



July 2023



**Pastor Brad Miller**

# GOOD NEWS

## Intentional Interim Senior Pastor Brad Miller From the Pastor

Our culture loves an underdog in an epic solo battle. In literature, in movies, and in music. Oftentimes music, particularly, invites every listener to be emboldened in their individual struggles of health, relationships, work, or actual battle. Consider just a few examples:


*I made it through the rain  
I kept my world protected  
I made it through the rain  
I kept my point of view  
I made it through the rain  
And found myself respected  
By the others who  
Got rained on too  
And made it through*  
-Barry Manilow, *I Made It Through the Rain*

*This is my fight song  
Take back my life song  
Prove I'm alright song  
My power's turned on  
Starting right now I'll be strong  
I'll play my fight song  
And I don't really care if nobody else believes  
'Cause I've still got a lot of fight left in me*  
-Rachel Platten, *Fight Song*

*Players gonna play, play, play, play, play  
And the haters gonna hate, hate, hate,  
hate, hate (haters gonna hate)  
Baby, I'm just gonna shake, shake, shake,  
shake, shake  
I shake it off, I shake it off  
Heartbreakers gonna break  
Fakers gonna fake  
I'm just gonna shake  
I shake it off, I shake it off*  
-Taylor Swift, *Shake it Off*

I, me, and my tend to be the big themes in all of these catchy lyrical encouragements. I have listened to all of the above and many other tunes over the past 13 months. At times, my calling to serve at Charity has certainly felt like a burdensome battle. Yet, I have never felt alone. God was always with us. An early oddity of our battles was when a few people heretically (and demonstrating Biblical illiteracy) declared that the Holy Spirit had left our building – as if a person of the Holy Trinity were some lost puppy dog only capable of following a preacher with a pocketful of Scooby Snacks! God was always present.

**(continued on page 4)**

EVENTS		
Office Closed July 3 & 4 in observance of Independence Day 		
<p>Wednesday, July 12 Children's &amp; Youth Meeting 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Wednesday, July 12 Patriotic/Gospel Sing-Along 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Thursday, July 13 Bonfire Night 7:00 p.m.</p>
<p>Wednesday, July 19 Amazing Grays New Rockford Trip</p>	<p>Thursday, July 20 Pinochle Game Night 6:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Tuesday, July 26 Larks Baseball Game 5:35 p.m. (gates open)</p>

## Executive Director of Ministries Doug Leet Transition

“4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

“8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” Philippians 4:4-8 (NIV)

Seasons of transition, whether in life or in an organization like Charity, can be overwhelming and even kind of scary. The Bible has all kinds of pertinent verses about transitions; many of them about prayer and trusting in God. The verses from the fourth chapter of Philippians may sound familiar, as verses 4-7 have been printed on our bulletin prayer sheet for many years. Good words from Paul to the church at Philippi, and to us at Charity.

As council president Mike Fluharty mentions in his newsletter article this month, with Pastor Brad finishing up his time at Charity, a short-term preaching schedule is in place, mostly with Pastor Ron Dahle in July and August (see Pastor Ron’s article too). There are a couple of exceptions in July, with Liberian missionary Samar Ghandour visiting on July 9, and Pastors Kathy and Peter Braafladt visiting on July 16.

Charity continues to move forward. We “Rejoice in the Lord always,” as we continue looking to the Lord in prayer with thanksgiving. We can trust that God will lead, and that He will provide.



**Doug Leet**

You can see in the accompanying financial chart that Charity is not currently, as Pastor Brad stated in a recent sermon, “functioning at scale.” In May, Charity’s general fund income fell more than \$10,000 short of expenditures, and year-to-date income is more than \$43,000 behind expenditures. As Charity moves forward, we will increasingly rely more on volunteers than on paid staff for different areas of need with our facility and grounds and with church programming. We ask that you pray about how you can continue to support Charity, both financially and in volunteer service.

With that, there are two part-time staff members who are leaving their positions at the end of June: Doug Sprynczynatyk (Spry) and Nathaniel Oakland. Spry is nearing retirement, but has accepted a similar custodial position with St. Mary’s Catholic Parish. It’s an opportunity that presented itself, and one that he’s looking forward to. Nathaniel was initially hired as Charity’s Connections Coordinator, but quickly stepped up when vacancies and needs developed in the children’s and youth areas this past year. As the school year neared completion, Nathaniel decided to step back from his involvement in those areas and had been immersing himself in home and family obligations, along with the myriad and time-consuming kids’ activities that entails. Nathaniel and his family continue to be a part of Charity, and he looks forward to volunteering in areas of need.

## Financial Report

<b>May Actual Income</b>	<b>\$43,070</b>
<b>May Budgeted Income</b>	<b><u>\$73,849</u></b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>\$30,779</b>

<b>May Actual Income</b>	<b>\$43,070</b>
<b>May Actual Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$53,734</u></b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>\$10,664</b>

<b>YTD Actual Income</b>	<b>\$235,414</b>
<b>YTD Budgeted Income</b>	<b><u>\$369,245</u></b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>\$133,831</b>

<b>YTD Actual Income</b>	<b>\$235,414</b>
<b>YTD Actual Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$278,770</u></b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>\$43,356</b>

## Memorials & Gifts

### CHARITY TRUST FUND

In memory of Kyle Hagel by Wayne & Marie Levang and Arlan & Linda Okerson

Scott & Connie Carter  
Jeff & Rose Gitter  
John & Sandy Seedorf  
Ken & Julie Slag

As you pray about how you can serve at Charity, keep your mind (and eyes) open to areas you can use your giftings. We will publicize upcoming meeting dates as we look to organize volunteer activities. God’s richest blessings on each Charity member as we move forward together!

## Vision Council Update

Greetings from the Vision Council.

I hope your summer is going well. I have certainly enjoyed the rain we have received in June. It is always nice to see the countryside green and growing. Not that long ago I was sure winter would never end and now we are well into summer. The seasons just keep rolling along. Our season is changing at Charity also. By the time this is printed our time with Pastor Brad will have ended and what a time it was. It was a time of trials and many challenges. Some pain and sorrow but a lot of growth as a church too. Perhaps not in numbers but in spiritual growth. We have grown in our understanding of Lutheran doctrine, the inerrant Word of God, and why it is so important to follow our governing documents. As difficult as the last year has been, we owe much thanks to Pastor Brad's teaching and guidance through it all. God's calling him to Charity Lutheran has been a great blessing to us all. Thank you, Pastor Brad. We will miss you and keep your next interim call in our prayers.

At the June Vision Council meeting we reviewed a number of options to fill the Pastoral vacancy as the Call Committee continues their work. We have determined that our best course forward will be to find another full-time Interim Pastor. That search process has been started. In the short-term Pastor Ron Dahle has graciously agreed to serve in a preaching capacity for July and August.

We have been attempting to hire both a Youth Director and Worship Leader with no success. We are now combining those two positions into one full-time position. Depending on potential candidate qualifications, the position would be "Associate Pastor of Worship and Youth" (LCMC qualified Pastor) or "Pastoral Associate for Worship and Youth." We hope that a full-time position will broaden the candidate pool.

I will close with a big "Thank You!" to all the volunteers and organizers of the Vacation Bible School in June. I have received a lot of positive feedback about the turnout, content, and enthusiastic response from the kids. Thank you to all of you that put so much time and effort into it.

God Bless  
Mike Fluharty  
Vision Council President

Vision Council questions can be emailed to:  
[vision.council@charitylutheran.org](mailto:vision.council@charitylutheran.org)

## Charity Call Committee Report

A delegation from Charity traveled out of town in June to visit a candidate being considered for Senior Pastor. Further follow-up, which may include a visit to Bismarck this summer, is being discussed with the candidate, the Call Committee and the Vision Council.

We are also gathering more information from four other recent applicants for the Senior Pastor position, which we will review over the next few weeks.

We ask for your continued prayers for our congregation and for the Senior Pastor God is preparing to send to us. Please reach out to us either individually or through our email at [callcommittee@charitylutheran.org](mailto: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](mailto:callcommittee@charitylutheran.org)

# From the Pastor

(continued from page 1)

The great cloud of witnesses – those Christians who have preceded us in death – were present in some mystical form as well. And of course, the faithful leaders, staff, and members of Charity all worked together to move the ministry of Charity forward.

It is a great trick of Satan to convince us that we are ever in battle alone. I, me, and my are pretty common in scripture – but they don't typically signal aloneness. Even when a psalmist or prophet laments their loneliness, their calling out to God affirms that they are ultimately not alone.

Thank you for accompanying me on our grand adventure. It was a privilege to be your temporary shepherd. I see great things ahead for Charity. Remember that you are never alone.

-Pastor Miller

## Tartu Mission Trip in August

For Want of a Nail

For want of a nail the shoe was lost.

For want of a shoe the horse was lost.

For want of a horse the rider was lost.

For want of a rider the message was lost.

For want of a message the battle was lost.

For want of a battle the kingdom was lost.

And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.

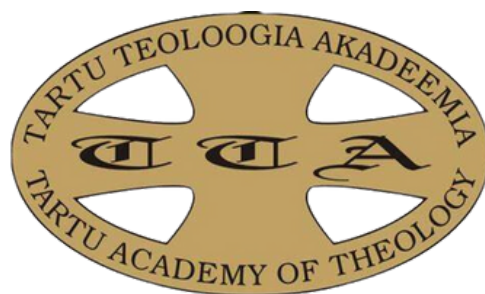
-Ben Franklin in 1758 (borrowed from German and French proverbs several centuries older)

These are exciting times for Charity as our future unfolds. There are many unknowns. We could choose to be anxious or we can choose to trust God and boldly proceed with ministry. One element of Charity history is the great work of Tartu Academy in Estonia. A team of Charity members are headed to Tartu in August to work on your behalf – sharing the Gospel and continuing this important missional legacy of our congregation. Our team is jointly led by Pastor Nordvall and Pastor Miller. The team members are Donavon Hatzenbuhler, Arlan & Linda Okerson, and Kathy Wermager. Over the next 6 weeks we need to raise around \$20,000.

We ask for your help in three ways:

- Pray for the whole team to be prepared and effective. Pray that the funds would be raised. Pray that family needs, logistics, and work responsibilities would not interfere with the trip.
- Give your full and regular tithe to support the full scope of work at Charity. We accomplish ministry around the world by first keeping the lights on and the bills paid here on Aspen Avenue.
- Give a special gift for this trip. We have the history. We have the opportunity. We have the team with the right gifts and skills. Don't let this initiative fail for want of funds.

-Pastor Miller



# July Events

**BISMARCK LARKS**  
**GROUP OUTING**  
 CHARITY LUTHERAN CHURCH



**SUMMER BONFIRE NIGHT**  
 Thursday, July 13 | 7-9 PM  
 Jeff & Rose Gitter's House  
 2912 Valley View Ave  
 Bismarck, ND 58501

55+  
*Singles & Couples*



**JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OUT AT THE BALLPARK**

**DATE: JULY 26TH**  
**GATES OPEN: 5:35 PM**  
**LOCATION: BISMARCK MUNICIPAL BALLPARK**

**TICKET OPTIONS**

Ticket options are on a first come, first serve basis. Book your group outing today!

 +  = \$15

\$15 BLEACHER SEAT      \$17 LARKS HAT

 +  +  = \$25

\$15 BLEACHER SEAT      \$17 LARKS HAT      90 MIN. ALL-YOU-CAN EAT

**JULY 26TH**

Get ready to hit the jackpot with your group outing. Come out to the Larks game and enjoy a night of baseball, entertainment and FUN!

**YOUR VIEW!**



**HOW TO PURCHASE TICKETS**

Scan the QR code or visit [larkstickets.com](http://larkstickets.com) and use promo code Charity



(701) 557 - 7600 | LARKSBASEBALL.COM | 201 W FRONT AVE. BISMARCK, ND

**Please join us for our Charity Lutheran Night at the Larks on Wednesday, July 26! We have reserved spots. Scan the QR code on the left, visit the website or call the Larks office at (701)-557-7600 to get your tickets. This will be a fun evening of baseball and fellowship!**

## Pinochle Group

The Pinochle Group will meet Thursday, July 20 at 6:00 p.m. Reserve a spot by texting John Seedorf at 701-426-9768.

**August 17 is the next Pinochle night.**



## Amazing Grays

The Amazing Grays will be heading to New Rockford on **July 19** by bus to see "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown" at the Dakota Prairie Regional Center for the Arts. We will plan to leave the Charity Lutheran Church lower parking lot at 2:30 p.m. We will plan to eat at 5:30 p.m. at the Bistro in the lower level of the church. Tickets for the show are \$25 and everyone orders and pays for their own food. The menu is mostly sandwiches and salads but it was very good last year. Please let me know by July 7 if you plan to go so I can order tickets and get our group together in one area of the theatre. You can pay me by cash or check made out to Renee Walz. We will return to Bismarck following the musical and probably arrive about 12:30 a.m.



Please RSVP to Renee Walz (701-400-1201) by text or phone call.



**HAPPY Fourth OF July**

The church office will be closed on Monday, July 3 and Tuesday, July 4 in observance of Independence Day!

# Confirmation



**Congratulations to our Confirmands!**



# Farewell Pastor Brad

We are grateful to Pastor Brad for his service to the people of Charity over the last 13 months. We had some time to honor him during the month of June with an Ice Cream Social and a reception following his last service on June 25. We wish Pastor Brad the best as he begins a new Intentional Interim Position close to home.



# 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. With a single donation become a SPUD CLUB MEMBER for 2023. Donate now and your name will remain on this list for the year!!

## 2023 Spud Club Members

- Mark & Lisa Aamodt
- Duane & Darlene Bentz
- Scott & Connie Carter
- Alvina Fueller
- Jeff & Rose Gitter
- Donavon Hatzenbuhler
- Dave & Nancy Jensen
- Matt & Penny Kaldor
- Georgia Kingsbury
- Chad & Laura Kourajian
- Mark & Liz Landis
- Dave & Barb Lee
- Doug & Rhonda Leet
- Wayne & Marie Levang
- Craig & Sandra Lohstreter
- Brad & Pam Miller
- Don & Kathy Nordquist
- Ken & Julie Slag
- John & Sandy Seedorf
- Norlyn & Patty Swenson
- Jerry & Renee Walz
- Kathy Wermager

# A Little About Me

## Pastor Ron Dahle

I have been asked to do some preaching during the period of time between the time of the leaving of Pastor Miller, and the calling of your next called or interim Pastor.

Perhaps it might be good for you to know a little about me. I am a graduate of Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN. I have served parishes in North Dakota since 1995. I retired about 5 years ago, but have worked as an interim pastor in some western North Dakota AFLC (Association of Free Lutheran Congregations) congregations during that time. Now that work has finished, and I am available to serve in a preaching capacity at Charity Lutheran.

It is my intention to follow the common lectionary rather than a topical style of preaching. The advantage is that we get to work our way through the Gospels in an orderly way. The Gospel message is the only function of preaching, and we must seek what God has to say to us from His written Word.

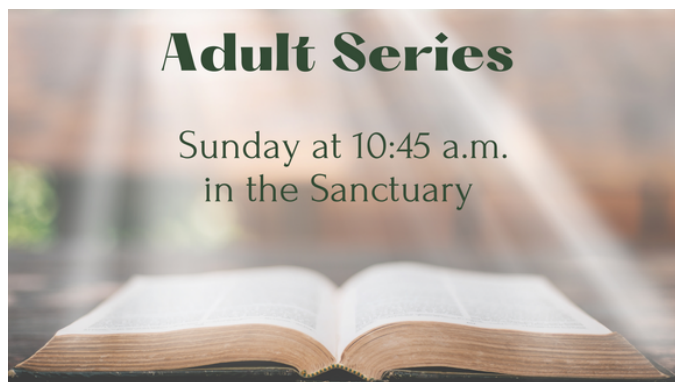
One perspective I wish all of us to consider is 'why is it necessary to hear the Gospel.' I like to use the first three chapters of Genesis to set the conditions for hearing the good news of the Gospel of Jesus, the Christ. God intended everything to be good, and to be in full harmony (relationship) between creation and God. But in Chapter 3 we find the rebellion of our first parents, and the result of every generation since then as being born alienated from God. And by default, rebellious!

God has given us the only plan for reconciling the world to God through faith in Jesus, the one sent from God, who is also God, to do the work necessary for us to be restored into full relationship with God. This is done through the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus.

From this comes the gift of the Holy Spirit who works faith in us when we hear the proclamation of the Gospel. I hope and pray to present the Gospel from this perspective. I pray that it will be a blessing to us all. Pray that the Holy Spirit would guide and direct our worship.

I look forward to sharing the Gospel with you and getting to know you.

In Christ, Ron Dahle



# July

## BIRTHDAYS



**July 1**  
Thomas Swanson

**July 8**  
Brad Braun

**July 3**  
Ryan Faragher

**July 9**  
Matthew Nisbet

**July 4**  
Alayna Bitz

**July 11**  
Angie Milakovic

**July 5**  
Harlow Bitz

**July 14**  
Harlan Faragher

**July 6**  
Sarah Erickson  
Ginger Keller

**July 15**  
Richard Collin  
Wayne Levang

**July 16**  
Derek Hill  
Maew Pukmith

**July 17**  
Mallory Kaldor  
Rupa Kindel  
Hannah Oakland

**July 18**  
Matthew Kaldor

**July 22**  
Jaxon Hill

**July 23**  
Kari Leet  
Kara Milakovic  
Amy Simpson

**July 24**  
Lorri Mittleider

**July 26**  
Kevin Kindel

**July 29**  
Jaedyn Smith  
Mike Smith  
Hesly Uline  
Jeff Uline  
Renee Walz



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



1 JOHN 4:16

**July 2** - Jeff and Heidi Brown  
**July 3** - Bob and Melodi Schulz  
**July 8** - Marlin and Leanne Fried  
**July 13** - Mike and Marian Fluharty  
**July 14** - Randy and Shelley Traynor  
**July 17** - Brad and Amy Hofmann  
**July 19** - Ken and Julie Slag  
**July 22** - Norlyn and Patty Swenson  
**July 24** - Duane and Darlene Bentz  
**July 25** - Kerry and Mavis Mikkelsen  
**July 30** - Brent and Lexie Allen









# stephen at Charity Lutheran MINISTRY.

ARE YOU GOING THROUGH A DIFFICULT TIME?

OUR STEPHEN MINISTERS WOULD LOVE TO HELP!

 <p><b>LISTEN</b></p> <p>Our Stephen Ministers are here to LISTEN to you.</p>	 <p><b>CARE</b></p> <p>Our Stephen Ministers CARE for you and keep everything confidential.</p>	 <p><b>ENCOURAGE</b></p> <p>Our Stephen Ministers want what is best for you!</p>	 <p><b>SUPPORT</b></p> <p>Our Stephen Ministers provide emotional &amp; spiritual SUPPORT.</p>
--	--	---	---

**Life can be hard. Sometimes you just need someone to talk to, someone who will listen and not judge. If you feel you would like a Stephen Minister, please call the church office at 258-1228 for more information.**

## Gospel Sing-Along

Wednesday, July 12

6:30-8:00pm

Charity Lutheran Church

This is for you, your Gospel Loving friends and/or family who enjoy listening to or singing along to Gospel and Patriotic Music and many hymns/songs from years gone by. Words are projected up on the screen! Led by the Fueller sisters Lorri Mittleider and Christie Neumiller. Open to the public. Coffee fellowship following. (Anyone can bring a treat to share.) The offering taken is for Heaven's Helpers Soup Cafe.



**GOSPEL & PATRIOTIC  
HYMNFEST SING-ALONG**

Wednesday, July 12  
6:30 - 8:00 PM

Contact Lorri Mittleider at (701) 400-1849 for more information.

## Vacation Bible School Thank You



### **THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!!!**

VBS 2023 was a success this year at Charity with 36 children attending. We would like to thank all the volunteers that helped make our VBS Boot Camp a success this year. Whether helping with: donations of food or money, group leaders, co-group leaders, decorating and undecorating, cooking volunteer meals, making our snacks for the kiddos, leading music, and sound. Helping with crafts, games, Bible adventures, and drama. All who loaned their army/navy gear for us to use as props, and Charity staff who helped in many ways. Please forgive me if we have forgotten anyone there are so many people to thank and we are so proud of this (OUR) Charity Family for the amazing number of volunteers in all capacities to make VBS 2023 such a huge success for our families.

A tremendous thank you to the trust fund for covering the registration fee of every child that registered for VBS this year. We are very grateful for your generous donation to help our VBS families.

Thank you to the families that brought their children to VBS they appeared to have such a fun time judging by the smiles on their faces.

I would like to thank my co-organizers Connie Geiger and Penny Kaldor. This was a group effort, and I could not have done this without each of them.

Thank you BOTH VERY MUCH!!!!!!

**Thank you does not seem like enough for all the volunteers, and all you have done, but we truly are,**

**THANKFUL for each and every one of you!**

*Sandy Seedorf, Connie Geiger, Penny Kaldor*

# VBS B.O.O.T. CAMP FUN





CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Non Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage PAID  
Permit # 353  
Bismarck, ND 58503

**CHARITY LUTHERAN CHURCH**

120 Aspen Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58503

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

Email: [office@charitylutheran.org](mailto:office@charitylutheran.org)

[www.charitylutheran.org](http://www.charitylutheran.org)

**children's  
and youth Meeting**

**Wednesday, July 12**

**6:30 p.m.**

**Please join us as we start  
planning our Fall programming!**

**Meet in New Youth Room**