



February 2023



Pastor Brad Miller

GOOD NEWS

Intentional Interim Senior Pastor Brad Miller From the Pastor

Some of you have heard me mention my son Byron's chronic illness: EDS or Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome. Like many syndromes that were given a name a century ago, it is actually several different genetic conditions. The most common syndrome is hyper-mobility. Byron can dislocate his shoulders with a simple shrug. Hyper-mobility was handy for circus side-show "freaks" a century ago. Unfortunately, hyper-mobility isn't forever. It tears apart the connective tissue that allow our joints (and other body parts) to function.

I am extremely grateful that we have seen hyper-mobility in our staff over the past six months.

Every staff member has taken on extra duties and born extra burdens just to enable basic operations at Charity to be maintained. Likewise, a vast cadre of volunteers have stepped up and handled tasks that had many years ago been delegated to various staff positions. All of that stretching and stepping up has inevitably led to a few toes stepped on and a few turfs invaded and a few egos bumped into.

Blessedly, God has prepared a path for us to faithfully and confidently move forward. We are in the process of publicizing our pastoral vacancy, our worship leader vacancy, and a single youth ministry position. We have gone from five paid youth staff positions to none at present. I am extremely grateful that Nathaniel Oakland juggled all of the youth work for a few months.

He will continue helping, especially with Confirmation and High School, as we seek to get a dedicated staff position filled. We are integrating more volunteers into the youth and children's ministries – but we need more help to finish out the school year and to prepare for VBS and a busy summer.

Can you do me a favor? Pause right now and pray for our staff and volunteers. Thank God for the work that they have done. Pray that God will bless their labors so that they bear fruit. Pray that all who are laboring will have perseverance and patience and strength. And, pray that God will send more workers for the abundant harvest.

EVENTS

Tuesday, February 14
Amazing Grays
6:00 p.m.

Friday, February 17
Pinochle Night
6:00 p.m.

Monday, February 20
President's Day
Office Closed

Wednesday, February 22
Ash Wednesday Services
12:10 p.m. & 6:15 p.m.

February 24-25
Crystal Springs Retreat
4th & 5th Graders

Saturday, February 25
Quilting Group
9:00 a.m.

Executive Director of Ministries Doug Leet

"What if..."

We are all richly blessed by the many individuals and families who have made Charity their faith home. As we live out our faith together and in the wider community, it's good to remember that we are representatives of Jesus. C.S. Lewis refers to believers as "little Christs" in Mere Christianity.

In Martin Luther's *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520), he wrote, "As our heavenly Father has in Christ freely come to our aid, we also ought freely to help our neighbor through our body and its works, and each one should become as it were a Christ to the other that we may be Christs to one another and Christ may be the same in all, that is, that we may be truly Christians....But alas in our day this life is unknown throughout the world; it is neither preached about nor sought after; we are altogether ignorant of our own name and do not know why we are Christians or bear the name of Christians. Surely we are named after Christ, not because he is absent from us, but because he dwells in us, that is, because we believe in him and are Christs one to another and do to our neighbors as Christ does to us."

We are examples to one another. Mark Vander Tuig reminded us on January 22 of 1 Peter 3:15 "But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

But do this with gentleness and respect." It's a good question to ask. Do people see that hope in us that would cause them to ask? Do they see us as "little Christs?"



Doug Leet

A related topic is stewardship. Stewardship is all-encompassing, but simply put, the earth and everything in it belongs to God, it's not ours. He allows us to manage what we have, including our finances. We encourage people to support Charity by tithing to our general fund for the operation of the church. Not everyone is able to give ten percent of their income as a tithe, but we can all work towards that end. The most important thing is to give consistently, developing it as a weekly habit.

Charity also has something called "forever giving." If you give to the Charity Lutheran Trust Fund, it helps Charity into the future. All donations are invested and grow over time. While none of the contributions are ever withdrawn, the earnings are available each year to aid in activities that promote the ministry and mission of Charity. To help promote this form of giving, Charity is launching the "Spud Club." Those who contribute to the trust fund, including gifts in memory or in honor of loved ones, will be listed in the newsletter each month, and will stay listed throughout the year as part of the Spud Club. This idea grew (pun intended) out of trust fund secretary Wayne Levang's seed potato presentation at the annual meeting.

Financial Report

Dec. Actual Income	\$87,604
Dec. Budgeted Income	<u>\$103,262</u>
Difference	<u>\$15,658</u>

Dec. Actual Income	\$87,604
Dec. Actual Expense	<u>\$78,358</u>
Difference	<u>\$9,246</u>

YTD Actual Income	\$928,520
YTD Budgeted Income	<u>\$1,239,148</u>
Difference	<u>\$310,628</u>

YTD Actual Income	\$928,520
YTD Actual Expense	<u>\$944,932</u>
Difference	<u>\$16,412</u>

Memorials

WELLSPRING

In Thankoffering for children and their spouses, Dina, Nathan, David, Megan and granddaughter Sophia and in memory of their mother Diane by David Price

Tartu

In Memory of Wilbert Fueller, Ray Mittleider & Stan Miller by Alvina Fueller

Vision Council Update

Greetings from the Vision Council.

Was nice to get through January without a repeat of the snowstorms in November and December. The Annual Meeting is behind us, and we want to thank all of those that attended. It was great to see all of you and encouraging to see all the interest and participation in determining the direction of Charity.

The Vision Council (VC) for 2023 is now Mike Fluharty (President), Craig Lohstreter (Vice President), John Seedorf (Secretary), Pam Miller, Dennis Simenson, Matt Kaldor, and Ray Eckroth. We ask that you keep us all lifted in prayer for God's will, wisdom, and guidance throughout the year. We also encourage everyone to contact any of us individually or through the VC email address on Charity's website with any concerns or questions you have. Our goal is always to communicate and be as transparent in the church's business as possible, but we may not always anticipate the issues and concerns that are on your mind. If that is the case, please reach out to any or all of us to answer your questions or listen to your concerns.

We are also excited to announce that Bob Nelson has accepted the appointment for Treasurer. He is going to be a great addition to the leadership team and really look forward to working with him. Thank you, Bob, for stepping up to serve in this position and we encourage all of you to give him a big thanks for taking this on.

At the January VC meeting we also approved hiring John Seedorf in an interim part-time capacity as Production/Technical Coordinator. Understanding there has been past controversy having a VC member also on staff, the circumstances have dictated the need. The vacancy in staff at this time has left us in a position where John was the only one left with even a fundamental understanding of Charity's computer and technical systems. We are looking at several longer-term solutions including contracting more of this work, so we aren't reliant on any single person again.

We are also reviewing the Worship Leader and Youth Director positions. All the people that have stepped up to keep those two important ministries going deserve a big thanks from all of us as we look for longer-term solutions and direction.

Lastly, a reminder for all about our Corporate Prayer service at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday evenings. We have much to praise God for bringing us through the last year and still have much to pray for in our call process, children's and youth ministries, worship ministry, healing and rebuilding going forward.

God Bless
Mike Fluharty
Vision Council President

Vision Council questions can be emailed to:
vision.council@charitylutheran.org

Corporate Prayer

Corporate Prayer will be held Tuesday nights from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. We would love to fill the sanctuary with those coming to pray, however even two is good because Matthew 18:20 states "*For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.*"



Learn more about reading the Bible in a Year

Please visit our website for more information. The information link can be found on the upper right hand corner of our homepage.

Here is the direct link to the Bible in a Year



Charity Call Committee Report

Following the annual meeting on January 8, the Call Committee completed the final Senior Pastor job position posting and the Congregation Profile. The Vision Council reviewed and approved them and, as of the end of January, the job position was posted on the LCMC website and at other locations. The Congregation Profile will be forwarded to anyone who sees the position opening and requests a copy of it.

We ask for your continued prayers for our congregation and for the Senior Pastor God is preparing to send to us. We praise God for guiding us through this process over the past year and a half.

The next meeting of the Call Committee will be February 7. In the meantime, please continue to reach out to us either individually or through our email at callcommittee@charitylutheran.org with any questions, comments or concerns.

Call Committee members - Beth Allen, Andrea Collin, Melissa Hill, Laura Kourajian and Scott Carter.

Call Committee questions can be emailed to:
callcommittee@charitylutheran.org

Welcome Back

We welcome John Seedorf back on staff at Charity as our Interim Part-Time Production/Technical Coordinator. We are grateful for all of his work in the various aspects of production and technical areas.



Thank You Volunteers

We are thankful for all the people who volunteer at Charity. It takes many volunteers to make our programs and events run each week and we couldn't do it without your help.

If you would like to get involved in a volunteer ministry at Charity, please contact the church office at 258-1228 or email us at contact@charitylutheran.org.

Confirmation Catch Up Information



"CONFIRMATION CATCH UP"

Saturday, March 18th
9am-7pm

Anyone past 8th grade who has participated in youth events at Charity without being confirmed, will be able to cover the catechism basics in one day. We will schedule an Affirmation of Baptism service in May. Those who complete this event will be ready to be confirmed - regardless of service hours, mission trips, or other former requirements. Please reserve your spot! An alternative course will likely be offered in the summer or fall for those who cannot attend.

lunch, dinner, and snacks provided.

Introducing the



Plant a single potato, give it time to grow and it will produce multiple potatoes. So it is with any memorial, honorarium, donation or gift to the TRUST FUND. It grows and lasts forever while producing earnings for gifting. Become a "SPUD CLUB FAMILY" for 2023 and donate now!!!! Your name will remain on this list for the entire year.

January Gifts

Donavon Hatzenbuhler - in memory of Duane Kuehn
Mark & Liz Landis
Doug & Rhonda Leet - Thankoffering for their family
Wayne & Marie Levang - Honor of new Trust Fund
Directors: Steve, Mark, Renee
Brad & Pam Miller
Don Nordquist
Jerry & Renee Walz

****Acknowledgement of gifts to Trust fund in current newsletter. Listed as a member in following months newsletter.*

"Seeking the Heart of God"

Pastor Bob Nordvall

Habakkuk 3:17-19 New Living Translation

*"Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vines;
even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren;
even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty,
yet I will rejoice in the Lord! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation!
The Sovereign Lord is my strength!
He makes me as surefooted as a deer, able to tread upon the heights!"*

This song of worship comes at the very end of the short book of Habakkuk near the close of the Old Testament. Have you ever read it? The prophet is not announcing prophecy like the other prophets. Rather, he is seeking God's heart about the problems and sin he was seeing in his country of Judah. In just 3 chapters, this book is a Q&A with God. In chapter 1, Habakkuk questions God with his perplexity and doubt. In chapter 2, he begins to see God's purposes in using the evil Babylonians to resolve Judah's unfaithfulness (It seems unthinkable to us). In Chapter 3, Habakkuk comes to the point of worship and praise and trust in God, no matter what! The book is both painful and joy-filled to read, and it applies, as all of Scripture does, to our daily needs seeking God's heart for guidance, healing, forgiveness and hope.

Recently, I had to take my Subaru in for repairs in the electronics. After a half day of diagnosing, the mechanics ended up doing a "reset on the codes." Everything works well now, and I already feel safer in my smart car. Sometimes in our hearts and lives we need to do a reset, especially in our spiritual codes, so that we come back into alignment with God's heart. It can involve confession, digging deeper into the source of problems and sometimes a pretty thorough cleaning up. It's not always the path we want to choose. In AA, Steps 4&5, it says, "We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of the exact nature of our wrongs" and then "We shared with God and another person those wrongs." Those who have found healing and new life through recovery in AA know all about this difficult, but life-giving process.

"Openness, willingness and honesty" are the 3 essentials in AA. They are also for all of us standing on very level ground at the foot of the cross, at the Lord's table and seeking the Lord's cleansing. Charity has been/still is in an "Interim process" and there remains those who have been willing to meet the commitments and challenges of this journey. Be encouraged, and stay the course to its completion, and let your trust in God grow. The barns and the fields and the vines will once again be filled!

Back to Habakkuk, the first verses of chapter 2, reads:

*"I will climb up to my watchtower (Ramparts on the wall) and stand at my guard-post
There I will wait to see what the Lord says and how He will answer my complaint. Then the Lord said to me, 'Write My answer plainly on tablets, so that a runner can carry the correct message to others. This vision is for a future time. It describes the end, and it will be fulfilled. If it seems slow in coming, wait patiently, for it will surely take place. It will not be delayed.'"*

Stay the course. Don't rush ahead. Help each other to be in the watchtowers. Wait patiently on the Lord. He will reset your codes and bring new life. There is great joy and opportunity and a new servant ahead!



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

February 1
Jessica Carlson
Andrea Collin

February 6
Dorine Wiedrich

February 2
Jen Anderson
Norman Graf
Dawn Kindel
Carol Mielke
Melinda Pudwill
Aliza Sullivan

February 9
Shawn Custer

February 11
Raine Skjod

February 12
Nancy Fuchs

February 3
Micheal Farley

February 13
Lynn Connell

February 5
Jeff Carlson

February 14
Eli Bullock
Keith Soiseth
Faye Wangen

February 15
Valerie Kuhn
Linda Okerson

February 16
Delores Soiseth

February 18
Beth Allen

February 19
Rylan Peshek

February 20
Stewart Milakovic

February 21
Melissa Okerson

February 22
Nancy Jensen

February 23
Bob Graveline
Jonathan Kuhn
Pamela Nelson

February 24
Kirsten Lindsay
Marshal Liudahl

February 25
Heidi Brown
Julie Dahle

February 26
Callie Bosch
Jackson Brown
Grace Miller
Velvet Schmidt

February 27
Barb Weaver



*Those who remain
in love
remain in God
and God
remains in them.*



1 JOHN 4:16

February 14 - Mike and Judy Smith
February 15 - Paul and Marlys Coughlin
February 18 - Chad and Laura Kourajian



stephen at Charity Lutheran MINISTRY.

Congratulations

TO OUR NEWLY COMMISSIONED STEPHEN MINISTERS



Connie Geiger

The very first time Ken and I visited Charity, we could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit and we both knew this was to be our church. We have been members since 2010. Our family consists of 2 daughters and 1 son, along with their spouses and 8 grandchildren. Much of our time is centered around family that we have feel blessed to have so close. Along with time spent with family, I also like my bible studies, reading, gardening and work in my flower beds, trips with my hubby, kayaking, sometimes golf and coffee dates.

I look forward to being a Stephen Minister and being able to walk alongside someone during their life changes and seeing God work - not only in their life, but mine as well.



Ken Geiger

I and my wife Connie of forty-one years have 3 children, all married and eight grandchildren, which are a big part of our lives. I'm retired since 2010, enjoy golfing, gardening, and chasing after my grandkids. We've been members of Charity since moving to Mandan in 2010.

To become a Stephen Minister, to walk with someone through their life challenges is very rewarding. I have to admit the training has been intense, but it has helped me grow in my faith.

If you or someone you know could benefit from the listening ear, caring presence, and Christ-centered support of a Stephen Minister, call the church office at 258-1228.

stephen at Charity Lutheran MINISTRY.

Congratulations

TO OUR NEWLY COMMISSIONED STEPHEN MINISTERS



Connie Carter

Connie Carter grew up in the Mayville-Portland, ND, area, but has lived in Mandan for 45 years. She and her husband Scott have three grown children and six grandchildren ranging in age from six to nineteen years old. She taught in the Mandan school district for twenty-one years before retiring in 2012.

Connie was drawn to the Stephen Ministry program because of her desire to help and serve others, and because of the useful topics covered within the coursework. She finds the class sessions to be of great benefit in all areas of life as she continues to trust in the Lord to direct her paths. Connie is thankful for the opportunity to encourage and support others, as well as the opportunity to grow in her own faith, through the Stephen Ministry program.



Scott Carter

Scott and his bride, Connie of 49 years, have been members of Charity Lutheran Church since March, 2013. They enjoy their family and activities with family, traveling and an activity in and on water. They have lived in the Mandan area for 45 years and call it home. Scott has been retired for 13 years from careers as a Soil Scientist with NDSU, several positions with NDDOT-Materials and Research Division in Bismarck, and part-time contractor/landlord. Scott and Connie are so grateful to be members of Charity and serve our Lord here at Charity in different areas of need for His honor and glory.

Scott, with much prayer, was called to the Stephen Ministry program to expand his experience, knowledge, and wisdom to better serve the fellow members of the church body, through our Lord. Scott states that God has blessed him with a caring heart and the need to be more patient and a better listener. Scott feels the Stephen Ministry training has been amazing and very fruitful. It has matured him spiritually at a very quick pace and he looks forward to the challenges God will use him for in the future. One of Scott's favorite daily bible verses is Philippians 4:6-7.

February Events

Amazing Grays

The Amazing Grays will meet Tuesday, February 14 at 6:00 p.m. for a catered dinner.



We are planning a special evening and some Valentine's Day fun.

Please let Renee Walz know if you plan to attend by Sunday evening, February 12, so she can order food Monday morning, February 13. Please RSVP to Renee at 400-1201 by text or phone call.

Pinochle Group

The Pinochle Group will meet Friday, February 17 at 6:00 p.m. Reserve a spot by texting John Seedorf at 701-426-9768.



Quilting Group

The Quilting Group will meet Saturday, February 25 at 9:00 a.m. Please join us as we make graduate quilts for May 2023. We will meet from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. in the Gazebo. Contact Liz Landis at 258-1228 in the main office for more information.



Adult Series

Sunday at 10:45 a.m.
in the Sanctuary

PRESIDENTS DAY
U.S.A.

The church office will be closed on Monday, February 20th

Youth Event

Arctic Blast is an overnight retreat for 4th-5th graders. They can expect a fun, friendly atmosphere where they will worship and develop a clearer understanding of who Jesus is and what He did for each of us. Thrown into the mix will be our annual pickle spitting competition & our rock, paper, scissors tournament! Be prepared for 24 hours of fun, faith, and friendship!

Activities include: A Climbing Wall, Gym (basketball, volleyball, roller skating, etc.), Snow Tubing, Ice Skating (bring your own skates), Sledding, & Ice Fishing

ARCTIC BLAST

FEBRUARY 24-25, 2023

Winter Retreat at Crystal Springs Camp for 4th-5th Graders
Registration Begins at 4:00pm on Friday
Retreat Ends at 4:00pm on Saturday

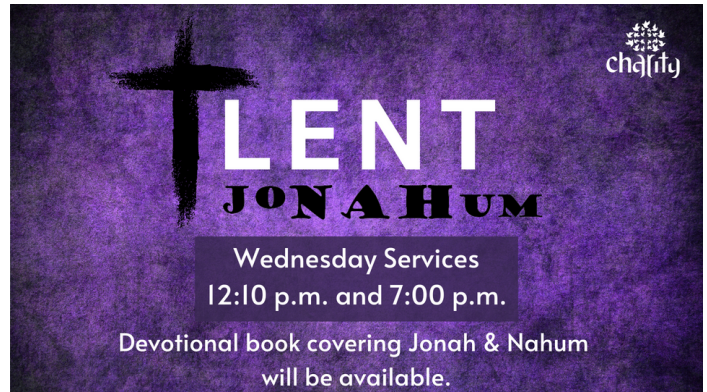
CAMPERS: \$60
\$10 late fee after Feb. 10, 2023

Scan QR code for more information and to register

Lent 2023

The season of Lent begins on Wednesday, February 22nd. We will offer two services for Ash Wednesday. Please plan to join us. We will have our WOW programming as well.

This Lent at Charity we will embark on a Lenten journey through the books of Jonah and Nahum. A devotional booklet will be available for each household and our midweek services will be based on the devotional texts.



Burden Board



Charity will be putting up a "burden board" in the hallway this Lent. We are encouraging you to write down the burden/s you are carrying (no personal names, please). We will pray for your burdens as a special prayer intention during our Sunday worship services. As you stop by the board, take some time to read the burdens people are carrying and take a moment to pray for them.



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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CHARITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

120 Aspen Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58503

Phone: 701-258-1228 or Fax: 701-258-4398

Email: office@charitylutheran.org

www.charitylutheran.org



LENT
JONAHUM

Wednesday Services
12:10 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Devotional book covering Jonah & Nahum
will be available.