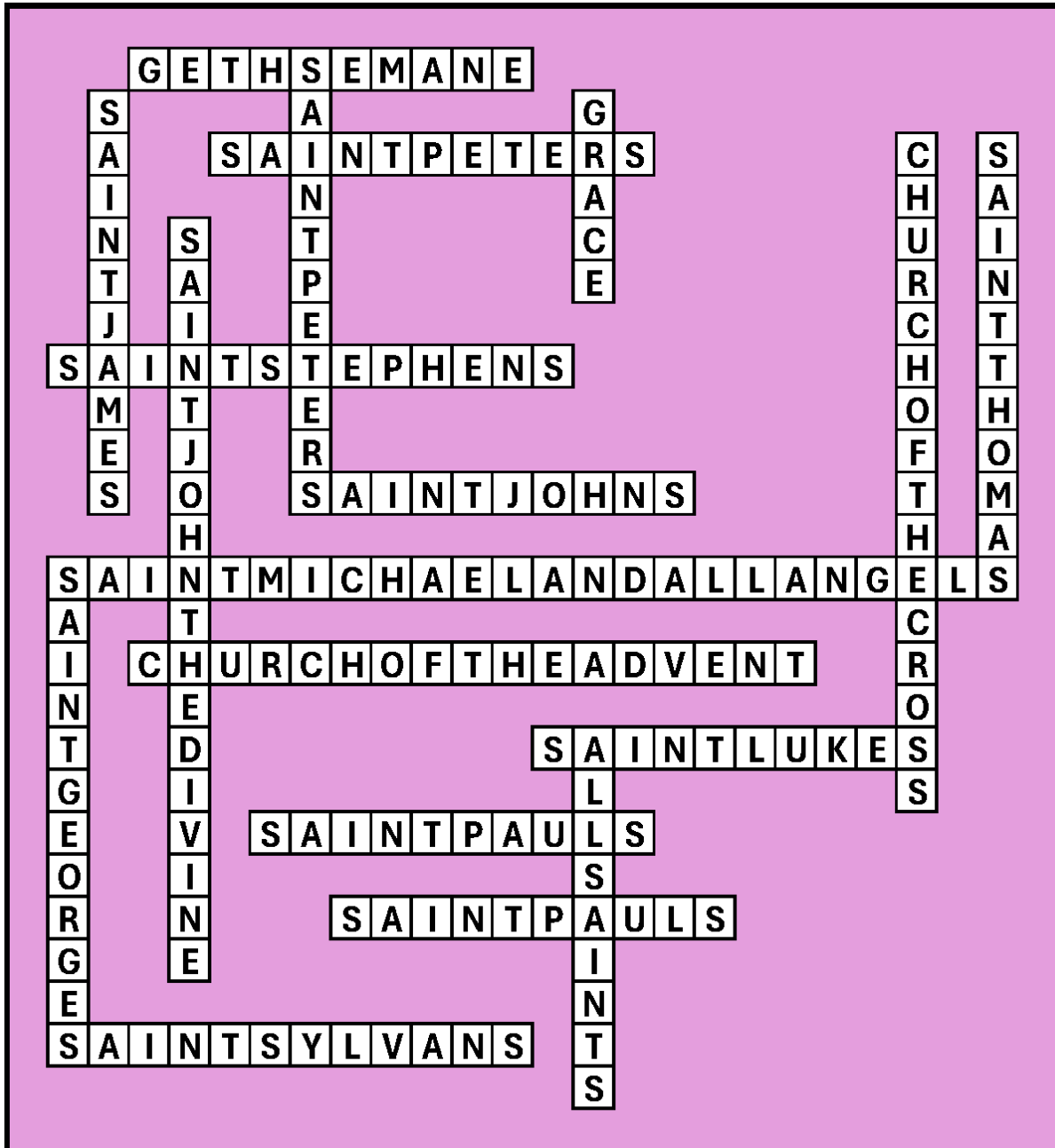




THE SHEAF



Deus Incrementum Dat | God Gives the Growth
1 Corinthians 3.6



A publication of the Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota
Easter Edition ~ April 2025



Easter Message from Bishop Provisional

The Right Rev. Brian Thom

To my mind, the arrival of Easter shares a kinship with Christmas. Both are magnificent proclamations about the identity of Jesus the Christ; one has no meaning without the other.



The similarity that comes to my awareness most years is that our experience of Easter is much like our experience of Christmas – the demands of preparing for Christmas in our homes and the serious Sunday-by-Sunday reproachment of the Lenten scriptures each in turn make us *really happy* when the celebration finally arrives! And, in the case of Easter, the coincidence of a northern hemisphere spring also invokes a budding sense of relief from winter's Lenten feel.

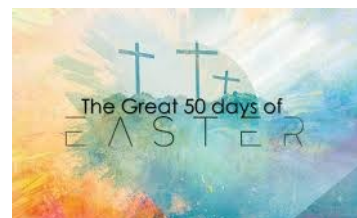
Over the coming Sundays, we will be inspired by the faith proclamations of the Marys, Thomas, Simon Peter, Paul, and others. We would do well to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them as we try to make all that Lenten seriousness turn into a transformative Eastertide.

Yet, as we embrace the spiritual refreshment of Sunday worship, I wonder if we might actually replicate the tools of Lent in order to bolster our joy of God's gift of resurrection.

I'm thinking I will take on an Easter devotion. A regular expression of the joy I feel as a beloved and redeemed child of God. Would you like to join me?

Something daily/weekly through the seven weeks of the Easter season that could include:

- ...a walk around the block every day
- ...seven thank-you notes to seven someones
- ...once a week, pay for the coffee customer in the car behind you...
or every time
- ...go early and sit quietly in the church, reading hymns and texts which
end with a seven
- ...an anonymous act of neighborhood tidiness
- ...on the Saturday before, read the lessons for each Sunday [www.lectionarypage.net]



Whichever unique and sincere expression you think of, accompany each gesture with a quiet 'thank you' to God. You will have added a good measure to your Easter joy... and to God's joy in you.

Sister and Brothers, Easter is more than a day or a season. It is a change of life – once for all, yes, but also by daily moments of thanksgiving, joy, and love.

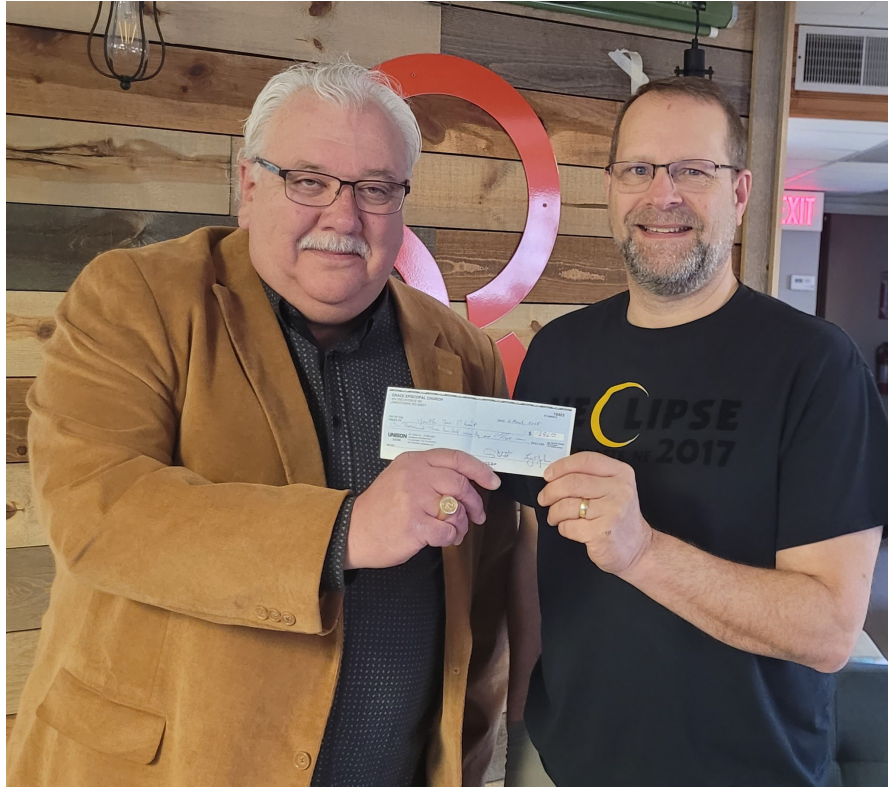
Blessed Easter!



Joyful Eastertide!

On Shrove Tuesday, Grace Church, Jamestown, hosted their third annual pancake supper fundraiser for the James Valley Youth For Christ.

This year's event raised \$1,396.00 for this local youth ministry.



Pictured are Fr. Robert Hoekstra, Rector of Grace Church, and Troy Gunderson, Executive Director of James Valley YFC in Jamestown and Valley City.

Convention 2025 ~ Save the Date



October 24-25, 2025

Prairie Knights Resort & Casino, Fort Yates

The Convention Planning Team will be gathering soon to start preparing for the 53rd Annual Diocesan Convention. Please consider sharing your time with this important Diocesan Ministry.

Easter Message from our Missioner for Reconciliation, Creation Care, and Congregational Ministry Development

The Rev. Kim Fox

Dear Beloved in Christ,

My first Easter in North Dakota, The Rev. Mary Johnson and I held a zoom service, as there was a blizzard. As I write this, heavy snow is falling in Minot on the second day of April, my son's 31st birthday. The calendar may say spring, but I am leaving my snow tires on until the end of the month!

This year I will be celebrating the Easter Vigil at Saint Paul's, White Shield and Easter Sunday at St. Sylvan's in Dunseith. I confess to preferring the Vigil, that most ancient ritual of kindling the fire: In the darkness, fire is kindled; after which the Celebrant may address the people in these or similar words:

Dear friends in Christ: On this most holy night, in which our Lord Jesus passed over from death to life, the Church invites her members, dispersed throughout the world, to gather in vigil and prayer. For this is the Passover of the Lord, in which, by hearing his Word and celebrating his Sacraments, we share in his victory over death.

In White Shield, we plan to kindle the fire with the traditional elements for smudging. In Dunseith, we will also have smudging in place of incense, as this is more culturally-appropriate to the Native American congregations I serve.



In the darkness, fire is kindled.

There are some long dark days in North Dakota winters and sometimes our spirits can get downhearted at the lack of light. Sometimes the darkness can threaten to overwhelm the light, but as we know, the darkness does not comprehend or overcome the light. (I've always appreciated those different translations that remind us that even a little light is enough to cut through the dark.)

One of the magnificent things about North Dakota is the beauty of our long summer days. Our lives are lived in cycles; our faith is lived in cycles, as well. We have times of darkness and death and times of light and resurrection.



As we approach Holy Week and Easter, how might we kindle the fire within ourselves? What do we need to do to stoke our own rekindled fire from ash? Because burnout is not a healthy model for the Church.

In the darkness, fire is kindled.

In Native culture, darkness is not considered evil, but rather a balance to the light. Seeds grow in the dark soil. Holy Week and Easter give us an opportunity to reflect on how to balance the darkness and light in ourselves, so that we might grow spiritually.

Lent has been a time of introspection and reflection on our mortality. With Easter, we can recommit to our baptismal covenant to respect the dignity of every person and to strive for justice and peace. As Christians and Episcopalians, we have the privilege and responsibility to be a moral voice of compassion in the world and to continue to accept and show love for everyone in the name of Christ. By doing so, we shine light into the darkness and with every act of advocacy for the poor and the oppressed, we become agents of change for the good. I am grateful for the efforts of our Creation Care and Reconciliation Committees for keeping issues of social justice (another way of saying "Gospel") before us.

In the darkness, fire is kindled.

After a long Lent, we will finally get to say the "A word" again and ring bells to mark our joy as we celebrate the light of Christ. Thanks be to God, our loving Creator, and thank you all for your own ministries within our Diocese!

In Christ's peace, power, and love,
Kim+



Calendar

**All noted times are Central Time*

Bishop Thom's Schedule

April 2025

- 8th-13th: Bishop Thom in North Dakota
- 13th: Bishop's Visitation at Grace, Jamestown

May 2025

- 14th-19th: Bishop Thom in North Dakota
- 18th: Bishop's Visitation at St. George's, Bismarck

June 2025

- 18th-23rd: Bishop Thom in North Dakota
- 22nd: Bishop's Visitation at St. Stephen's, Fargo
- 22nd: Peter's Akecmeir's Ordination to the Priesthood (St. John the Divine, Mhd); 4pm

Diocesan Events and Dates to Note

April 2025

- 13th: Bishop's Visitation: Grace, Jamestown
- 21st: Diocesan Office Closed (Easter Monday)
- 24th: Diocesan Ministry Support Team meeting (Zoom); 10am

May 2025

- 5th-9th: Diocesan Administrator at B+E+S+T Conference (St. Louis, MO)
- 6th: Clergy/Congregation Leaders Meeting (Zoom); 6:30pm
- 6th: Province VI Small Church Gathering (Zoom); 7:30pm
- 8th: Diocesan Ministry Support Team Meeting (Zoom); 10am
- 18th: Bishop's Visitation: St. George's, Bismarck
- 22nd: Diocesan Ministry Support Team Meeting (Zoom); 10am
- 26th: Diocesan Office Closed (Memorial Day)

June 2025

- 3rd: Clergy/Congregation Leaders Meeting (Zoom); 6:30pm
- 3rd: Province VI Small Church Gathering (Zoom); 7:30pm
- 5th: Diocesan Ministry Support Team Meeting (Zoom); 10am
- **9th: Pentecost Sheaf deadline!!**
- 20th-21st: Diocesan Council (In-Person); Jamestown
- 22nd: Bishop's Visitation: St. Stephen's, Fargo
- 22nd: Peter's Akecmeir's Ordination to the Priesthood (St. John the Divine, Mhd); 4pm

*"As long as the earth endures, seedtime
and harvest, cold and heat, summer and
winter, day and night will never cease."*

- Genesis 8:22 -



Bishop Brian's Visitation & Diocesan Council Schedule

April	11th-12th	Diocesan Council [Fargo]
	13th	Grace, Jamestown
May	18th	St. George's, Bismarck
June	20th-21st	Diocesan Council [Grace, Jamestown]
	22nd	St. Stephen's, Fargo
	22nd	Peter Akecmeir Ordination to Priesthood [St. John the Divine, Moorhead]
July	20th	St. James, Cannon Ball & St. Luke's, Fort Yates
August	24th	St. Sylvan's, Dunseith
September	TBD	Diocesan Council [All Saints, Minot]
	TBD	St. Paul's, White Shield
October	24th-25th	53rd Annual Diocesan Convention [Prairie Knights, Fort Yates]
	26th	Gethsemane, Fargo & St. John the Divine, Moorhead
November	21st-22nd	Diocesan Council [St. Paul's, Grand Forks]
	23rd	St. Paul's, Grand Forks
December	14th	All Saints, Minot



The Sheaf



Future Editions

We are working on making the *Sheaf* more collaborative and celebratory of all the ministry that happens throughout the Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota. And we want YOUR input! Let us help you celebrate the ministry you are a part of!

Sheaf Deadlines and Publication Dates

Pentecost: June 9, 2025 Deadline | June 13, 2025, 2025 Publication

Pre-Convention: September 8, 2025 Deadline | September 12, 2025 Publication

Advent: December 1, 2025 Deadline | December 5, 2025 Publication

North Dakota Council on Indian Ministry

The North Dakota Council on Indian Ministry gathered at The Fitness Center in Dunseith on Saturday, March 15th from 10am-3pm.

Diocesan Council member, Tyrrell DeCoteau, of St. Sylvan's, offered a prayer of welcome in the Ojibwe language.

The meeting was graciously hosted by St. Sylvan's, whose fine folks provided a wealth of refreshments, followed by a wonderful lunch prepared by Betty Swain. Thank you, St. Sylvan's, for your hospitality!

Bishop Brian Thom presided over the meeting and Diocesan Missioner, Ashley Hubbard, served as chaplain, opening our day with worship from the Indigenous resource, A Disciple's Prayer Book.

Three reservations were represented by physical attendance: Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa, MHA (Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara) Nation, and Standing Rock, with a representative from Spirit Lake listening in by phone.

The senior wardens and lay leaders from each congregation gave reports as to current ministries, joys, and challenges. The two priests in charge, The Rev. John Floberg (Standing Rock) and The Rev. Kim Fox (St. Paul's, White Shield and St. Sylvan's, Dunseith) also expressed support and admiration for their respective congregations.

The Young Life coordinator, Tyrin Gates, gave up his college spring break to share about the thriving youth ministry on Standing Rock.

Announcements were made, including sharing about a proposal, written by Kim Fox and Ashley Hubbard and approved by Bishop Brian, for an Indigenous Leadership Development grant in conjunction with Trinity Wall Street, at the invitation of The Rev. Dr. Mary Crist, Indigenous Theological Education Coordinator for The Episcopal Church. The Diocese of North Dakota is poised to become the first cohort of that endeavor, which would focus on the development of youth leadership in church and community, guided by elders.



Native American Christian Ministry, an initiative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America in the Fargo-Moorhead area, has also reached out to NDCIM to explore the potential for future partnership.

Several children were present and gave hope for the future, not only of these particular congregations, but also for The Episcopal Church overall. Newly-elected Senior Warden for St. Sylvan's, Valarie Davis, was there with her "sidekick," grandson, Riott, who never misses church and who was overheard to have quietly asked Kim Fox whether the meeting would go on much longer! (You did great, Riott!)

Officers were elected, as follows: Tyrrell DeCoteau (St. Sylvan's, Dunseith) Chair, Carmine Goodhouse (St. Luke's, Fort Yates) Vice Chair, and The Rev. John Floberg (Standing Rock), Secretary/Treasurer. Congratulations to our new officers, who will guide the next meeting of NDCIM at Diocesan Convention, in conjunction with our Bishop!

In the meantime, the Executive Committee of NDCIM, consisting of the officers and the two priests in charge representing Native congregations, will meet.

Bylaws were reviewed for the possibility of future changes, to be undertaken at a later date.

Budget will also be reviewed by the Executive Committee in preparation for the traditional luncheon meeting at Convention in the fall.

North Dakota is an aided diocese, receiving funding from General Convention. The goal of NDCIM is to ensure equitable allocation of resources for the support of all Native congregations.

Gathering different tribes with their respective cultural differences is an important mission, not only of NDCIM, but also of the Diocese as a whole, especially as we call our next Bishop Diocesan, for whom Native ministry will be an integral and vital part of ministering in North Dakota.

Following adjournment of our meeting, all were invited to an Open House at St. Sylvan's, to view the grounds and inside of the church, including the newly-installed photographs of bishops dating from the 1800s. St. Sylvan's is the oldest congregation in our diocese and we are grateful for their faithful witness in the Turtle Mountains.

If you have questions concerning NDCIM, please contact Bishop Brian Thom or NDCIM Officers:

Tyrrell DeCoteau | tyrrell.district4@gmail.com [Chair]

Carmine Goodhouse | ncc1701trek@icloud.com [Vice Chair]

The Rev. John Floberg | jffloberg@gmail.com [Secretary/Treasurer]

Please hold NDCIM in your prayers and be sure to thank their members for their work and witness!





Sweet Hour of Prayer

The Rev. John Floberg, Standing Rock



The Dakota Hymn “Sweet Hour of Prayer” was not literally translated from English into Dakota; rather, it adapted a familiar melody to create a new hymn. Senior high music students at Standing Rock contributed to translating the first verse of this Dakota hymn into English. As is the case with most hymn translations, this version is not a word-for-word literal translation, but ensures that key terms are transliterated or accurately translated.

<i>The Dakota Hymn</i>	<i>The Translation from Dakota</i>	<i>The Original English Hymn</i>
Jerusalem	The holy realm	Sweet hour of prayer!
wakan kin he	Jerusalem	sweet hour of prayer!
Mahpiya heciya wanka,	resides in heaven above this sphere.	that calls me from a world of care,
O unyanpi wasteste kin,	I choose to go into that place	and bids me at my Father’s throne
Han, heciya	and make a new song	make all my wants
waun wacin.	with my praise.	and wishes known.
Jerusalem wankand wakan,	I choose to be with you O Lord,	In seasons of distress and grief,
Han heciya waun kte hcin,	I want the life that you provide.	my soul has often found relief,
O dowan teca wan yuha,	Holy and blessed I do believe	and oft escaped the tempter’s snare
Hed Christ iwado wan kta ce.	a new song in my heart I’ll sing.	by thy return, sweet hour of prayer.

O dowan teca wan yuha

The Dakota Hymnal, translated decades ago, is now outdated compared to The Hymnal 1982. Language and faith are intertwined, as language affirms and transmits beliefs within a community. Language usage reinforces group identity and culture. Translating Christian hymns weaves faith into culture.



Raphael DeCoteau and his brother Leroy DeCoteau at St. Sylvan’s, Dunseith as altar boys in the mid 1960s.

A Whole Herd of Goats

The Rev. Harvey Henderson, St. Paul's, Grand Forks



The Sunday School children at St. Paul's in Grand Forks decided to raise some funds to buy a goat through Heifer International, an organization which "supports smallholder farmers to sustainably address hunger and poverty in their communities while caring for the earth." (www.heifer.org) Goats help families feed themselves by providing milk, cheese, and butter. Families can also earn income by selling the extra milk.

The cost of one goat is \$120. The children helped organize a pancake supper on Shrove Tuesday, March 4. It was a gathering of parishioners and a few others. The generosity of folks was amazing and the **children raised \$480, enough to buy four goats!** A group of generous donors from Heifer International offered to make gifts given in the month of March help **three times as many families.** That means that the simple idea of buying one goat resulted in the folks at Heifer International being able to buy **twelve goats, a very religious number of goats, indeed a whole herd of goats.** I am not sure that we are able to name the goats but these biblical women come to mind: Sarah, Rebekah, Leah, Rachel, Miriam, Naomi, Ruth, Mary, Elizabeth, Mary M., Phoebe, and Junia. They must be female goats if they produce milk!

Father Harvey Henderson
Priest-in-Charge
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Grand Forks, ND



St. Gabriel's—Ready to Stretch Itself

The Rev. John Floberg, Standing Rock

St. Gabriel's Camp offers opportunities for teens and adults to connect and form relationships that can continue at home. Adults accompanying youth from their congregations is essential for discipline and support during their stay.

Youth Ministry can be likened to a combination lock, requiring several elements for effectiveness. One important aspect is for adults to engage with youth rather than expecting youth to approach adults. Another key element involves activities that foster interaction among participants at events. Additionally, extended gatherings such as evening meetings, overnight stays, or camp settings enhance the impact of the experience, as the message, theme, community, and worship contribute to the overall effect. Incorporating these elements can facilitate meaningful connections between youth and adults.



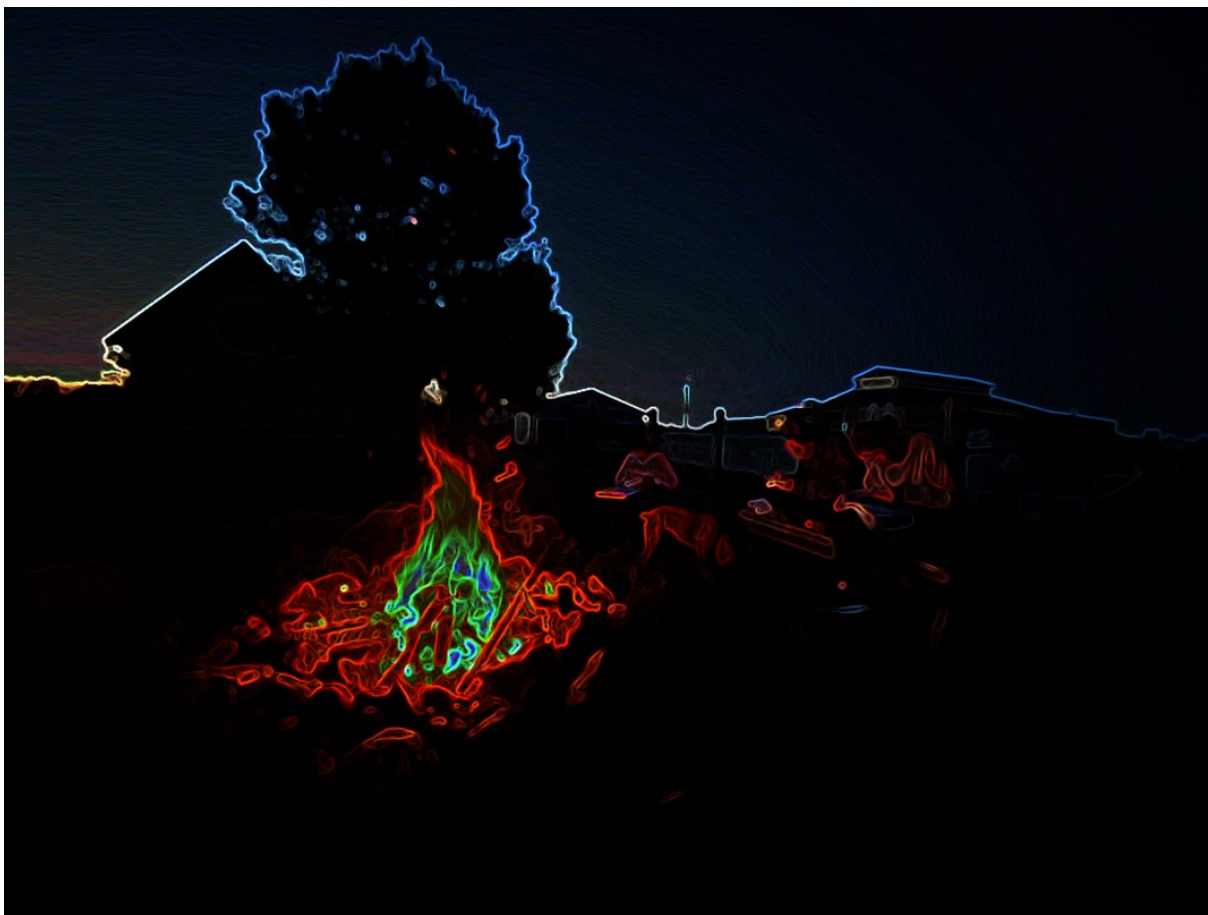
Activities during camp include hiking the butte, kayaking and tubing on Froelich Dam, swimming in the above-ground pool, club talks and gatherings, organized group games, four square volleyball, shooting pool, canteen visits, chapel services, campfires, movies, star gazing, and enjoying meals.

No registration fees are required for Camp. Complete a 2025 Release Form and register the Camp Session and Camper(s) in advance. St. Gabriel's can host up to 50 campers. Each congregation should provide one adult for

every seven youth registered.

What to bring: Changes of clothes, swimsuit, hat, towel, toiletries (including shampoo), closed-toed shoes, sweatshirt if cool, bedding or sleeping bag. Phones will be collected at the start of Camp and returned at the end.





Camp Gabriel Dates

May 2-4, 2025 [Fishing Camp]

June 17 – 19, 2025

July 15 – 17, 2025

August 5 – 7, 2025

Camp sessions this summer begin at eleven on Tuesday morning through Thursday afternoon.

Campers traveling over two hours can arrive the evening before. Groups may stay an extra night or two with their leaders. Local activities include a pow wow, rodeo, or outdoor movie. City visitors will enjoy our starry nights. Camp and equipment will be available for extended stays. If arriving before 6 pm on Monday or staying Thursday night or longer, please inform us for supper arrangements.

To register or request further information contact Fr. John Floberg (jffloberg@gmail.com).

Open to rising 6th grade (middle school) through senior high.





UTO NEWS HIGHLIGHTS FOR APRIL 2025

UNITED THANK OFFERING Gratitude

UTO is now taking orders for Spring/Summer materials. You can order your kits [here](#) by April 10th for shipping by April 28. These materials focus on gratitude for things becoming new.

Don't forget that UTO has a free program for congregations to use called Waves of Gratitude. Learn more (or download the resources) [here](#).

Save the date for our 4th Annual Virtual Training Day on Saturday, June 7th 10a- 2p Eastern time. [Click here to register](#) for the Online Training Day, and everyone who registers by May 23rd will get an event swag bag mailed to you!

UNITED THANK OFFERING Grants

Be sure to join us for the Virtual Training Day as we offer a training for people who want to support grant applicants locally. This year we'll spend time diving into the focus more and will offer a checklist to help you with the criteria. [Click here to register](#) for the Online Training Day, and everyone who registers by May 23rd will get an event swag bag mailed to you!

The Triennial Focus for grants will be inspired by scripture and tradition. Beginning with the 2026 UTO Grant Focus on Justice and Bridging Divides. Find out more [here](#).

Be sure to see the full newsletter for an update from a 2023 Grant to South Dakota for a horse arena.

UNITED THANK OFFERING Generosity

Just a reminder that this Lent we're not offering our usual virtual race, but we are welcoming support for EMM. To donate to support EMM this Lent, who we are partnering with for all our Lenten materials, [click here](#).

Our 2024 Ingathering information is now available. [Read the full report here](#).

[Register your parish here](#)

[Order UTO Materials here](#)

Fishing Weekend Announced!

St. Gabriel's will host a fishing weekend from May 2-4, beating Minnesota's Season Opener by a week! Jesus called his disciples based on their love for fishing, saying, "I will make you fishers of men."

You can bring your own boat, use a kayak, or enjoy a guided pontoon boat. The cost is \$25 per person, including boats, lodging, and meals. Bring your own bedding and fishing license.

The event starts with dinner at 6 PM on Friday and ends after Sunday morning worship. Space is limited, so sign up soon. Contact Fr. John Floberg at 701-891-2911 or jffloberg@gmail.com.



ND Cycle of Prayer

Sunday, April 20, 2025

The Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui

Retired Clergy: Alan Broadhead, Charles Cherry, Bonniejean Christensen, Wes Fox, George Schulenberg, George Slanger, Cherian Mathew, Mike Horn, Bart Davis, Mary Johnson, Zanne Ness; and for the work and ministry of the Mothers' Union and the Daughters of the King.

Sunday, April 27, 2025

The Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean

Clergy Serving Elsewhere or on Leave: Matthew Coomber, Mary Gokey, Alex Lodu-Kenyi, Gadi Edward, Sally Smythe, Erin Richards, Zechariah Reng, Brandon Mauai, Crystal Towers; and for the work of the Diocesan Reconciliation Committee.

Sunday, May 4, 2025

The Church of Ireland

St. George's, Bismarck: Beth Lipp, Ed Wos, Deacons; Zanne Ness, Canon; Jane White, Senior Warden; and for United Thank Offering: Vanessa Strobel and Mary Massad, co-coordinators.

Sunday, May 11, 2025

The Nippon Sei Ko Kai

St. James, Cannon Ball: John Floberg, Rector; Sloane Floberg, Deacon; Elaine McLaughlin; Senior Warden; and for the North Dakota Episcopal Foundation: Beth Lipp, president.

Sunday, May 18, 2025

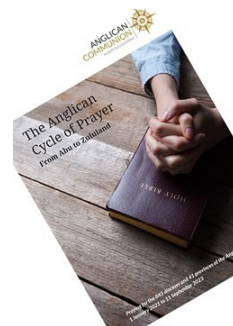
The Episcopal church in Jerusalem and The Middle East

St. Michael's, Cartwright: Kim Fox, Priest-in-Charge; Doug Gullikson, Senior Warden; and for Episcopal Relief and Development: Andrea Stomberg, coordinator.

Sunday, May 25, 2025

The Anglican Church of Kenya

Church of the Advent, Devils Lake: Don Leroux, Deacon; Kristin Kenner, Senior Warden; and for those in the ordination process.



The quarterly Cycle of Prayer can be found on our website at: www.ndepiscopal.org/cycle-of-prayer



The Sheaf

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The Sheaf—Easter Edition

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www.ndepiscopal.org/the-sheaf

