

UNITED MONTHLY

Volume 14, Issue 2

February 2024

We are United to
EXPERIENCE Jesus,
SERVE others and
LIVE the Word!

We live out this mis-
sion statement with
our core values of
Joyful Worship,
Authentic Community,
Faithful Witness and
Ridiculous Generosity.



United Lutheran Church
is a congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America.



God's work.
Our hands.

The Season of Love and Chocolates

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*"Taste and see that the Lord is good;
Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him," (Psalm 34:8).*

Valentine's Day and chocolates!... You can't really have one without the other, can you? It seems that immediately after the Christmas decorations come down in our consumer driven world... Valentine's Day and Chocolates take over... boxes and boxes of chocolates, chocolate promising to be the love of your life, chocolate cookies, candies, donuts, chocolate covered ants and grasshoppers for the adventurous, not to mention the chocolate Altoid breath mints I saw in the grocery store the other day!

All this chocolate sensation got me thinking of the famous quote from the movie Forrest Gump... *"Life is like a box of chocolates... you never know what you're gonna get."*

True to life! We wake up every morning completely unsure of what the day may hold for us. The plans we've made sometimes happen the way we made them and sometimes something completely different comes our way. We never really know for sure, do we?

I know, the days that come filled with coconut are my favorite. The ones filled with chewy caramel help slow me down. And I'd just as soon go back to bed if I'm stuck with one of the gooey bland fruit filled. Of course there's the days when the chocolates sit untouched. Days where tragedy or difficult times come out of nowhere and there's no sweetness to be found.

Author and speaker, LauraLee Shaw, writes... "You see, no matter what chocolate we are "in the middle of" right now, God is there... with the certainty of His promise today as well as His hope of heaven in the future."

God knows that life is uncertain for us. That's why He comforts us and reminds us so many times that He is our constant companion, our steadfast friend, our consistently loving God and Savior. His promises are never a surprise or an uncertainty. His promises are full and rich, never bland. He reaches out to us with both hands offering grace and mercy and forgiveness over and over again. In the midst of whatever comes our way, He brings peace, hope and everlasting love!

During this season of love and chocolates, let us feast on the one that never disappoints!

In Christ,

Pastor Jodi

Looking Ahead to Lent,
February Wednesday Services:

February 14 - Ash Wednesday, Worship 7PM

February 21 - Lenten Meal 6PM

Worship 7PM - "Salvation for Sale"

February 28 - Lenten Meal 6PM

Worship 7PM - "All Things New"

February 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 12PM AI-Anon	2	3
4 10AM Worship with Holy Communion 11AM Endowment Meeting	5	6	7 10:30AM Ministerial meeting 5:15PM Wednesday School 6PM Confirmation 7PM Youth Group	8 8:30AM-4:30PM Pastor Jodi @ Grief Training 12PM AI-Anon	9 8:30AM-4:30PM Pastor Jodi @ Grief Training 9AM Crafting/Scrapbooking	10 9AM Crafting/Scrapbooking
11 9:30AM Coffee/Cocoa served by the Youth 10AM Worship lead by the Youth - Super Bowl Trivia Sunday with Holy Communion	12 12PM Pastor Jodi @ Behavioral Task Force Meeting 5PM P.E.O.	13 9AM-3PM Quilting 5PM Esther Circle	14 9AM-3PM Quilting 10:30AM Deborah Circle @ Senior Center 2PM Wheatland Bible Study 5:15PM Wednesday school 7PM Ash Wednesday Worship with Holy Communion	15 12PM AI-Anon	16	17
18 10AM Worship with Holy Communion	19 5:30PM Church Council Meeting	20 10:30AM Pastors' Text Study in Mountain 12PM Writer's Group	21 2PM Rachel Circle 5:15PM Wednesday school 6PM Lenten supper 7PM Lenten Worship	22 9AM-2PM Preschool Screening	23	24
25 10AM Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion 11AM Visitation Committee Meeting	26 5PM P.E.O.	27 12PM Pastor Jodi @ Maple Manor meeting	28 5:15PM Wednesday school 6PM Lenten supper 7PM Lenten Worship	29 12PM AI-Anon		

Faith & Care #4

Leader - Lisa Schuler	Darrel & Karen Kempert
Miles & Teresa Anderson	Bub & Janice Knudson
Rob & Laura Belle	LeeAnn Knudson
John & Karen Boe	Ryan & Nicole Koons
Kenneth & DeLynn Carlson	Courtney Krom
Jayla Christie	Kayla Krom
Wayne & Nancy Coyle	Jolena Lowery
Jim & Marcie Crockett	Matt & Crystal Lowery
Tim & Myrna Devine	Chris & Tina Mikkelsen
Ryan & Heather Domres	Val Olson
Dan & Peggy Fischer	Josh & Sarah Overby
Darren & Lisa Gellner	Trevor & Jennifer Romfo
Kraig Gellner	Jace Roy & Lindsey Hegg
Greg & Sara Goodman	Mark & Shauna Schneider
Ryan & Ashley Gustafson	Joan Schrader
Ashton Hedger	Bob & Diane Simmons
Zach & Andrea Jacobson	Kassandra Spanier
Corey & Julie Johnson	Jeannie Steinwand
Devon & Katie Johnson	Carla Symons
Jay & Delane Johnson	Willie Thom
Landin & Brynn Johnson	Ryan & Shannon Wagner
Linden & Helen Johnson	Shannon & Sheri Winnegge
Charles & Marie Jordan	

ULC Leadership 2024

President	LeeAnn Knudson
Vice President	Steve Hart
Secretary	Kari Agotness
Financial Secretary	Julie Johnson

Committee Council Representatives

Education	Angie Sanders, Kristy McDonald
Endowment	On Rotation
Hospitality	Terry Jacobson
Property	Sara Goodman
Stewardship	Katie Henry

Non-voting Representative

Pastor	Jodi Myrvik
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Council Notes 01-22-24 Mtg

Pastor Jodi shared Lent services are almost prepared; theme is 'What Would Jesus Do?' and the services will be youth-led. The loose offering during the Lenten services will go to the Langdon Ministerial Association. The fund-raising campaign for the Pregnancy Help Center has begun. PRBC will be having their annual meeting on Monday, January 29; Pastor Jodi is open to having additional representatives to attend.

Julie reported that the quilting income and expenses will be moved out of the United Women fund beginning in January. The quilters received a grant from the Wohletz Estate for their mission work. Discussion was had on how to increase consistency of offering income. Currently there is bill pay, mailing offerings to the church and Tithely.

Endowment will review guidance for the committee and discuss options to maximize return. They will be meeting after the annual meeting.

Steve reported that the youth room ceiling has been completely repaired thanks to volunteers. There has been positive comments about the new TVs.

Reminder of the Annual Meeting coming up on Sunday, January 28. Hospitality Committee will set up and serve.

Council minutes and treasurer's report are posted monthly on the bulletin board in the hall across from the church kitchen.

Financial Update 12-31-23

December Offering	\$26,884.92	
	<u>Year-to-Date</u>	<u>Budget YTD</u>
Offering Income	\$194,146.48	\$188,535.00
	<u>Current Year</u>	<u>Last Year</u>
Total Income thru December	\$202,135.82	\$200,224.23
*Total Expenses thru December	\$237,825.73	\$190,191.44

***Please note, our actual expenses for 2023 were \$187,460.73.** Included in the expenses shown above is a \$30,000 transfer from the general fund in January and a \$20,000 transfer from the general fund in July. Both transfers were moved in to the dedicated building fund.

As of January 30, our Endowment Fund balance was \$107,389.72. If you would like to make a contribution to the Endowment Fund, please make checks payable to "InFaith Foundation" (which manages our endowment fund). Interest accrued yearly from this Endowment fund has been used at the end of each year to give back to needs within our community or special projects within the church.

Offering

We look forward to your contributions to keep the steady flow of funds to pay the church's yearly budgeted expenses. Whether you are away or watching online, we appreciate those contributions coming in the mail, through Tithe.ly or even bill pay. Thank you!

Mental Health....The Love Connection

Love is a powerful emotion and it can be healing. While love can't fix everything or prevent someone from developing a mental illness, it does support overall good physical and mental health. Research clearly shows that loving and healthy relationships are important for improving and sustaining mental health.

Through baptism, God calls us, names us and claims us. He declares us "His Beloved." God has created us for good relationships and he invites us into an amazing relationship with him.

John 3:16-17 says, *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him."*

It's almost a cliché to say that you cannot love anyone else until you love yourself, but there is a lot of truth in the statement. Taking care of yourself is essential to good mental health as well as physical well being. Be kind and compassionate to yourself. Forgive your flaws but also work on self-improvement. Embrace your best traits and appreciate them.

One of the best things you can do for positive self-care is to get treatment for mental illness. Realize that it is not a flaw you have but a real health condition that requires treatment. Love is powerful and healing, but no relationship, no matter how great, can fully heal mental illness. If you are struggling, reach out for professional services to help you become stronger, healthier and happier. You are loved and you matter!

Youth Group

Youth Group meets the first Wednesday of each month through the school year. They will meet Wednesday, February 7 at 7PM and burn last year's palm leaves for Ash Wednesday service and play Lenten Trivia. Youth Group is open to grades 7-12.

Confirmation

Confirmation classes meet most Wednesdays at 6PM during the school year but with Lent starting in February, the schedule is below:

February 7 - The Resurrection
 February 14 - Ash Wednesday Service at 7PM
 February 21 - Worship 7PM - "Salvation for Sale"
 February 28 - Worship 7PM - "All Things New"

Students will be participating in Ash Wednesday service along with the other Wednesday services, serving meals and meeting with their mentors following the Wednesday services. "What Would Jesus Do?" will be the Wednesday Lenten theme.

Wednesday School

Classes for February are: (5:15PM)

February 7 - Jesus Tempted in the Desert
 February 14 - Ash Wednesday Lesson
 February 21 - Fishers of Men
 February 28 - Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man

Youth Super Bowl Sunday

Join us for our Youth Sunday on February 11 as our youth will take the lead. It is Super Bowl Sunday so please wear your favorite team's shirt or jersey. There will be Bible trivia (Jeopardy) amongst our youth with teams. **Youth will be serving coffee/cocoa prior to worship in the narthex around 9:30AM. Coffee will also be served following worship that day.**



Giving Hearts Day

Giving Hearts Day, February 8, continues to grow as a vital avenue to support the ministry of our Eastern North Dakota Synod. It has allowed the synod to maintain financial support to its ministry partners during complex financial times. Our END Synod has a matching donor of \$40,000.

Other organizations are available to donate to, locally and state wide. Just go to www.givingheartday.org, search for "Eastern North Dakota Synod ELCA" or another non-profit and schedule your donation; just be sure that the "Pay on Giving Hearts Day, February 8th, 2024" box is checked. If giving to an organization by check, please write it out and send to that organization and indicate "Giving Hearts Day" in the memo line. Checks MUST be received by 5PM on 2/08/24 to be counted.



Haiti Update

Thank you to the members of United Lutheran Church for your continued prayers and support for our brothers and sisters in Haiti. We are especially grateful for the special congregational vote to co-sponsor our friend Kerlange, her husband Armstrong and children Zeke and Hannah to come to live, at least temporarily, in the United States. As of January 10, there has been no notification that our application for support has been approved by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Since January, 2023 more than two million applications for support for Cubans, Haitians, Nicaraguans, and Venezuelans have been submitted to the USCIS. As of the middle of August, 160,000 applications had been approved. We and many more are still waiting. We have been given estimates of a few more months to a year before our application will be considered.

The situation in Haiti continues to deteriorate. Since the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse in July of 2021, the country has increasingly come under control of gangs. There is currently no single elected official left in the capital. The Prime Minister, Ariel Henry, was appointed just before the president was assassinated and was installed after President Moïse's death. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Haiti, according to their constitution, should have assumed the role of president. He, however, died of Covid about the same time. There have been no legislative elections for several years so there is no legislature. There is no effective government and in spite of calls from the Haitian people for his resignation, Mr. Henry refuses to resign.

The national police force does not have the resources or manpower to control the gang activity. Gangs control much of the port and therefore most of the diesel fuel, gasoline and food that is imported into the country. Gang violence and shootings have become a daily occurrence, not only in the capital city of Port au Prince, but increasingly is spreading to the countryside and smaller cities like Ste. Marc where Kerlange and her family live.

In the last month and a half, Kerlange's sister Judith was shot while in the market selling bread. Fortunately, neither of her wounds were life threatening, but required surgery and antibiotics. She was not able to go back to the market for a couple weeks and earn money to feed her family. Kerlange's other sister, Lisbonne, has been diagnosed with serious health problems but cannot afford treatment. Just before Christmas, gangs came to Lisbonne's house, dragged her and her children into the street and threatened to kill them. They beat her young adult children and were only stopped when the police came. The police advised them to leave their home because the gangs would come back. Having nowhere else to go, they stayed. The gangs did come back and shot and killed her oldest son. Kerlange borrowed money against her home to pay for the young man's funeral. The only other option was that his body would simply have been disposed of as no one in the family has any money or assets. The loan will soon need to be repaid.

Kerlange was not at home when this last bout of violence began and has not been able to return to her house for more than month. They have all been staying with friends in a different part of the city.

Even in the midst of all of this, Kerlange has continued to give aid to her neighbors. She, with financial support from Seeds of Support, St. Andrew Lutheran Church in Eden Prairie, MN and our congregation, has twice organized and delivered basic supplies and has visited patients in the local hospital in Ste. Marc. She organized a food distribution for those who are facing malnutrition. She and her friends bought and repacked and distributed staple foods for more than 100 others on Christmas Day. One woman told her, that Jesus had come to her and others, because she had nothing to eat. Kerlange has taken care of her sisters and their children, and her mother. She has helped a friend with eight children who had been driven out of her home and was living under tarps and sheets. Together with friends from Seeds of Support, Kerlange helped find affordable rooms for her friend and children. She has been our hands and feet in Haiti.

In spite of all the trauma, violence and risks facing Kerlange and others in Haiti, their faith remains strong. She recently said, "We cannot help everyone, but we helped these." She never forgets to remind me how blessed she is and how grateful she is for the help she has received and has been able to give others.

Please continue to remember our friends and other brothers and sisters in Christ in Haiti and around the world who live with daily violence, hunger, lack of medicine and jobs. Remember them in our prayers, in our giving and with our voices,

Matthew 25:40 (The Message) 'I'm telling the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me.'

Baby Bottle Campaign

As Christians and through the amazing grace of Jesus Christ, we are called to sow the seeds of love and lift to those around us. Please reach out and help the Pregnancy Help Center with love by supporting their yearly fundraiser....the Baby Bottle Campaign.

The Pregnancy Help Center offers guidance, referrals, education, maternity and baby clothes and many helpful items at no cost. Bottles are located on the shelf closest to the sanctuary doors. Please take an empty baby bottle home and fill it with change, \$\$ bills or a check and return by February 19. Thank you for your thoughtfulness!



Prayers of...

Healing

Caven Dahl (Hodgkin's lymphoma), David Roy, Julie Nelson, Steve Bulat, Joyce Johnson, Ken Carlson, Mavis Dahl, Bev Domres, Lorraine Rude and our brothers and sisters in Haiti.

Grief for the Families of:

Jenny and Trevor Romfo on the death of Jenny's father, Dennis Thronset.

Brian & Darby Hart on the death of Darby's mother, Sharon Chaput.

Jeremy & Lisa Schuler on the death of Jeremy's mother, Pamela Schuler.

We invite you to pray for those individuals listed. Please call the church office if you have additions to our prayer list.

Thank you to the following individuals who completed terms of service on council and committees at United Lutheran in January:

Gerald Anderson (Property)
 Ken Carlson (Endowment)
 Ashton Hedger (Stewardship)
 Bernie Goodman (Nominating)
 Amanda Coyle (Hospitality)
 Carol Hart (Nominating)
 Kyle Rollness (Education)

Thank you to those who have accepted nominations to serve in 2024 and ahead. We look forward to doing ministry together!

What Is Lent?

Lent is the 40 days, not including Sundays, from Ash Wednesday to the Saturday before Easter. Christians around the world consider Lent a time to reflect on what Jesus did for us.

Remember during Advent how John the Baptist expressed a need to prepare the way for Jesus... to prepare our hearts for Jesus' birth? Lent is a time, too, to get our hearts ready to truly appreciate Jesus' death for us and celebrate Easter.

This year, Lent begins on February 14, Valentine's Day. In worship on this evening, you will hear verses like "for you are dust and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19), as ashes in the shape of a cross are marked on each person's forehead. It's a day for humbling ourselves, for remembering God is great and that He made us from dust.

The following five consecutive Wednesdays during Lent, we will worship through scripture, skits and music around the theme "What Did Jesus Do?" The youth will lead the services and serve a light meal at 6PM prior to the services.

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday. Maundy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter. "Maundy" comes from a Latin word for "command" because it's on this night that Jesus famously commanded His disciples, "As I have loved you, you also are to love one another." On this day we remember when Jesus ate the Last Supper with His twelve disciples and was then betrayed by Judas, arrested and put on an unjust trial. The climax of Holy Week is Good Friday, although it may seem ironic to call the day Jesus suffered and died "good." We meditate this day on the need for Jesus to die because of our sin. The "good" part describes the incredible gift of God's forgiveness because of Jesus' sacrificial blood and death, paying the price for our wrongdoing (sin).

Easter is technically not part of Lent. It's *after* the 40 days. It is the "happy ending" of Lent when we celebrate Jesus' resurrection! Not only did Jesus die for our sins, but He grabbed victory over our worst enemy, death, assuring us of our own victory when we will be raised from the dead, too.

One might say that Ash Wednesday through Easter is a continual Valentine's Day... a celebration of God's great love for us!

I hope you will participate in all the steps of the journey!

January Memorials

Juanita Domres - Dennis Domres (garden & general)

Memorials may be mailed or dropped by the Church Office at United Lutheran at any time.

At-a-Glance and General Announcements

Thank You to:

Kalleigh Rollness and Brooke Gemmill along with Lisa Schuler for their special music on January 7.

Terry Jacobson for leading us in worship on January 14 while Pastor Jodi was away.

Lane Lindseth for being our guest organist on January 21.

Corey Johnson and Max Johnson for taping/texturing the repair in the ceiling of the youth room. Dale Luhmann for painting the ceiling and touching up the walls in the youth room and Pam Luhmann for doing a deep clean of the room.

Those who participated in our Annual Meeting on January 28. A very special thank you to our Nominating Committee for their time and work in filling all the positions for 2024! (Trevor Romfo, Carol Hart, Bernie Goodman, Patricia Scott and Deidre Long).

Thank you to our Hospitality Committee for setting up and serving for the potluck following the annual meeting and those that stayed to help clean up.

2023 Annual Reports

Extra 2023 Annual Reports are available on the magazine carousel outside the sanctuary.

United Quilters

Quilters meet the 2nd Tuesday and Wednesday of each month (9AM-3PM), September-April. **They will meet again on February 13-14.** If you can cut, sew or tie, you are welcome to come and help fulfill our mission. All materials, tools and machines provided; little experience required!

Weather Cancellation Notice

If inclement weather should arise, Pastor and Council President will make any decisions to cancel worship by 7:00 AM Sunday morning. A post will be made on our Facebook page and radio (KNDK) will also be notified.

Dear Members of United,

Thank you for the gift card I received on your behalf for Christmas from the United Lutheran Council. Also thank you to all the cards, pictures, greetings and gifts we received during the Christmas Season. We are so blessed to be living and serving in such a generous community. May God continue to bless our ministry together!

Pastor Jodi, Paul and Sophie

Visitation Committee

The Visitation Committee will meet following worship, February 25. If you know of individuals that might be homebound or should be added to our visitation list, please share with the church office or write on the "tear-off" section of the bulletin and place in the offering plate.

Faith & Care

You will find a red binder located on the shelf as you enter the sanctuary labeled "Faith & Care" that contains information for most Faith & Care duties that happen each Sunday by volunteers (reading, ushering, communion assisting, etc.) If you've ever wondered what those duties responsibilities are, take a look. Feel free to reach out to your Faith & Care leader also, if you have any questions. Volunteering is a big part of what makes worship services run smoothly. We appreciate our leaders (Lisa Schuler, Brian & Darby Hart, Carol Hart, David & Jan Haslekaas) and everyone that helps each month!

Offering Envelopes

2024 offering envelopes are available to be picked up from the table in the fellowship hall.

Pastor Jodi's Contact Information

pjmyrvik@polarcomm.com
Cell phone number 701-265-2409

Crafting Weekend/February 9-10

Open to all in the community who enjoys crafting while being with others! Bring your scrapbook, paints/canvases, sewing, crocheting, knitting, etc. to United Lutheran. The group meets once a month (Friday-Saturday). For more information, contact Lisa Schuler.

Flu Shots Protect Loved Ones

Getting vaccinated against flu can help protect loved ones, like adults 65 years and older and people living with chronic conditions, both groups of people who are at higher risk of having serious flu complications. Bottom line? Getting an annual flu vaccine is important to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community against flu. Cavalier County Health District offers flu vaccine by appointment and on a walk in basis pending staff availability.

Fundraiser

Wales Fire Hall, Breakfast fundraiser, St. Michael's parish hall in Wales, Sunday, February 11, serving 9AM - 1PM. Scrambled eggs, pancakes, sausage, coffee and juice. Free will offering. Pick up orders available.

Helpful Information

AI-Anon - Thursdays, 12PM, ULC, providing support for relatives and friends of alcoholics. Call 701-270-2254 with questions.

Alcoholics Anonymous - Langdon - Wednesdays, 7PM, south wing of Langdon Prairie Health, **Cavalier** - Tuesdays, 8PM, Pembina County Memorial Hospital, **Lakota** - Thursdays, 7PM, Lakota

Mental health distress - Dial 988 for support for anyone experiencing mental health distress – whether that is thoughts of suicide, mental health, substance use crisis, emotional distress and even just worried about a loved one who may need crisis support

Visit United online at www.unitedlangdon.org or call us at 701-256-2594.



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Return Service Requested

Worship and Ministry - February Schedule

February 4 - Worship with Holy Communion

Reader - Nancy Coyle
Ushers - Zach & Andrea Jacobson
Communion Assts - Ashton Hedger,
Harper Jacobson & Edwin Olson
Acolytes - Chloe Koons and Oakley Koons
Projectionist - Adam Hart
Coffee - Bub & Janice Knudson

February 11 - Worship Lead by the Youth

Coffee and hot cocoa will be served in the narthex prior to worship (9:30AM) by the youth and the Faith & Care roles will be filled by the youth also.
Acolytes - Maxum Mostad & Merek Mostad
Communion Asst - Jacob Tollefson
Projectionist - Meredith Romfo
Coffee - Linden & Helen Johnson

February 14 - Ash Wednesday Worship with Holy Communion (7PM)

Communion Asst - Meggy Hetletved

February 18 - Worship with Holy Communion

Reader - LeeAnn Knudson
Ushers - Willy Thom & Chris Mikkelsen
Communion Asst - Diane Simmons,
Josh Overby & LeeAnn Knudson
Acolytes - Jack Borchardt & Ben Borchardt
Projectionist - Jaymee Reidhammer
Coffee - Shannon & Sheri Winnege

February 25 - Contemporary Worship with Holy Communion

Reader - Finley Crockett
Ushers - Devon Johnson & Liam Johnson
Communion Asst - Remmi Bodnar
Acolytes - Hallie Overby & Reid Overby
Projectionist - Tyson Gemmill
Coffee - Courtney Krom

Thank you to Elaine Haugen for being our communion prep individual for the month of February!