no longer considered ill, but are still suffering from lingering complications, and I know people who have buried loved ones because of COVID-19. The world is in the midst of a pandemic and no amount of fear, anxiety, or polarization will change that. I want you to read that again...filling our hearts with fear, putting each other down, dividing ourselves, or acting like there are sides to living in a pandemic will not get us through this pandemic any faster. In fact, it will only make the healing take longer.

As Christians, our top concern is living in the ways of Christ. *Agape* is how Jesus taught us to live with and love one another. It is how God loves us. If there is something any of us can do to even potentially keep another person safe, *agape* guides us to do it. *Agape* is not about doing what is most comfortable or convenient. It is not about our opinions or politics. It is about putting our care for others first.

Every decision we make as a church has been and continues to be made out of care for each other and the wider community. There are no sides to these dangerous times. There are only opportunities to ease suffering and love one another. We are doing that in the midst of this pandemic with our online and outdoor options, mask requirements at in-person gatherings, and physical distancing. None of this is convenient, but *agape* is not about that. *Agape* is caring for others.



Worship In-Person & Online

Sundays at 10 AM

Sept. 6 – inside with communion
 Sept. 13 – outside with music
 Sept. 20 – outside with music
 Sept. 27 – outside with music

Wednesdays at 6 PM

Online only at Bismarck UCC's
 Facebook or YouTube pages and
www.uccbismarck.org/worship

Daily Offerings

Daily Devotionals LIVE on Facebook

Weekly Connections

Phone calls from CONNECTORS

To have a "connector" call you on a regular basis, please contact the church office at 701-223-2915

Friday Bible Study

Meets every Friday at 8:30 AM
 Pioneer Park

Sunday Fellowship

Every Sunday at 11 AM outside in the church parking lot

Monthly Connections

Virtual Knitting/Quilting

September 1, 15 and 29 at 2 PM

Mayflower Circle

September 10 at 12 Noon

Worship with us every Sunday at 10:00 AM & Wednesday at 6:00 PM

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 opportunities to put our faith in action with courage to go beyond what we think we can do."

Last month we kicked off a mid-week worship series on the incredible work that is being done in Bismarck to care for those in need in these difficult times. On Aug. 19, we heard an update on homelessness in Bismarck from Ministry on the Margins and this September we will hear more updates on topics like local hunger, local children, and our partnership school in East Timor. Take a mid-week pause every Wednesday at 6 pm at www.uccbismarck.org/worship

Council Corner

by Mike Stein, Moderator

As a people of faith, we are called to be "good stewards" of the assets with which we have been entrusted. Good stewardship calls for financial planning and estate planning to ensure the financial security of our families and loved ones. We must also consider how we will provide for the church or ministry that we love and serve to secure its foundation and vitality for future generations. One way you can achieve these goals is through a Planned Gift.

What is a Planned Gift?

Planned gifts are planned for during the donor's lifetime but not realized by the beneficiary until the donor's death. A planned gift is an expression of you and your family's values and commitment to Christian stewardship. A planned gift is an expression of you and your family's values. It's 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.

Planned gifts are a wonderful way to create a meaningful legacy for you and your family. A planned gift does not require great wealth. It is a win for you and a win for the church or ministry.

There are several ways to structure your planned gift depending on your objectives. Some options include:

- A bequest in your Will (no minimum)
- A Charitable Gift Annuity (gift of \$10,000+)
- Structuring a Charitable Remainder Trust (gift of \$50,000+)
- Outright gifts of life insurance, an IRA, real estate or appreciated assets (no minimum)

The most important aspects in structuring a Planned Gift is the opportunity to identify the cause and mission that matters most to you and the appropriate accumulated asset to use to fund your gift. United Church Funds can help you determine which gift best meets your personal, spiritual and financial objectives.

Ways to Support Your Church Family

- Sponsor a Sunday. Visit uccbismarck.org/donate. Oct. 4, 11, 18, and 25 are available.
- Direct donation. Mail a check to the office, donate in-person at worship or during the week, or donate securely online.
- Living Trust Fund or Memorial. Make plans to support the church for years to come.
- Offer your time. Record a video. Be a worship leader.
- Spread the word. Call a friend. Share a worship link.

FINANCIAL STATUS

January 1 to July 31, 2020

Revenue

General Offerings

Actual = \$ 83,473

Other Income (Dedicated, Earned)

Actual = \$ 9,373

Expenses

Actual = \$ 84,848

Total Revenue = \$ 92,846

Total Expenses = \$ 94,888

NET ACTIVITY = \$ -2,042

SUPPORT OF OUR MISSION PARTNERS IN 2019

East Timor Education Fund	\$ 956
Charles Hall Youth Services	\$ 169
Our Church's Wider Mission	\$ 6,975
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$ 315
Strengthen the Church	\$ 50
Neighbors in Need	\$ 20
The Christmas Fund	\$
Jack's Food Pantry	\$ 2,141
Total Shared Ministry	\$ 10,626

Thank You for Sponsoring a Sunday!

August 23, 2020 - In Appreciation of Bismarck UCC



In appreciation of my relationship with Bismarck UCC as I served Salem UCC in New Salem and the two Prospera Care Centers in Mandan.

Sponsored by Rev. Ron Hildahl

Rev. Ron Hildahl lives out his faith with a compassionate heart and the gift of a listening ear. We have been blessed to have him join us in worship when his other worship leadership responsibilities allow. He currently serves as chaplain at the Anne Carlsen Center in Jamestown.

August 30, 2020 – Happy 90th Birthday, John Toman!



Surprise! Happy Birthday John from Eunice and your entire church family at Bismarck UCC. You are such a blessing to us all and we wish you God's blessing all year long!

Sponsored by Eunice Toman

John and Eunice are connectors at heart. They have been known to regularly give individuals ride to church, stop by to visit homebound members, and just generally share their deep care with others.

September 6, 2020 – Happy Anniversary, Evan & Tove!



Happy 49th Anniversary to Evan and Tove Mandigo. May God bless both of you with a love that keeps growing.

Sponsored by Tove & Evan Mandigo

Evan most recently completed two terms on the Board of Trustees and still serves the Northern Plains Conference as an advisor on matters related to church insurance. Tove currently serves on the Board of Christian Education and is a part of Mayflower Circle.

September 13, 2020 In Honor of our Grandkids

In honor of our incredible grandchildren:
Sofia, Stella, and Hans!

Sponsored by Bill & Lonna Augustadt

Bill's family is a founding family of Bismarck UCC and Lonna most recently served as our interim Administrative Assistant. You may have gotten a call from Lonna recently asking if you would offer a song, reading, or tech skills in worship!



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The Church is full of people
in the Autumn of their years.
Some have led colourful lives
leaves bronzed and golden
through exposure to the elements
their appearance the centre of attention.
Others have been exposed
to more extreme conditions
branches bowed and scarred.
Some go unnoticed,
yet stand tall and steadfast
against wind and rain.
All have a story to tell
all can offer support and shelter
for saplings which grow beneath
their leafy canopy.

John Birch. www.faithandworship.com

UCC 101

How well do you know the UCC?

- 1) The United Church of Christ is a _____ denomination.
- 2) The UCC was formed when four major denominations came together as one. What are those four historical churches of the UCC?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
- 3) The United Church of Christ was formed during a merger in _____.
- 4) What two sacraments are recognized in the UCC?
 - a.
 - b.
- 5) What phrase from scripture is the motto of the UCC?

Sponsor a Sunday continued

September 20, 2020 – In Celebration of Autumn!



Sponsored Anonymously

Thank you to our anonymous sponsor for reminding us of the blessings and joy of the changing seasons.



September 27, 2020

In Gratitude of the Ministry of Bismarck UCC

Sponsored Anonymously

Thank you to our anonymous sponsor for your encouragement and support of our ongoing outreach and ministry.

Deacon's Greetings

by Harold Karch, Deacon's Chair

We hope this letter finds you able to stay connected with your church family. We currently have two ways to join our services. You can attend in person or on-line at <https://www.uccbismarck.org/worship>. It is our hope that you are taking advantage of these services.

Our "Jack's Food Pantry" is still receiving food and other items at the church; but to make them more available to those who need them we have partnered with the "Adopt a block" program around the Bismarck-Mandan area.

During this unusual time in the life of the church, it is important to take advantage of the "Connector Calls", and reach out to those around us on behalf of the church to continue to do God's work in the world. Stay well and God Bless us all.

With Love, Your Board of Deacons:

Carol Baber, Sandra Domagala, Harold Karch, Darlene Kinnischtzke, Loren Knoll, and James Mandiqo.

Primrose Ministry News

by Darcy Avery, Primrose Ministries Coordinator

Primrose Ministries has been moving forward in spite of the pandemic's restrictions. Six residents attended our outside services on August 5th as Ken Trana served. These members are regulars and enjoy discussion following the service. Dale Carmen will provide the messages for September 2nd and 30th. Darcy brings the keyboard and *Sonshine* music books so the residents can join in the singing. We appreciate the Primrose staff working so closely with us as we strive to provide quality spiritual outreach. The residents are so welcoming to us and we so enjoy worshipping with them.



The church office will be closed on Monday, Sept. 7th.
Have a safe Labor Day weekend!



by Pamela Clark-Stein, Stewardship Chair

Please remember that all basket items need to be 1), new/unopened, 2) non-perishable and 3) non-alcoholic items.

Theme ideas to jumpstart the fun and basket designing!

- Board games and family game night
 - Camping and other “summer fun” activities
 - Gardening
 - Sports and sports fans
 - Hunting and fishing
 - Cooking
 - Back to school
 - Holiday and special occasion
 - Pet lovers
 - Home décor
 - Kitchen accessories
 - Crafts and DIY projects
 - Coffee lovers
 - Family cultural heritage
 - Theme of your choice
- 
- A pile of board games and snacks. Visible board games include 'MONOPOLY' and 'OPRE'. In the foreground, there are several containers of snacks, including a large orange container of 'POPCORNS' and a smaller container of 'POPCORNS'.



To learn more about Charles Hall
Youth and Family Services, visit
www.charleshallnd.org

This Silent Auction replaces our annual Buffalo Supper to benefit Charles Hall Youth and Family Services. Donate themed baskets for auction by delivering them to the church by Monday, September 21. Baskets can be dropped off on Sunday mornings at 10am or Monday – Friday from 9am – 1pm. If those times do not work for you, please contact the church office at 701-223-2915 or a Stewardship Committee member.

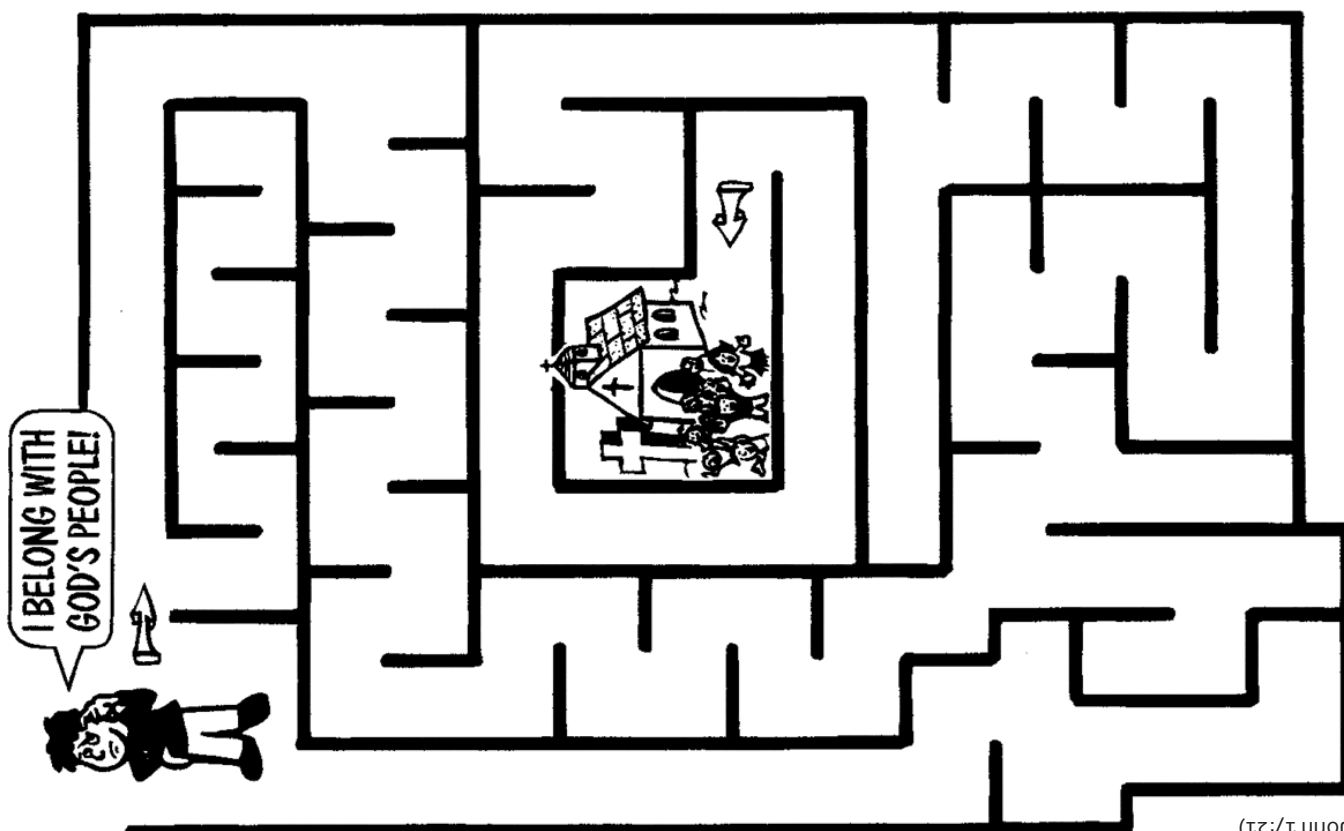
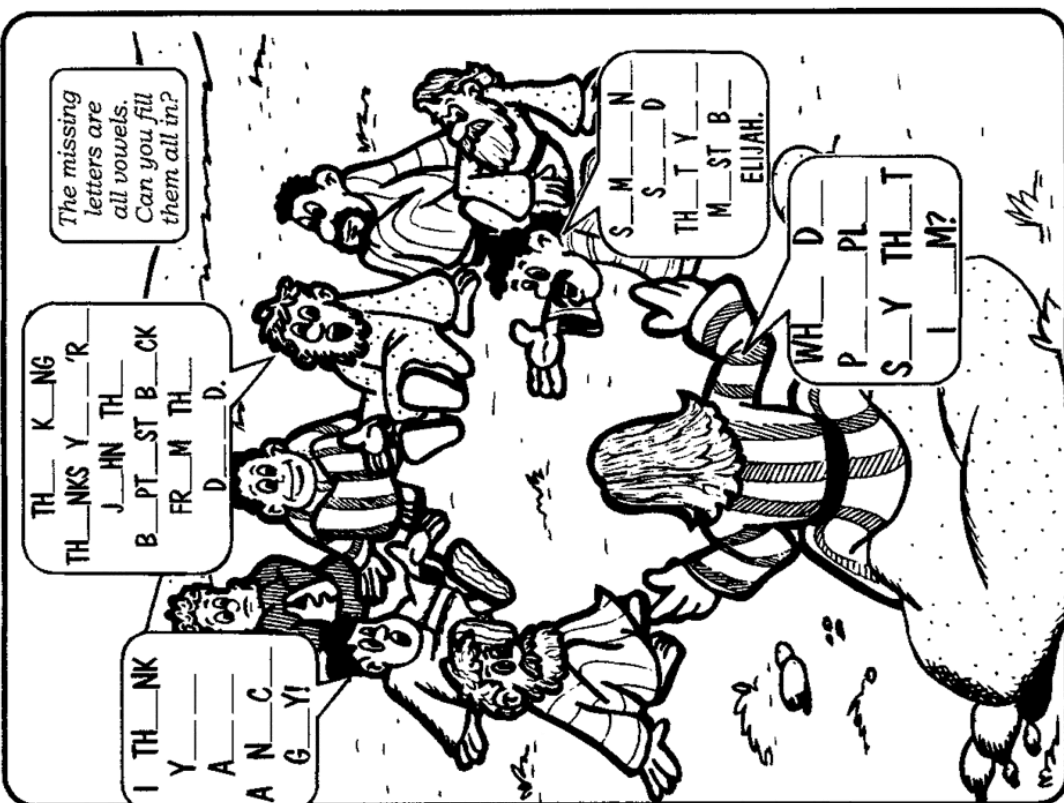
Children & Others Young at Heart

Kidsword

Pentecost Week 12, Year A
Ordinary Time Week 21

August 23, 2020

Matthew 16:13-20



Fall Schedule & COVID-19 Update

The start of Sunday School, Confirmation, and Adult Education classes has been **delayed to the week of October 4, 2020**. Council and the Board of Christian Education will be closely monitoring the status of COVID-19 in our community and its impact on the local school system. We are committed to both providing a safe place for people of all ages and doing what we can to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 throughout the pandemic.

As a result of the continued increase of Burleigh County's infection rates, the church Council requests all indoor worship and activity attendees wear masks and follow the physical distancing guidelines of the CDC. Vulnerable individuals or family members of vulnerable individuals attend our church for spiritual care and we ask everyone to do their part in protecting those who are knowingly at risk and those who we may not realize are at risk for serious COVID-19 outcomes.

Ongoing Classes

Friday Morning Bible Study

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

Sunday School

Classes for pre-school through junior high school aged are scheduled to begin the week of October 4. The format will be determined by our community's COVID-19 status.

Confirmation

Contact Pastor Gretchen if you are interested in affirming your faith.

Have a class idea?

If you have an idea for a class or would like to lead a course during the year, please contact Pastor Gretchen or the church office.

Ministry & Fellowship Groups

Mayflower Circle

This women's fellowship group meets every second Thursday of the month at noon. Mayflower Circle leads various ministries throughout the year including funeral luncheons, annual rummage sale, numerous fundraisers, and others. Join us this month on Thursday, **Sept. 12th at noon** via Zoom.

Knitting Group & Threads of Love

Our knitting and quilting groups are currently meeting virtually using Zoom. This month's gatherings are on **Sept. 1st, 15th, and 29th at 1 pm**. Contact the church office for the Zoom link.

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 with interest in joining this group of worship leaders.

UCC Choir

Starting in October, the choir is taking a new format. All choir members and interested individuals are invited to work with choir director Craig Devos to prepare a solo or recording for Sunday or Wednesday worship services.

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 Sue Pearson
03 Mary Knutson
09 Michael Schmidt
09 Maiah McCowen
13 Denyka Sauer
13 Susan Stockert

14 Eden Kraft
23 Maria Roller-Schlecht
26 Chad Akovenko
27 Pam Smokey
30 Ruby Jackson

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