

GraceNotes

A PUBLICATION OF GRACE FREE LUTHERAN CHURCH, VALLEY CITY, ND

Matthew 9:11-12 “And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” But when he heard it, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.”

How do you know when you are sick? There are many sicknesses that we run into that cause fevers, coughing, runny noses, fatigue, and a whole host of other difficulties. We sometimes need more help in determining what our sickness is so we find a doctor who makes a diagnosis using their knowledge and various tests that they can run.

Now when we are feeling well, no weariness or fever, having no trouble going about our normal activities, we might think that we do not have any need of a doctor. However, sometimes the most difficult and dangerous physical troubles are not easily seen, and a terminal illness can sneak up on us very quickly.

Spiritually, the Pharisees thought that they were well and needed no spiritual doctor. They saw themselves as righteous and pure and certainly would never be so corrupt and deceptive as any tax collector and could never be as immoral as some of the sinners they could point out to you. But in their pride, they missed the reality that before God any sin brings about condemnation. Our lives are not lived in comparison to the relative sin of others but are put before the mirror of God’s Law. That mirror shows us our need for forgiveness and the mercy of Jesus Christ. The Pharisees were sick and they did not recognize it.

May God protect us from not recognizing our spiritual need. Certainly, some are ignorant of their need, having never been informed of their sin and the holiness of God. Others have heard about their sin and have minimized it or rationalized it in their minds. This is why the Law needs to be preached. It needs to be preached to those who have never heard it as well as to those who have heard it in the past. There is a significant reality that the Word of God makes clear, we are all spiritually sick and need a physician.

In today’s world, with numerous areas of specialization, we sometimes wonder what kind of doctor we might need to see. You might have a stomach pain and wonder if you need to see a general practitioner or a gastrointestinal doctor. Perhaps you have a heart that is racing, do you need a cardiologist or an electrophysiologist? The specializations seem endless.

In our spiritual sickness, I have wonderful news, the physician you need to see is Jesus Christ. And unlike some medical practices, He is always open to new patients. He is never going to rush on to the next patient after you without really paying attention to your concerns. He is not going to question whether your insurance will cover the costs of the visit.

The Word of God shows us our need – our sickness – and provides to us the Gospel which is the work of Christ to bring

us to wholeness. I am so thankful for doctors who have helped me through my life. I have had a couple of eye troubles in the past that would have most likely left me blind if it were not for two eye surgeries. You too can likely think of a time or two when a doctor greatly helped you.

The doctors and surgeons that we turn to can often help repair or restore those things that have caused us trouble. Spiritually, what Christ does for us has similarities. Jesus repairs our broken relationship with God, He restores us to life, and He provides eternal life to all who believe.

Doctors, at least the ones I am aware of, do not go around looking for patients. They are not knocking on doors, making calls, or starting conversations with people to help them with troubles that they might have. But Christ in his great love and mercy came down from heaven for this very purpose. He left the glory of heaven so that He might confront mankind with their sin and their need for a physician.

This is also part of the comfort of the Gospel: Christ does not merely diagnose our condition and leave us frightened by the seriousness of it. He comes with the very cure that we could never provide for ourselves. He does not tell us to heal our own hearts, cleanse our own consciences, or somehow earn our way back into the favor of God. Instead, He takes our sin upon Himself, bears its guilt at the cross, and rises again in victory so that forgiveness and life may be given freely to sinners. The Great Physician does not turn away those who come in weakness, shame, or fear. He welcomes the burdened, speaks peace to the troubled conscience, and assures us that in Him there is mercy enough for every wound sin has caused.

He healed the deaf, the blind, and the lame so that we might understand His power over sickness and even death. He preached about repentance and faith in Him so that we might understand the healing He had brought for us. May the Lord in His mercy show us our sickness and make clear to us that Jesus is the Great Physician.

*By Pastor
Dennis Norby*



DATES to remember

- **VBS**
May 31-June 4, 2026
- **WMF Quarterly Meeting**
June 8, 2026
- **AFLC Annual Conference**
June 10-13, 2026
- **Quarterly Meeting**
July 12, 2026
- **Family Camp**
July 14-19, 2026

Grace Council Updates

Monthly Meetings:

Thursday, June 4, 2026

Deacons Meet 6:30pm
Boards Meet 7:00pm
Council Meets 8:00pm

Thursday, July 9, 2026

Deacons Meet 6:30pm
Boards Meet 7:00pm
Council Meets 8:00pm

QUARTERLY MEETING

Quarterly Congregational Meeting: Sunday, July 12, 2026

Potluck following the service
Congregational Meeting will
begin at approximately 12:30pm

Financial Summary

As of 5/22/26

General Fund=\$48,366.83

Building Imp. Fund=\$14,409.27

(Sign=\$897.78; Parking Lot=\$6,659.05;

Exterior Maintenance=\$6,852.44)

Scholarship Fund=\$9,337.61

Seminary Fund=\$0.00

General Fund CD (1)=\$45,201.48

General Fund CD (2)=\$33,533.56

General Fund CD (3)=\$61,407.12

Parking Lot Fund CD (1)=\$40,332.26

Parking Lot Fund CD (2)=\$7,164.16



AFLC Annual Conference
June 10-13, 2026, Moorhead, MN

St. Paul's Free Lutheran Church in Fargo will host the 2026 AFLC Annual Conference at Concordia College in Moorhead. Please consider attending as this is a great opportunity to experience the annual conference without having to travel far. Pre-registration deadline is May 31. Register online at www.aflc.org/conferences/

JUNE/JULY 2026

Church Directory

UPDATE



The target date for printing an updated photo directory is **July 15**. The directory will be printed using information currently on file in the online directory. Please note, you do not need to be a member to be listed in the directory.

Please stop by the table in the fellowship hall to verify your information and for instructions on how to log into the online directory and submit a photo. **If you wish to have a photo included in the directory, you must either submit one online or email a digital copy of a photo to Sarah Meester at gracefree@msn.com**

If you have any questions, please talk to Sarah in the church office.

"It is important for each of us that we not forget how our country came to be an independent nation. It's even more important that we individually remember how dependent we are upon God's provision, protection, and blessing for those liberties we daily enjoy and use. Take the time to turn to the Lord with a thankful heart. Pray also for the willingness to share in the responsibilities and duties that belong to you as a citizen of the United States of America."

Daily Devotions, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Sister Lakes, Michigan – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

Zion Free Lutheran Events

Sundays

9:00am Divine Worship

10:00am Fellowship

Holy Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays

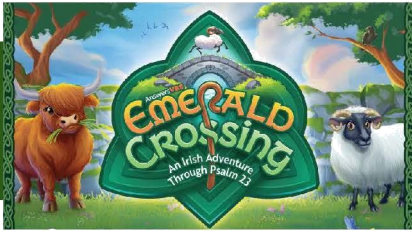
WMF

7:00pm Monday, June 15

Monday, July 20



Get your passport ready and join us on a journey through Ireland, exploring the powerful words of Psalm 23.



In a world filled with worry and confusion, kids need to know there is a God who cares for them. They'll discover the life of the shepherd-king David and will learn how to cross from worry to peace, from fear to faith, and from uncertainty to a firm foundation in God's Word through a relationship with the Good Shepherd.

May 31st - June 4th

5:30 - 8:30 pm

Meals served

*Get signed-up for your **Free T-Shirt***

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. Psalm 23:1

Please sign-up if you are interested in helping!
Contact Erin Dahl 388-0631



- 2 Claudia Gilbertson
- 3 Titus Mehlhoff (Caleb)
- 4 Abby Shanenko (Eric)
- 6 Colleen McGinnity
Rebecca Drummond
- 7 Tricia Pfennig (Greg)
- 10 Kinsley Hoots (Nathan)
- 12 Josh Schroeder
- 13 Duane Wetch
- 14 Danny Schroeder
- 15 Wanda Niess
Elaine Almberg
Trevan Pfennig
- 16 Jessa Halberg
- 19 Ashten Hannig (Darin)
- 28 Amelia Johnson

Missionaries

- 1 Steve Kvale

Ladies of Grace ~

Join us for fellowship and summer treats at our WMF Quarterly Meeting ~ Monday, June 8 at 7pm
Hosted by Group 2

Madi Meester, wife of Pastor Mikey Meester, will reflect on her experiences as a seminary wife and first year serving in a congregation.



Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:58

JUNE EVENTS

Sundays

- 9am Lake Chapel
- 10:30am Divine Worship

Wednesdays

- 7pm Youth Group
- Adult Bible Study

Men's Prayer

- 7am Saturdays

VBS

- 5:30-8:30pm, May 31-June 4

WMF Quarterly Meeting

- 7pm Monday, June 8

Quilting

- 1pm Thursday, June 11

WMF Bible Study

- 7pm Monday, June 15

Faith Circle

- 9:30am Tuesday, June 23

LAKE CHAPEL SERVICES

Sundays at 9:00am ~ May 24 through September 6

The Chapel is located 1/2 mile south of Bay Shore Resort overlooking Lake Ashtabula.

The interdenominational services are conducted by laymen. Everyone is welcome ~ come as you are!



May 24	Delmere McLean
May 31	Soren Grotberg
June 7	Larry Herzog
June 14	Duane Burchill
June 21	Tim Huber
June 28	Randy Schlecht
July 5	Brian Wright
July 12	Genesis Program
July 19	Terry & Linda Schwartz
July 26	Ben Stiegelmeier
August 2	Mike Woodley
August 9	Greg Hager
August 16	Troy Gunderson
August 23	Dwight Grotberg
August 30	
September 6	Singspiration

- 5 Jenna Hannig
- 6 Ann Rolf
- 7 Tom Meester
- 13 Andy Sveet
- 16 Violet Richman (George)
- 21 Erin Roswick
- 22 Ryan Graalum
- 23 Jan Kjelland
- 25 Nancy Sorensen
- 26 Mason Dahl (Mardy)
Iris Richman (George)
- 27 Nathan Hoots
- 28 Jeff Perleberg
- 29 Aliyah Hannig (Darin)

Missionaries

- 3 John Lee Jr (John)
- 9 Zoey Abel (Matthew)
- 20 Jonni Sliver
- 23 John Lee

Summer CAMP

Family Camp at Wilderness Bible Camp
Lake Park, MN July 14-19

Teen Camp at FaHoCha
July 26-31

Pre-Teen Camp at FaHoCha
August 2-6

*Registration forms will be available soon!

JULY EVENTS

Sundays

- 9am Lake Chapel
- 10:30am Divine Worship

Wednesdays

- 7pm Youth Group
- Adult Bible Study

Men's Prayer

- 7am Saturdays

Quilting

- 1pm Thursday, July 9

Potluck & Quarterly Meeting

- 11:30am Sunday, July 12

Wilderness Family Camp

- July 12-19

WMF Bible Study

- 7pm Monday, July 20

FaHoCha Teen Camp

- July 26-31

Faith Circle

- 9:30am Tuesday, July 28



Verse

of the Month

July~

Isaiah 44:8 - Fear not, nor be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? And you are my witnesses! Is there a God besides me? There is no Rock; I know not any.

June~

Psalm 23:1-3- ¹The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. ²He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. ³He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

May~

1 Peter 5:6-7- ⁶Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, ⁷casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

April~

1 Peter 1:3- Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead

March~

John 10:14-15- ¹I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ²just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

February~

Deuteronomy 7:6- For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

AFLC Ministry Focus for June



Mission

The Mission of AFLC Evangelism and Discipleship is to **encourage, equip, and assist** the congregations and pastors of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations in making and equipping disciples who make and equip disciples.

Rekindling a Passion for Evangelism

Each year, AFLC Evangelism & Discipleship hosts an event called Rekindle the Fire, an opportunity for laypeople and pastors to gather and receive encouragement and training in congregational and community ministry. This event will be held Tuesday, June 9 in Fargo.

LIVING AS A DISCIPLE podcast

Our call as Christians is to be disciples – but what is a "disciple"? This podcast examines what it means to be a disciple of Jesus and how that impacts the way we live our lives.

For more information or to donate to AFLC Evangelism & Discipleship visit

www.aflc.org/evangelism/

AFLC Ministry Focus for July



The Goal of our ministry is to go into all the world, proclaim salvation in Jesus Christ, plant free and living Lutheran congregations, and equip believers in the true and inerrant Word of God.

AFLC Missionaries Located Around the World

Mexico:

- Todd & Barb Schierkolk

Paraguay:

- Matthew & Ednay Abel
- Zachariah & Carey Ritland

Brazil:

- Jonni Sliver
- Jonathan & Tamba Abel
- John & Hannah Lee
- Paul & Becky Abel

Uganda:

- Michael Rokenbrodt

Missionaries on loan:

- Andrew & Alexis Olson
- Steve & Glenda Kvale

The AFLC also has a presence in India, Chile & Switzerland.

For more information or to donate to AFLC World Missions visit www.aflcworldmissions.org



J·U·N·E

2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Adult Bible Study 7pm	4 Deacons Meet 6:30pm Boards Meet 7pm Council Meets 8pm	5	6 Men's Prayer 7am
VBS May 31 - June 4, 5:30 - 8:30pm						
7 Lake Chapel– Larry Herzog 9am Divine Worship with Holy Communion 10:30am	8 WMF Quarterly Meeting 7pm	9	10 Youth Group 7pm Adult Bible Study 7pm	11 Quilting 1pm	12	13 Men's Prayer 7am
AFLC Annual Conference June 10-13						
14 Lake Chapel– Duane Burchill 9am Divine Worship 10:30am  <i>Flag Day</i>	15 WMF Bible Study 7pm	16	17 Youth Group 7pm Adult Bible Study 7pm	18	19	20 Men's Prayer 7am
21  Lake Chapel– Tim Huber 9am Divine Worship 10:30am  <i>HELLO Summer</i>	22	23 Faith Circle 9:30am	24 Youth Group 7pm Adult Bible Study 7pm	25	26	27 Men's Prayer 7am
28 Lake Chapel– Randy Schlecht 9am Divine Worship 10:30am	29	30				



JULY

2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Youth Group 7pm Adult Bible Study 7pm	2	3	4 Men's Prayer 7am  INDEPENDENCE Day 1776 ~ 2026
5 Lake Chapel– Brian Wright 9am Divine Worship with Holy Communion 10:30am	6	7	8 Youth Group 7pm Adult Bible Study 7pm	9 Quilting 1pm Deacons Meet 6:30pm Boards Meet 7pm Council Meets 8pm	10	11 Men's Prayer 7am
12 Lake Chapel– Genesis Program 9am Divine Worship 10:30am Potluck 11:30am Quarterly Meeting 12:30pm	13	14	15 Youth Group 7pm Adult Bible Study 7pm	16	17	18 Men's Prayer 7am
		Wilderness Family Camp July 14 - 19				
19 Lake Chapel– Terry & Linda Schwartz 9am Divine Worship 10:30am	20 WMF Bible Study 7pm	21	22 Youth Group 7pm Adult Bible Study 7pm	23	24	25 Men's Prayer 7am
26 Lake Chapel– Ben Stiegelmeier 9am Divine Worship 10:30am	27 Fa Ho Cha	28 Faith Circle 9:30am Teen Camp July	29 Youth Group 7pm Adult Bible Study 7pm	30 26 - 31	31	

GRACE FREE LUTHERAN CHURCH

2351 West Main St
Valley City, ND 58072



Sundays at Grace

Sunday School 9:00 AM (September-May)
Divine Worship 10:30 AM

Sundays at Zion

Divine Worship 9:00 AM
Fellowship 10:00 AM

Sundays: Lift High the Cross KOVC (1490) 10 AM KSJB(600) 8 AM

Watch Live! Sunday Mornings at 10:30 AM at www.gracefree.com/watch-online

Church office hours are 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Mon-Fri

Phone: (701) 845-2753

E-mail: gracefree@msn.com

Website: www.gracefree.com

Senior Pastor Dennis Norby thenorbys@msn.com

Administrative Assistant~ Sarah Meester gracefree@msn.com

Children's Ministry Leader~ Erin Dahl