

THE GOOD NEWS

THE NORTHWOOD-WASHINGTON LUTHERAN PARISH
June 2025

Washington Church Worship Ministers:

Ushers: Annette Aird
Desiree McMillan

NELC Worship Ministers:

Ushers: Wade Bilden
John Hutchison



We are still looking for helpers to help serve the **summer school meals**. It only takes 1 1/2 hours each day. Contact Deb at the church office at 701-587-5381, if you are interested in helping.

Congratulations to Pastor Steve. He graduates from the seminary on Sunday, June 1.

22 quilts, made by the NELC quilters, were delivered to the Lutheran World Relief truck in Grand Forks May 23.



Splash into Faith with Park River Bible Camp, Thursday, June 26, 9 am—4 pm at Riverside Park in Grand Forks. Kindergarten through 5th grade youth welcome \$5/youth. Camp worship, games, crafts, learning, lunch & ice cream truck, swimming at Riverside pool! This event is hosted in collaboration with Grand Forks area ELCA Churches. We will need volunteers 7th grade and up to help, especially EMT's and medical professionals. We are also looking for monetary donations to sponsor the \$5 charge for kids or donations to help pay for food and activities.

Noisy offering on June 1 will go to the Great Plains Food Bank in Fargo.



Happy Father's Day!!
June 15.



NELC is having a **rummage sale**, 9 am—2 pm, Saturday, June 14. If you are doing some organizing or spring cleaning and finding treasures you no longer need, they can be donated to NELC for the rummage sale. Your gently used items, they can be put in room #4 in the basement of NELC (no electronics or large furniture, please). Help is needed to set-up for the rummage starting at 1 pm on Friday, June 13 and packing up items on Monday, June 16 at 1 pm.

NELC Council Meeting, following worship June 15.

It's time to think about bible camp. **Red Willow** has camps for all ages from K through grade 12. Go to redwillowbiblecamp.org to get the times and ages. NELC will reimburse \$100 per camper.

Vacation Bible School will be Monday through Thursday, July 14-17 at NELC. We looking adult helpers for that week. Call the church office at 701-587-5381, if you would like to volunteer.



*Be a Faithful
Steward*

From Pastor Steve

I recently attended the First Call Retreat in Crookston with the other new leaders in the Eastern ND Synod and the Northwest MN Synod along with our Synod staff and our Bishops. This was a nice way to get to know some of my colleagues who are in their first three years of ministry. We also went over some conflict resolution methods and learned how to navigate parish ministry when we are all new at it. During this retreat I had some time to speak with Bishop Tessa about the changing landscape of the Grand Forks conference of churches, and I had lunch with Bishop Bill Tesch from NW MN Synod about the changing numbers of seminary graduates and what that means for the church in a larger context.

The Grand Fork Conference is going through some changes. When I began in Northwood on internship, Calvary Lutheran had just lost Pastor Kirk. Pastor Ivy had moved to Texas and then recently Pastor Aaron took over at Christus Rex campus ministry at UND. Calvary has been going for a while with Pastor Jared from Fargo who is their interim until they can call a new lead pastor. That has not happened yet. Thompson is now looking for a Pastor as Kristen has taken a call in Decorah Iowa. United Lutheran is also beginning the search as well. Pastor Peter and Karla are moving to St. Paul to be closer to family as they approach retirement age. Those are some big changes in our immediate area, and I didn't even mention all the smaller rural churches who have been looking for a Pastor for some time and are unlikely to find anyone.

Bishop Bill is on the board of Luther Seminary, and he thought we have about 35 graduates this spring (me included). Some of my graduating classmates are not going into Parish Ministry and so the pool of available new Pastors looking for calls is pretty small. This is the same for all the other ELCA seminaries. We aren't graduating enough people to fill synods.

Why am I sharing this news with you? Certainly not to make you scared, or worried that our churches may all go away someday. I share it because the advice of our Bishops, who I trust and who are paying close attention to the way things are changing, is that we need to identify leaders within our congregations. We have people in our churches with a talent for ministry and one of the things that holds them back more than anything is that their fellow members never tell them that they do. We have people in our churches who are good at public speaking, and will lead hymns, and will read scripture or work with our kids. I know we do, because it happens when I am away and we don't have a supply minister. We need to lift up these gifts. We need to constantly listen to the Holy Spirit because people are being nudged in the direction of more involved ministry in the church.

The days of relying on the Pastor to do everything are gone, and churches can make a choice. They can either get lost in despair that they will never find their own Pastor again, or they can take responsibility for the work that God is calling them to do in the world and find creative ways to be the answer to their perceived problem.

I know summer is a time when people become more disconnected from the church, but I want all of you to take some intentional time to ask yourselves where in the church you might be able to lend your talents.

One of the areas we are particularly in need of is musicians. Do you know how to play piano, guitar or any instrument? Have you always wanted to sing, but never felt like you could do it in front of the congregation? Come talk to me or to any of the members of our choir. We would love you to share your gifts.

Do you like working with kids? We have two amazing opportunities this summer. June 26th is our Splash into Faith event at Riverside Park in Grand Forks. I have been part of a planning team to host a day camp for kids in grades K-5. Park River Bible camp's staff will be on hand to run a family worship, games, and activities all day ending in swim time at the Riverside Pool. Other church leaders and I will be there, but we need other willing adults to volunteer to make this day successful. This is also a great opportunity for our older kids to get involved as leaders and helpers. If they are in grade 7 or above, we would love to have them.

Vacation Bible School will be July 14-17 and one change I am really hoping to make this year is more adults in the building. We need you as helpers and group leaders. This is not only to help our kids be safe while in our church, but also it is a way for our adults to connect with the young people. Intergenerational Ministry is key to the future. They learn from you, and they look up to you. Our adults need to model what faith and service looks like to our young people and VBS is the perfect place to do it.

We have so many other ways to connect with the church and the wider community this summer and beyond. If you have ideas or questions, I'd love to hear them.

The good news I leave you with is that the downward trend in churches is stabilizing according to recent studies, but it is stabilizing because congregations are taking greater ownership of the ministries of their church. There isn't one leader or pastor that is single handedly doing any of this. It takes all of us working together and trusting in the direction God is moving. Amen.

SPLASH INTO FAITH

WITH PARK RIVER BIBLE CAMP

Thursday, June 26th + 9:00am - 4:00pm

Riverside Park in Grand Forks

Kindergarten through 5th gr. youth welcome! \$5/youth



Camp Worship!



GAMES, CRAFTS, LEARNING



**LUNCH & THE ICE
CREAM TRUCK!**



**SWIMMING AT
RIVERSIDE POOL!**

REGISTER TODAY!



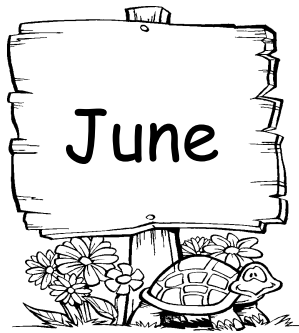
This event is hosted in collaboration
with Grand Forks Area ELCA churches



Northwood-Washington Lutheran Parish
P.O. Box 394
Northwood, ND 58267

Non-Profit Organization
US Postage Paid
Permit No. 3

Address Service Requested



STAFF OF NORTHWOOD-WASHINGTON LUTHERAN PARISH

Minister	Steve DeKrey	Custodians	Les Wheeler & Deseree
Parish Assistant	Deb Aaland		McMillan-Washington
	Office number 701-587-5381		Deb Aaland-NELC
Organists	Joan Huso-NELC	Church E-mail	nelc@polarcomm.com
	Diane Nelson-Washington		

Pastor's office hours: 8 am -2:30 pm, Monday & Tuesday; 8 am—5 pm Wednesday;
8 am—3 pm Thursday

Parish Assistant's office hours: 8:30 am to 3 pm Monday thru Friday

Sunday Worship services at Washington Church start at 9 am

Sunday Worship services at Northwood Evangelical Lutheran Church start at 11 am

The worship service is livestreamed on our website: www.northwoodwashingtonparish.org

NELC Council Members: Pete Antonson, Bob Bilden, Wade Bilden, Ed Bina, Nancy Hall, Karl Jodock, Nicole Korsmo, Angela Lyste, Tim Mutchler Jr., Amy Sheggerud

Washington Council Members: Annette Aird, Mary Gravidahl, Craig Hanson, Chris Moore, David Mullet, Cecil Tinderholt