

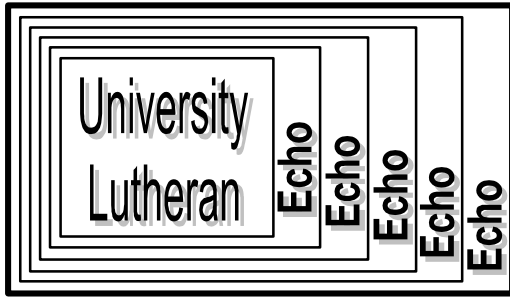
May 2026

The Echo

UNIVERSITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

2122 University Avenue

Grand Forks, North Dakota 58203



Did you know there were Northern and Southern Kingdoms of Israel? After Kings David and Solomon both ruled over a united Israel, the nation was divided into two kingdoms from the year 930 BCE to 722 BCE. The northern kingdom was known as Samaria, and the southern kingdom was known as Judah. Without going into the reasons for the split, the Kingdom of Samaria was never a stable country. In fact, it was marked by political instability, and this instability could be seen in the deaths of at least a half dozen kings who were assassinated. How can such behavior become so commonplace?

The recent third assassination attempt on President Trump has me worried this kind of behavior or even desire might also become regularized in our culture. This is not some kind of political support on my part for our current president, or any other president for that matter. Rather, it is my sincere worry that the two sides of our political parties are beginning to ponder if murder might be the way to win a political argument, that is, to win by eliminating the leaders of the other side. So, I ask, is it OK for us to identify our leaders as Hitler or Stalin, and then to call or even hope for their elimination?

My answer is unequivocally NO! In fact, I would disagree with any Christian who would determine it right to assassinate even someone like Adolf Hitler. Of course, I have no problem with people opposing Hitler. For example, I think every German Lutheran pastor should have at least quietly done so. However, to follow Christ is never to kill and always being willing to die for your neighbor. Jesus did not give his life on the cross so that we might use our freedom in Christ to kill anyone. Instead, I believe Jesus has called us to follow his example, and as best we can to lay down our lives for others.

So, even if you believe a president is "like" Hitler or Stalin, both murderers of millions, remember the words of Jesus from Luke 6: *"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven."* These may be some of the hardest words that Jesus left for us in this world, but if we wish to be like children of our Heavenly Father, we must live by them. If we don't, we certainly risk encouraging the same kind of thinking and behavior that became commonplace in Samaria.

Now, I am guessing that no followers of Jesus in Grand Forks, particularly people at University Lutheran Church, are plotting any kind of political assassinations. However, we can certainly start reversing some of the craziness in our country by challenging ourselves to think differently when we feel hatred toward some political leader or their followers. In fact, these followers probably already sit next to us at worship on Sunday or Wednesday. Do any of us really wish ill will on someone because of who they voted for in a presidential election? I hope such wrongful thinking has not come so near us.

Nor should we be tempted to think the other side should make nice first before we reciprocate. My way of thinking is that Christian people ought to verbalize how we disapprove of hateful discourse, by actually talking differently to and about each other. In other words, we lead by example. Maybe that seems naive, but I believe it is Christlike. It is Christlike to use our words to build each other up instead of tearing each other down. It is Christlike to love and serve one another, even people we consider our enemies, just like our Lord Jesus loved and served us when he died for us on the cross.

The Apostle Paul put it this way in Romans 5:10, that *"while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son"*. What if it is our willingness to hate other people that makes us enemies of God? Well, whatever it is, praise the Lord that while we were his enemies that he did not hate us and wish death on us. Instead, he died for us so that we might live. Maybe having received such kindness and love from the Lord, we now can take this same grace and give it not just to family and friends, but also to those who have hurt us, and to those for whom we feel hate and consider our enemies.

You are in my prayers. Please keep me in yours.

Peter Dorn





Worship Highlights

Mother's Day Worship - May 10

Please join us for worship on Mother's Day! The day will include some extras to make it a special day for our moms – including children and youth assisting with worship, a gift for moms as well as for all adult women in attendance, and finally brunch after the worship service. The menu for brunch is chicken salad croissant, fruit, and dessert. The cost is simply a free will offering with all proceeds going toward Community Violence Intervention Center (CVIC).

The Day of Pentecost - May 24

The Day of Pentecost is the day we celebrate both God's Holy Spirit, as well as the birthday of the Christian Church. It was 50 days after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ that the disciples received the gift and power of the Holy Spirit, and then through their witness the church began. Together we proclaim that we have this same Holy Spirit in us.

This is a red Sunday in the church year, so we will have red flowers, and we invite you to wear red as well. May 24 is also Memorial Day weekend. So, at our worship service we will honor our US Veterans who have made the ultimate sacrifice and died while serving our country, as well as remember all beloved family member and friends who we have laid to rest.



Wednesday Worship Hiatus - May 20 and 27

Worship on Wednesday will have a 2-week break as WWJ classes conclude on May 13. In other words, there is no Wednesday worship on either May 20 or 27. This will give our musicians and other worship leaders a helpful pause and rest from their faithful weekly service. Of course, summer Wednesday worship will begin then on June 3.

Graduation Recognition Sunday - May 31



This is our day to recognize our graduating High School Seniors. Senior class, you are invited to join us for worship before your graduation service. There will be a special gift for you, as well as a cake reception in your honor. It is also our intention to announce the recipients of our Paul and Bonnie Cox scholarships that day. Seniors, please give us a copy of your senior picture, and tell us what you plan to do in the fall of 2026 for our slide presentation.

Summer Wednesday "Picnic and Praise" Worship - June 3

Summer Wednesday Worship will begin June 3. We will picnic (indoors) with simple yet delicious meals at 5:00pm, and praise God through worship with Holy Communion at 6:00pm. Our sermon series on Wednesdays will focus our attention on the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ:

- Last Supper: Did We Just Receive An Inheritance?
- Betrayal and Arrest: When Have We Run Away From Jesus?
- Trial of Jesus: How Did the World Get This Way?
- Jesus before Pilate: Aren't People More Important Than Politics?
- Crucifixion and Death: How Deep is God's Love for Us?



Feed My Starving Children

University Lutheran Church joined the Greater Grand Forks Area in our 14th year of packing meals for Feed My Starving Children on April 24-26. We packed one session this year:

Saturday, 8:30am
353 boxes - 76,248 meals
208 children will eat one healthy meal for one year
ULC donated a total of \$6878.93 this year

Thank you to everyone who prayed about, contributed money toward, and packed for this event. Special thanks to Patty Olsen for being our congregation coordinator.



New Member Events May 13 and 17

We have tentatively scheduled two New Member events, Wednesday, May 13, 6pm, and Sunday, May 17, 10:00am. If you would like to become a member of our ULC family, or you know someone who would, please call the church office, or speak with Pastor Tom. There will also be a New Member Orientation on Tuesday, May 12, at 6:30pm.

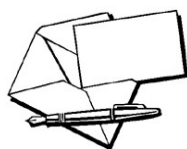


Mission of the Month

Our Noisy offerings for May will go toward the Community Violence Intervention Center (CVIC). CVIC has a long history in Grand Forks of responding to sexual assault, abuse, and violence in the home, and the many other shapes violence takes in our community. All money collected through our noisy offering cans (coins, dollars and checks) will go toward CVIC.

Mission Endowment Meeting May 5

The next meeting of the ULC Mission Endowment is Tuesday, May 5, 5:30pm, in the fellowship hall. Our time for accepting grant requests has passed for this spring meeting, but please feel free to submit a request anyway for future grant consideration.



Visitation Team May 8

Please join us Friday, May 8, 1:00pm, in the narthex to write and send cards for homebound, nursing home and other people. This has been a great way for us to reach out to people in our congregation. We welcome anyone who would like to write cards.

Financial Update

At the end of March, our general fund shortfall is \$32,520. Our Catch-Up effort that we started at the end of March is ongoing. We are hoping things will look a little better at the end of April. Please remember we are financially ok. We do have a reserve fund, though this fund "must" be paid back. Our next special offering will be our annual Summer Stewardship mailing. This offering usually comes out in late May, and it often gives us an extra boost as we head into summer. Thank you for your generosity toward our shared ministry.



Lent and Easter Sunday Numbers

We had a great Lent together, both on Wednesdays and Sundays. While our attendance was down a little on Wednesdays due to some interesting weather, we did have an increase on our Sunday mornings. If you are curious, you can see a comparison of worship attendance between this year and last number. The first number is 2025 and the second is 2026:

Ash Wednesday	223	169	Sunday Lent 1	87	110
Wednesday 2	148	158	Sunday Lent 2	108	112
Wednesday 3	184	154	Sunday Lent 3	59	108
Wednesday 4	186	129	Sunday Lent 4	98	110
Wednesday 5	177	152	Sunday Lent 5	99	108
Wednesday 6	169	179	Palm Sunday	166	148
Maundy Thursday	115	114	Sunday 8am	144	136
Good Friday	110	99	Easter Sunday 10am	246	267



Wednesday Meals:

May 6 - Hot dogs

May 13 - Pizza

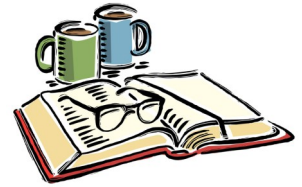
May 20 & 27 - No supper/worship



ULC Adult Education in May

Sunday Morning Adult Class

Our Sunday Morning Adult Class meets at 8:45am on Sunday mornings. During the month of May, we are reflecting on our prayer lives. Why do we pray? What exactly should we be praying for? Does God answer us? How do we listen to God? How do we know the voice we are listening to is God's voice? Please join us for a great time of teaching, learning, and fellowship.



Thursday Morning Bible Study - "Ephesians: Who Are We?"

Paul's letter to the Ephesians reminds us who and whose we are from Paul's perspective. We are followers of Jesus Christ who are blessed by Jesus, alive because of Jesus, loved by Jesus, one in Jesus, living like Jesus, and dressed like Jesus. Please join Pastor Tom for this new and fresh look at this letter of Paul, where Paul redefines our identity as Christian people. Our class meets at 9:30am in the Fellowship Hall.

- Week 3: We Are Beloved Gentiles (May 7)
- Week 4: We Are One in Christ (May 14)
- Week 5: We Are Living a Christian Life (May 21)
- Week 6: We Are Living in Christian Homes (May 28)
- Week 7: We Are Wearing the Armor of God (June 4)

WELCA Bible Study "Resurrection and life: Leading us into abundant life"

This third and final session revolves around the third dimension of I AM: "God's promise to lead God's people into abundant life." From before creation to the time of Moses to today, this is God's enduring promise to God's people. In declaring that he is "the resurrection and the life," and "the way, the truth, and the life," Jesus is stepping into this grand tradition, reminding God's people to cling to God's promise, God's very holy name: I AM. God has promised to be with God's people—to abide with us, to guide us, to protect us, and to lead us into abundant life, now and forever. Please join us at 10:00am, Friday, May 8.



Calling All Men "Three Men of Faith in John"

We are Calling All Men to our new monthly Bible study entitled, "Three Men of Faith in John". Our three men from the Gospel of John are Nicodemus, the Man Born Blind, and Lazarus. We have just learned of these men at Sunday worship during Lent, now let's talk further about them as a group of faithful men. Gentlemen, will you please join us on Saturday, May 16 at 8:30am in the Fellowship Hall. We will pray, eat pizza, and see how these three men and their faith journeys might help us as we journey in faith in this present day.

Synod Assembly - June 5-7

Our Eastern North Dakota Synod will have it's annual assembly on June 5-7 at the Holiday Inn in Fargo. So far your voting members are Paula Cox, Joanna Pearson, and Pastor Tom. **We are short one voting member and it needs to be a male.**

ULC men, is there anyone out there who will go with us!

The assembly theme this year is "Waters of Promise, Waters of Life". There will be worship, Bible study, displays, a report from the ELCA, conference elections, and more. But the big deal this year is that we are electing a bishop. Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth has completed her first 6-year term, and she may be elected for a second and final 6-year term. However, we have a process to follow which means other bishop candidates may be considered as well.

The assembly begins at 4:30pm, Friday, June 5, and is scheduled to conclude around 12:30pm, Sunday June 7. Please keep this assembly and the bishop election in your prayers.



First Communion Class

We had a 5-week class on Holy Communion for fifth and sixth graders. These who have completed the class have either had their First Communion or will in the near future:

Gigi Anderson
Kamryn Bailly
Hudson Frederikson

TJ Friezen
Bella Garcia
Karleigh Halvorson

Rayna Pedersen
Reagan Wangen
Ava Ziniel

Confirmation

Our confirmation classes for 2025-26 are nearly complete! Here are a few important things for you to remember:

1. Classes will be done on Wednesday, April 29.
 2. Our end of the year pizza party is Sunday, May 17, 4:00pm at Pizza Ranch. Youth only need to bring money for the arcade. Your meal is paid for by church.
 3. Please turn in your mentor folders when you and your mentor have completed this year's assignment. It is OK if you are still working on it.
 4. If you have worship notes to complete, why not catch up over the summer? If you are not sure how many they have left to do, please ask Pastor Tom.
- 9th graders, check with Pastor Tom to see if you have completed all your requirements!

Sundaes on Wednesday



Sundaes on Wednesday will meet May 6 and 13 from 8:00pm-9:30pm in May. We will take 2 weeks off (May 20 and 27) while there is no Wednesday worship.

Then in June, we will meet every week after Picnic and Praise worship (June 3, 10, 17, 24) from 7:30-9:30. This will be our usual schedule:

7:30pm Ice cream sundaes
8:30pm A special event or service project
9:00pm Flashlight devotions

WELCA May News

Hello everyone,
Well our season of festivals has begun! Our Spring Salad Luncheon was a wonderful way to start. Thank you to Sandy Norby for bringing spring inside with her beautiful table, basket, and window decor. It was delightful! Thank you to all for your time and talents, from delicious desserts to scrumptious salads. It was a lunch all enjoyed. Thanks to the busy bakers, the salad makers, our friendly plant grower, crafters, quilters and basket makers! Thank you to the youth group for your help with the tables and our guests. Your smiles were very welcoming to all. And of course, thanks to our dish room trio, you always do a wonderful job. It takes all of you from set-up to clean-up to make this event special, so thank you

Our proceeds from the day are as follows:

Quilts - \$500
Luncheon - \$1710
Cards/Napkins - \$412.50
Bake Sale - \$942.25
Raffle - \$1435
Donations - \$710
Total - \$5709.75

Our next event will be the Rhubarb Festival on June 13th. A recipe book is being put together by Genny Olson, so if you have a favorite rhubarb recipe please drop it off in the yellow folder by the office door. There is a yellow file folder in the mail slots by the office door. This event is always a great time for our WELCA group to host.

Lara Dando and Debbie Watts, Co-presidents

WOMEN OF THE ELCA Purpose Statement



As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit,

We commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the Church, the society, and the world.

**University Lutheran Church
Council Meeting
April 21, 2026**



Members Present: Jessi Saylor, LeAnn Barendt, Matt Solberg, John Neal, Kevin Meyer, Evonne Lopez, Jamie Boe, Joanna Pearson, Chris Rydland, Pastor Tom Colenso

Devotions: Read from John, Chapter 10

Minutes from March 17, 2026: Approved

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer's report for March will be approved in May.

Pastor's Report: Custodial contract, with Don and Heather Miller, has been signed. Motion approved to set aside \$2,000 from the Evenson Memorial Fund to send youth to Bible camp this summer. Would love to send 8+ kids to camp!

Old Business:

- Kitchen Remodel – next meeting will be Tuesday, April 28, at 5:00 pm
- Catch-up fund – doing well. May do a follow-up in May.
- 75th Anniversary Time Capsule – church council members will be contributing! If anyone would like to contribute, please let Pastor Tom or a council member know! Rally Sunday, in September, is the plan to get it put in place.
- Frost Fire theater – will be looking into a bus to take a group to the musical, "Come from Away", this summer

New Business

- Bishop Forums prior to election in June
- Thursday, April 23, 7:00 pm via Zoom (Eastern ND Synod website will have link)
- Thursday, April 30, 7:00 pm in person – Valley City
- Eastern ND Synod Assembly voting members
- Election weekend is June 5-7
- Need 1 male, 1 female to attend
- Piano in narthex
- Motion approved to re-home this piano. New home to be determined.
- Railing for alter platform
- The council will research options for a railing to be installed on the west side of the chancel, to improve the safety of individuals stepping up or down

Ministry Reports:

Education: Vacation Bible School will be held August 3-6th

Property: New smoke alarms are up. Parking lot sweeping - will plan on getting it done early May. Discussed possibility of adding an additional handicap spot to the parking lot.

Worship: Nothing to report

Youth: 15 individuals attending the bowling event. Sundaes on Wednesday are going well!

Mission Endowment: Will meet May 5

WELCA: Salad Luncheon was a success!

ULC Men's Group: Nothing to report

Next meeting will be Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 6:30pm.



May 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 10:00 Prayer Group	2
3 8:45 Adult Class 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 WORSHIP 11:00 Fellowship 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	4 5:30 WELCA Board Meeting 6:30 Game Fellowship 7:00 AI-Anon 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	5 10:00 Staff Meeting 10:00 Round Table 5:30 Mission Endowment 5:30 Quilters	6 10:00 TOPS 5:00 Supper - Hot dogs 6:00 WORSHIP/WWJ 8:00 Sundaes on Wednesday 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	7 9:30 Inez Drake Burial 11:00 Bible Study 1:00 Quilting 5:30 Girl Scouts	8 10:00 WELCA Bible Study 1:00 Visitation Team	9
10 <i>Mother's Day</i> 8:45 Adult Class 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 WORSHIP 11:00 Fellowship/Brunch 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	11 6:30 Game Fellowship 7:00 AI-Anon 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	12 10:00 Staff Meeting 5:30 Quilters 6:30 New Member Orientation	13 <i>New Member Wed.</i> 10:00 TOPS 5:00 Supper - Pizza 6:00 WORSHIP & WWJ 8:00 Sundaes on Wednesday 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	14 9:30 Bible Study 1:00 Quilting	15 5:00 - 7:30pm Graduation Party for Anna Pulley-Nicholls	16 8:30am Calling All Men
17 <i>New Member Sun.</i> 8:45 Adult Class 10:00 WORSHIP 11:00 Fellowship 4:00 Confirmation Pizza Party at Pizza Ranch 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	18 6:30 Game Fellowship 7:00 AI-Anon 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	19 10:00 Staff Meeting 5:30 Quilters 5:30 Worship Ministry 6:30 Church Council	20 10:00 TOPS 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous No Supper or Worship	21 9:30 Bible Study 1:00 Quilting 5:30 Girl Scouts 7:00 Franklin Club	22	23
24 10:00 WORSHIP 11:00 Fellowship 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	25 <i>Memorial Day</i> 6:30 Game Fellowship 7:00 AI-Anon 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	26 10:00 Staff Meeting 5:30 Quilters	27 10:00 TOPS 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous No Supper or Worship	28 9:30 Bible Study 1:00 Quilting 1:30 Edgewood Worship	29	30 10:00 Gowan and Kartes Baptisms 1:00 Kari Machart Student Piano Recitals
31 <i>Graduation Sunday</i> 10:00 WORSHIP 11:00 Fellowship/Reception 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous						

**UNIVERSITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
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WORSHIP & EVENT SCHEDULE

SUNDAY WORSHIP & EDUCATION

8:45am Adult Class
9:00am Church School, Confirmation
10:00am WORSHIP
11:00am Fellowship

WEDNESDAY WITH JESUS

5:00pm Supper
6:00pm WORSHIP & WWJ (May 6 and 13)
7:00pm Chapel Choir
8:00pm Sundaes on Wednesday

Mother's Day Worship and Brunch

Sunday, May 10 10:00am

**Graduation Sunday
Recognition and Reception**

Sunday, May 31 10:00am

Sundaes on Wednesdays

May 6 and 13 8:00pm

Confirmation

End of Year Pizza Party

Sunday, May 17
4:00pm at Pizza Ranch

WELCA Bible Study

Friday, May 8 10:00am

Thursday Morning Bible Study

May 7, 14, 21, and 28 9:30am

Calling All Men

Saturday, May 16 8:30am

ULC STAFF

Ministers: Every Member of the Congregation
Missionaries: Willie and Anne Langdji
Pastor: Thomas W. Colenso
Education Coordinator: Jen Cummings
Youth Minister: Phoebe Burke

Administrative Assistant: Seanne Voracek
Choir Director: Mary Spichal
Organists: Lauri Shimpa
Jane Traub

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