



May 2023



Pastor Brad Miller

GOOD NEWS

Intentional Interim Senior Pastor Brad Miller From the Pastor

By the time this newsletter is in the mail, Norlyn Swenson and I will be on our way to Ukraine. We invite your prayers for our safety and effectiveness. Based upon past experience, there will be daily occasions when we are offered tea – with or without bergamot is the big local distinction. There will also be occasions when we are offered a chance to sample the local beer – which we may or may not politely accept.

Alcohol is an interesting insight to church history and the global dispersal of denominations. For the first 18 centuries of Christianity, pretty much everybody consumed alcohol.

It was commonplace in Biblical times and “wine” is mentioned more than 200 times in the Bible. Turning water into wine was Jesus’ first public miracle. Wine is treated topically in scripture much like sex: as a good thing and a blessing which can become a bad thing and a curse outside of proper limits and boundaries. Sex is good and proper within marriage, but adultery is bad. Wine is good to drink and to offer as a sacrifice, but drunkenness is bad.

A curious thing happened in the United States for a century from 1830 to 1930: the Temperance Movement. It started as a healthy appeal against drunkenness during a time when awareness of social ills was coupled with early advocacy for nutritional literacy.

As the movement picked up speed, it took on the character of a moral crusade which declared that good people don’t consume alcohol at all. It culminated with the attempt to stop all people from consuming alcohol with Prohibition – enforced by the 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1919. By 1933, Americans were fed up with the experiment and they ratified the 21st Amendment which repealed the 18th Amendment.

(continued on page 4)

EVENTS

Sunday, May 14
Last Day of Sunday School
10:45 a.m.

Sunday, May 14
Mother's Day

Friday, May 19
Pinochle Group
6:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 21
Graduate Sunday
9:30 a.m.

Sunday, May 21
Confirmation Sunday
9:30 a.m.

Monday, May 29
Memorial Day
Office Closed

Executive Director of Ministries Doug Leet

The Flying "V"

We are blessed in our neck of the woods. How many of us go outdoors on a beautiful spring day and appreciate the wonderful honking sounds of Canada geese flying overhead, some high, some low enough to see their black head and white markings around the face, but all in some semblance of a V-shaped formation? We get to experience all four seasons, and from my own perspective, by the end of each season I'm ready for the next one. And that change is all the more sweet after persevering through some of the trials and extremes of the former season.

In Ecclesiastes 3:1-2, Solomon writes, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot."

There are things to learn from Canadian honkers. A Library of Congress article notes their flying formation serves two important purposes: "First, it conserves their energy. Each bird flies slightly above the bird in front of them, resulting in a reduction of wind resistance. The birds take turns being in front, falling back when they get tired. In this way, the geese can fly for a long time before they must stop (up to 71% greater flying range than if each bird were flying alone). The second benefit to the "V" formation is that it is easy to keep track of every bird in the group. Flying in formation may assist with the communication and coordination within the group."

If a bird falls out of formation, it will suddenly feel drag and resistance. So it will seek to return to the flock and away from isolation. The result is a natural sense of community and common purpose, giving direction and focus for each one.

This is the same sense and a need of belonging that is vital for a Christian in being attached to the Body of Christ. And their incessant honking also seems to serve a good purpose: encouraging those birds in the lead to keep going and keep up the speed.

The writer of Hebrews exhorts in Chapter 10:24-25, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

We find ourselves in a new reality at Charity with a smaller weekly worship service attendance (174 to year-to-date including Holy Week services), thus less contributions to our general fund budget. Throughout the remainder of the year, Charity's leadership, both on staff and the Vision Council, are working to monitor and adjust our expenditures to get them more in line with the actual income Charity is receiving. The financial chart on this page indicates that year-to-date we have \$35,000 less in actual income than we do in actual expenses.



Doug Leet

Financial Report

March Actual Income	\$47,311
March Budgeted Income	\$73,849
Difference	\$26,538

March Actual Income	\$47,311
March Actual Expenses	\$51,951
Difference	\$4,640

YTD Actual Income	\$133,848
YTD Budgeted Income	\$221,547
Difference	\$87,699

YTD Actual Income	\$133,848
YTD Actual Expense	\$168,576
Difference	\$34,728

Memorials & Gifts

In memory of Jon Mielke by Duane & Darlene Bentz

Gift to Trust Fund by Georgia Kingsbury

Gift to Trust Fund by Norlyn & Patty Swenson

So, as we continue to move forward together in this community of faith we call our "Charity Family," in the distance I can almost hear Mighty Ducks coach Gordon Bombay yelling from the bench, "Run the Flying V!!!"

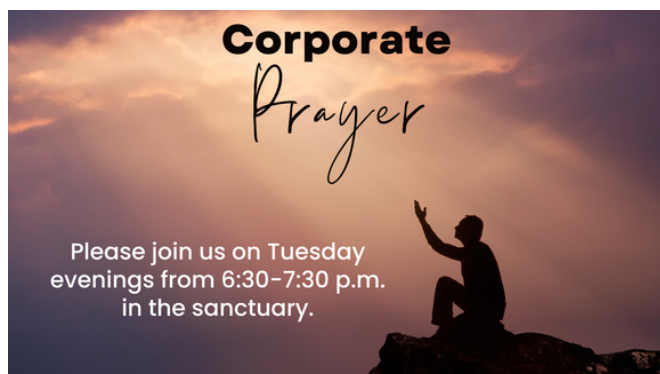
Vision Council Update

Greetings from the Vision Council.

Hard to believe all of the snow is almost gone and May is upon us. My attention has gone from clearing the driveway to raking the yard and planting the garden. Every season ends with the beginning of another one bringing a new set of issues and challenges to focus on. It can be really challenging when we're engaged in spring activities and winter is not quite done with us yet. I feel like that is where our Church is at also. We are becoming engaged in our next season's challenges while our last season is still not fully behind us. Charity Lutheran is in a transition period right now. Our new challenges involve budget, unfilled positions, call process, and the organizational structure that best fulfills God's will for Charity Lutheran Church. As I ponder and pray over these challenges, I also see the opportunities and blessings they represent. Our circumstances can grow our faith and relationship with our Father as we move into this new season prayerfully addressing these new challenges or we can be overwhelmed with resentment, frustration, and anger that was part of the past season. There is always a period of overlap transitioning from one season to the next. I have experienced the joy of growth in faith but also the moments of anger at the people or events that created our new challenges. We are all in a different place with our transition from one season to the next and each of us will have to find our way. I would share that my transition journey was made mostly at our corporate prayer sessions every Tuesday. That time spent in prayer and fellowship with other Charity disciples has moved my heart. The forgiveness I needed and received from our Father also moved me to forgive others. I certainly do keep the lessons learned but give all the negative emotions up. I would encourage all of you to join us for corporate prayer every Tuesday at 6:30pm. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." Philippians 4 verse 6.

God Bless
Mike Fluharty
Vision Council President

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



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.*"

1st Week - Healing Service
2nd Week - Bulletin Congregational Prayer
3rd Week - Vision Council Meeting Agenda
4th Week - Senior Pastor Call Process
5th Week - World Peace

From the Pastor

(continued from page 1)

This timeline of history is important because it overlapped the growth of certain denominations in the United States: notably Baptists and the Assemblies of God. Leaders in both groups shrewdly rode the cultural wave of the Temperance Movement and effectively co-branded their religious preaching with the not-particularly-Bible demonization of alcohol.

Hence, my shock on my first mission trip to England decades ago when a Baptist host pastor offered me a beer. I sputtered my incredulous: "but you're Baptist!" He laughed and explained that basic Baptist theology had nothing to do with bans on alcohol and that: "that was an American thing." Indeed, he was correct.

So if you travel in Africa or behind the old Iron Curtain and you encounter a Baptist pastor, they may or may not share a frosty mug with you! Whether they do depends upon whether they were trained by Baptist missionaries from USA or Baptist missionaries from UK.

So, if you encounter your Baptist or AG neighbor at a local liquor store, do the kind thing and don't harass them! People today choose not to drink for all sorts of good reasons: the carbs, the calories, the interaction with prescription medications, addiction, or just taste preference. All of those are good and proper. Just don't let anybody try to hornswoggle you with some bogus argument about it being Biblical. When we twist the Bible into a prideful PR tool to vainly decorate our mere preferences, then we disrespect the great gift that God has given us in His Word.

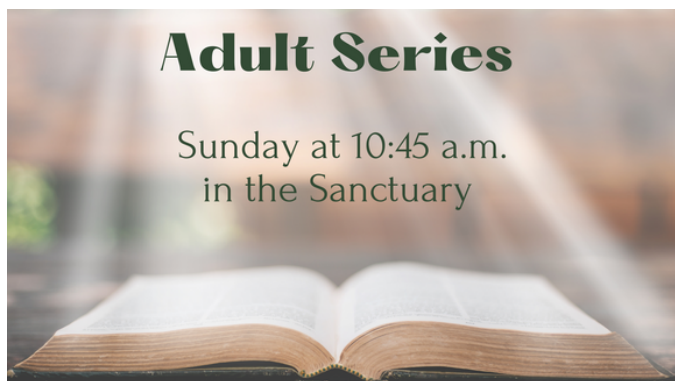
Peace be with you,
Pastor Miller

Pinochle Group

The Pinochle Group will meet Thursday, May 19 at 6:00 p.m. Reserve a spot by texting John Seedorf at 701-426-9768.

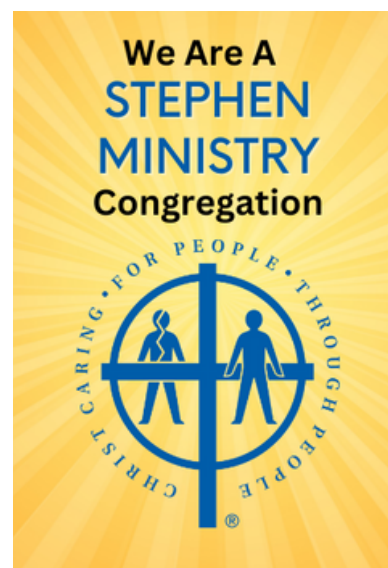


No Amazing Grays or Quilting Group in May



stephen at Charity Lutheran MINISTRY.

The snow is finally melting, and the days are getting longer. The sun shines later in the evening. God has good things in store that will renew our rejoicing. As we kindle this hope, we remember that life will have troubles and sorrows. There will be crises and personal tragedies. We will walk through more dark valleys on this side of heaven, but God will walk with us in those challenging moments. His promises do not change with the seasons. His love lasts through the night, and rejoicing will return in the morning. Charity Lutheran Stephen Ministers (SM) will walk beside you who are hurting and need someone to listen and pray. If you are having a rough time and need someone to **listen** and **pray**, please contact the church office at 258-1228. The relationship is **confidential** and **lasts as long or little as you need it to** (it does not have a time limit).



Charity Call Committee Report

The Call Committee will conduct an interview via Zoom with another candidate on May 1 and has responded to several other inquiries. We have made some updates to the listing on the LCMC website and information about our position was included in a letter to all LCMC pastors from Pastor Brad.

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 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

Confirmation



Graduate Sunday



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
Alvina Fueller
Donavon Hatzenbuhler
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
Norlyn & Patty Swenson
Jerry & Renee Walz
Kathy Wermager

Charity Lutheran Night at the Larks



Let's think ahead to summer! We have put together a 3-question survey to gauge your interest in a Charity Lutheran Night at the Larks baseball game. Please fill out the survey and let us know if we should plan this fun summer family friendly event. You can scan the QR code on the right or type in this web address:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6YTBYZQ>



"Prayer"

Curtis Dikoff - Revival Prayer Fellowship

Prayer should be the foundation of every church. Asking for God's help, blessing and power is essential for healthy churches. The work of the kingdom of God was never meant to be done in human strength, but in divine power through the Holy Spirit.

Thank you, dear Charity Church family for supporting me and Revival Prayer Fellowship. Since January 1st I have been traveling to courthouses across the state. I have been in 41 county courthouses, and prayed for many elected officials, sheriff's departments and others that work in county courthouses along with local churches and clergy. It has been an eye-opening experience; 3,000 miles traveled and still have more to go. I have met people who are courageous to share their faith and others who are fearful of pressure from government agencies. Every person that I asked about the condition of our country agreed with me when I said, our country is in trouble and we must pray. On my Facebook page, RPFGLOBAL, I have pictures and videos of many of the courthouses.

Praying for people in authority is such an important part of the Christian life. Pastors, churches, board members, elected officials in our state, elected officials in Washington DC, local school boards, law enforcement personnel, etc... all need God's grace and direction. Pray with me for these who have been seated in authority that they might be diligent about doing what is right and doing what is righteous.

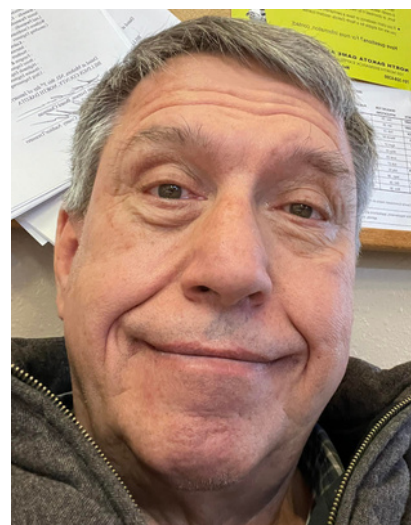
Pray for me as I finish visiting and praying in the remaining 12 courthouses.

National Day of Prayer is May 3rd and 4th. May 3rd is a first ever youth prayer movement gathering, meeting at Century High School auditorium with many students leading this large group of teens in a prayer service. May 4 at the Capitol at noon there will be hundreds that meet to pray. May 4 in the evening hundreds will gather in the Russell Reid Auditorium at the North Dakota Heritage Center. These meetings will make a difference in the lives of those who attend and in the lives of those who are prayed for.

This fall we are planning a prayer summit for pastors. Pray for pastors to attend and to be stirred in their souls. Details are in the making and our goal is 50+ pastors from all denominations.

Thank you again for your support and for your prayer. God bless you dear church family at Charity Lutheran Church.

Curtis Dikoff





BIRTHDAYS

May 2
Penny Kaldor

May 4
Carleen Carlson

May 5
Emma Faragher

May 6
Amara Baumeister

May 7
Alvina Fueller
Don Nordquist

May 8
Navy Allen

May 10
Justin Schwarz
Jan Selby

May 11
Al Hill
May 20
Kyler Bosch
Sophia Okerson

May 13
Jaxon Smith

May 14
Shelley Rowe

May 17
Brad Allen

May 18
Karen Swanson

May 22
Debi Selby

May 26
Annie Dukart
Judy Smith

May 27
Lisa Johnson

May 30
Frank Mendoza
John Wangen

May 31
Karlee Klindtworth



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



1 JOHN 4:16

- May 3** - Curt and LuElla Dahme
- May 10** - Ryan and Melissa Okerson
- May 11** - Ray and Sharon Schock
- May 15** - Jeremiah and Siri Penn
- May 16** - Clark and Lisa Johnson
- May 20** - Craig and Sandra Lohstreter
- May 22** - Noel and Marla Laxdal
- May 23** - Khalin and Tina Dendy
- May 23** - John and Chara Wangen
- May 24** - Richard and Andrea Collin
- May 26** - Doug and Jane Schulz
- May 27** - Arnold and Nancy Leno
- May 29** - Marvin and Julie Dahle



Youth News



Our last day of Sunday school for the school year will be May 14.



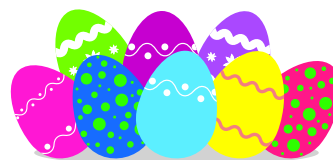
We are looking forward to Vacation Bible School beginning, Monday June 19. Stay tuned for more information.

Thank you

We are incredibly thankful to all of our amazing volunteers who have helped with our children's and youth programming this school year! Thank you for giving of your time to help all of our young people learn more about their faith and to grow closer to Jesus. We also thank everyone who served on the WOW meal team to offer delicious meals each week.

Easter Egg Fun

On Good Friday we welcomed families to Charity Lutheran for an Easter egg hunt and to dye Easter eggs! A fun time was had by all! Thank you families for coming.



Welcome Charity's Newest Members



Help us welcome our newest members to Charity Lutheran. These families completed the steps to become a part of our family. New member Sunday was held on April 2nd.



Gene Anderson



Dennis and Jan Greenstein



Kirk Mitzel



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CHARITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

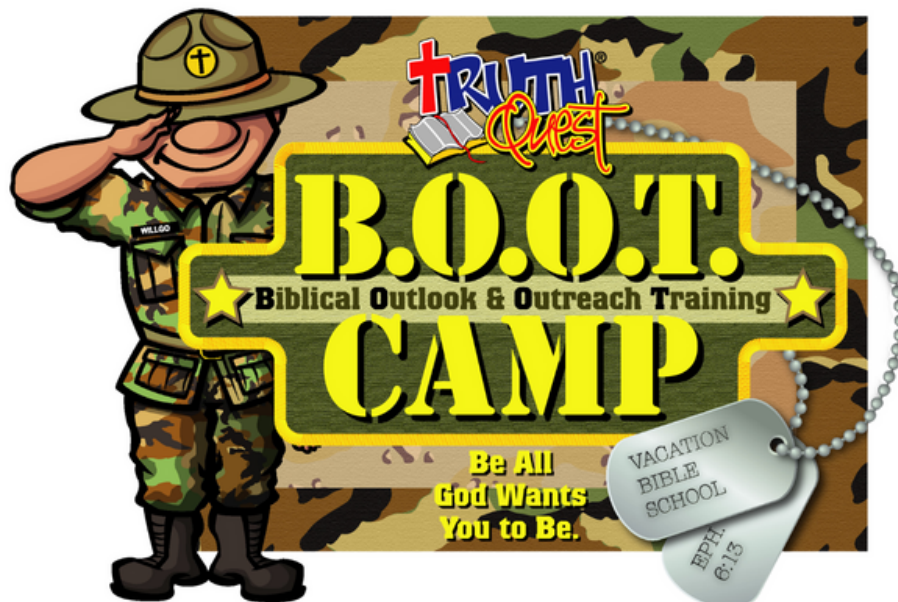
120 Aspen Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58503

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

Email: office@charitylutheran.org

www.charitylutheran.org

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



BEGINS JUNE 19