



April 2026 - Here and Now Newsletter! Volume 73, Issue 4

**PASTOR LEANNE’S THROWBACK MESSAGE FROM APRIL 2023**

Today’s kids will never know the excitement of being asked to stay after school to help clean the chalk boards. When I was in second grade at Longfellow Elementary, that was a special treat, one that always induced the fantasy that I was teacher’s pet. All of the learning we had conquered would be on those chalkboards, and I was commissioned to take an eraser and clear it off to make room for new learning. The immediate result was a blurred, streaky mess of chalk that produced unpleasant dust. The blackboards became pure chaos before I was given a damp cloth to wipe up the mess. The part I liked most came later, when a classmate and I were told to take the black fuzzy erasers outside and beat them against the side of the stone building. Squares of colored chalk appeared against the wall as the erasers gave up their chalk dust. I always left feeling quite accomplished, sure that the teacher thought most highly of me.

It’s that streaky, blurry mess that was the chalkboard that has me thinking today - thinking about how that stage of chaotic chalk streak was necessary in between the writing of the knowledge we had attained and the knowledge that was yet to be imparted to us. Certainly it was not pretty, and the dust it produced could cause choking if one accidentally breathed it in. But, even the small mind of a child knew that the only way there would be room for the learning of tomorrow was if yesterday’s knowledge became blurry, confusing, disorienting.

Honestly, I think that is like life – at least like the life of a disciple – because every now and then we all come to a time when what we know becomes confusing and refuses to serve a new day. Our souls are like that chalkboard – we must endure a time of chaos, of confusion, of disorientation before there is space within us for something new, something that enhances our much needed growth. It is not a season of the soul that we like, we often fight against the restructuring of our understanding. Transitions are messy and upsetting. They are also necessary if we are to grow.

We need not fear nor fight times of confusion – what we need is to understand that times of unnerving transitions are not permanent, but they are necessary stages in the process of growth. The plan of God moves us through all the stages of life, the ones we enjoy and the ones that are uncomfortable, and God supplies us with answers in mysterious ways, →

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
PASTOR’S MESSAGE EASTER WORD SEARCH	1-2
PARISH NURSE NEWS MUNCH & MINGLE “UNDIE SUNDAY”	3
SPECIAL POEM APRIL DONATIONS	4
WESTMINSTER CHIMES– AT BELLFEST 2026	5
CHRISTIAN ED ~ YOUTH EASTER TRIVIA	6-7
PINOCHLE PARTY PER CAPITA “THE BANQUET”	8
FPC SCHOLARSHIPS BRAG BOX	9
SESSION HIGHLIGHTS	10
BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES	11
CALENDAR	12



**PASTOR'S MESSAGE CONTINUED:**

through confusing times; but never fear, we are on our way to greater clarity.

Hear the words of the prophet Isaiah to those who fear that the confusion of now is a permanent state: "Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood since the earth was founded? God sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. The Lord stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in. To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One. Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? The One who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing. So, why do you say, O Jacob, and complain, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD; my cause is disregarded by my God"? Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. God will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. The Lord gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

Keep calm and know – better clarity is just ahead.

*Leanne*



## Easter Word Search

G	S	N	O	I	T	P	M	E	D	E	R	Y	Y	M
J	J	U	Y	K	I	R	Y	T	T	F	X	E	O	L
R	L	K	F	W	E	E	C	I	O	J	E	R	C	K
X	Y	N	G	Q	C	U	W	V	U	P	C	M	C	K
R	C	R	O	S	S	H	R	E	D	P	H	M	N	E
I	F	V	A	I	B	Q	U	I	R	G	P	Q	R	N
S	A	Q	Z	M	T	M	I	R	A	C	L	E	T	S
E	I	A	O	I	R	C	H	R	C	O	Y	I	U	E
N	T	T	P	R	C	G	E	Y	O	H	S	S	R	L
I	H	H	S	O	O	C	A	R	K	I	E	P	V	K
N	W	O	R	C	S	D	U	B	R	J	V	R	G	T
O	H	T	N	G	N	T	E	S	F	U	L	A	M	I
D	P	V	O	U	Q	F	L	D	K	A	S	Y	S	H
Z	M	E	S	B	Z	Z	W	E	M	L	Y	E	D	F
E	T	G	L	M	E	G	K	B	S	L	T	R	R	U

APOSTLES  
CROWN  
LAMB  
PRAYER  
RESURRECTION  
SON

CHURCH  
FAITH  
MARY  
REDEMPTION  
RISEN  
SUNDAY

CROSS  
JESUS  
MIRACLE  
REJOICE  
SAVIOR  
TOMB



## PARISH NURSE NEWS -

Wellness comes in all forms - physical, mental, and spiritual. This month I would like to address the emotional and mental health impact of SCAMS. Scams can cause psychological distress including feelings of shame, guilt and embarrassment. They can cause panic and helplessness and even impact a person's sense of safety.

I recently attended an educational session from the Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General. The numbers shocked me. In 2025, North Dakota had 117 victims call the Consumer Protection hotline with a combined loss of \$8.6 million. In 2024, 138 North Dakotans called the Consumer Protection hotline and lost \$5.3 million. (These are only reported cases; many go unreported due to shame or fear.) This means there were less victims in 2025, however the amount lost was \$3 million more than the previous year. I asked what is being done to remedy this and the answer was "education". Scammers are fast and they can be relentless, causing confusion and panic for the average person, making them feel under pressure to make immediate decisions. Educating yourself is the best way to stay on top of the many tactics they use. This month look at the "Nurses Notes" bulletin board in the Narthex for important information on scams and take any copies you would like.

Shredding is another important aspect of fraud prevention. This month AARP is holding a FREE shredding event on April 25th from 8:30 am to noon at 107 West Main Ave. Registration is recommended online at <https://www.aarp.org/events/details.aarp-shred-it-day.c8n7gc548g8>

Blood pressure clinic will be held on **April 26th** before and after the church service. This will be the last one until fall, but feel free to contact me with any blood pressure needs throughout the summer months.

"O LORD, rescue me from evil people. Protect me from those who are violent...  
Keep me safe, LORD, from the hands of the wicked; protect me from the violent,  
who devise ways to trip my feet"

*Psalm 140:1-4*



### **Blood Pressure Clinic - Sunday, April 26, 2026**

**9AM-10AM & 11AM-12PM - IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM**



### **Munch & Mingle!**

Broadway Grill (100 W Broadway Ave.)

**Noon - Broadway Grill & Tavern**

**Wednesday, April 1, 2026!**

### **"Undie Sunday"**

Boxers, briefs, hipster, granny pants, hi-cut, action figures, cotton or nylon—you decide...

The Hospitality Committee will be collecting appropriate NEW underwear of all sizes and shapes (kids and adults) on **Sunday, May 17th**.

During the service there will be an opportunity to toss the underwear into baskets (with help from our youth). Please consider helping with this project. All items will be distributed to the Heart River Correctional Facility and the Abused Adult Resource Center.



## **Tumbling Ride**

An old man sits on his bench  
Reflecting his own blip in time  
Nurtured in the womb of love  
Rising through the fires of youth  
Sensual union that binds two as one  
Turbulent wind carved their souls  
Now his fall has arrived  
Mirroring a leaf's tumbling ride

Green turns to red and orange  
Enlightened in the blazing in the sun  
Whispering breeze rattles the leaves  
Some jump off riding free  
Glancing up on the mothering tree.  
Spinning and tumbling for all to see  
Riding the waves of their gravity

Cuddling in the soft moist soil  
Reflecting their short blip in time  
Waiting for the soft blanket of white  
The long winters sleep never to wake  
Releasing their bodies  
That seep back into mother earth  
Nourishing their tree of life

Author: Warren Roberts (Carolyn Bark's brother)



**HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE:** During April, the Hospitality Committee is asking for ingredients to fill snack bags. Heaven's Helpers' Soup Café volunteers will use the donated items to put together snack bags for their guests.

**Peanuts** (Without the shell)

**M&M's**

**Dried Cranberries**

**Reece's Pieces**

**Crackers**

**Chex Mix**

**Sunflower Seeds**

**Cereal** (Larger, non-crumbly cereal such as Cheerios, Kix)

**Snack Size Baggies**

Items can be dropped off at the donation box in the Narthex. Thanks for your generosity.

Heaven's Helpers  
Soup Cafe  
**SOUP**  
CAFE

## Bells in the Big City

On March 7th, after a six-year hiatus, Westminster Chimes traveled once again to Arden Hills, MN to participate in Bellfest 2026. We joined 19 other Minnesota regional ensembles to play in a massed ringing event culminating in a concert for the public. Our conductor this year was handbell composer/arranger Matthew Compton of Colorado Springs. We all agreed that he was the most enjoyable conductor of the five Bellfests we have attended.

With a smaller than usual ensemble attending this year due to health and scheduling complications, we were really glad to have some former ringers join us. Renee Stewart Loney was a charter member when our handbell program started in 1973 and she was soon joined by sister, Kara Stewart Richter, when she started Jr. High. The Stewart sisters also included oldest sister Myra Stewart Annan of South Carolina who started her ringing vocation after leaving Bismarck. Their ability, experience and good-nature made them a welcome addition!

Before attending, we were given a list of five required pieces to rehearse in preparation for playing en masse. Four of these pieces have already been played this season in worship and we will share the fifth on April 26th. Monetarily our 3-day trip was made more manageable by having our registration fees paid through Worship and Music. Our gas and lodging expenses were covered by dollars earned from the generous consumers of our caramel rolls!

Thank you,  
Lael Hoerauf, dir.



**Westminster Chimes – Bellfest 2026: Kara Richter, Juanita Hocking, Linda Tonolli, Alice Nix, Renee Loney, Myra Annan, Rosey Sand, and Lael Hoerauf**



**The massed ensemble setup during a rehearsal break. Westminster Chimes is the red-skirted group in the front row! The director's raised podium is seen at the right.**

**CHRISTIAN ED:**

The kids and teens have been working on their songs and presented them on Palm Sunday. What an amazing job! Earlier this month the kids also got to have a Mario Party. The teens are getting ready for their spring retreat, in Moorhead, MN (May 1-3). Next we will be working on the Mother's Day performance - Youth Sunday, May 10th!

*Youth Ministry Director, Mark Jensen*





# EASTER

## trivia

what is the most popular jelly bean flavor?  
 a. apple b. cherry c. licorice d. orange

how many million of chocolate bunnies are produced each year?  
 a. 45 million b. 70 million c. 90 million d. 105 million

what percent of americans give or share candy on easter?  
 a. 59% b. 73% c. 84% d. 91%

how many peeps are made for easter?  
 a. 1.2 million b. 3.2 million c. 4.8 million d. 5.5 million

answers: b. cherry, c. 90 million, c. 84%, d. 5.5 million



Easter isn't at all about Easter bunnies and Easter eggs as such, though these things are nice to have at Easter time. I've heard it said that the Easter egg represents 'new life' - as a chicken hatches from an egg. It is okay to enjoy chocolate bunnies and Easter eggs at Easter time, but let us not forget the real meaning of Easter.



## **PINOCHLE CARD PARTY!**

The Hospitality Committee is sponsoring a pinochle card party on **Sat., April 11, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the church parlor.** This party is for all those who know how to play pinochle and those who wish to learn to play or to play better.



Beginners or those needing a refresher course will be placed at a table with at least one person who knows how to play and will be provided with cheat sheets and instructions to use as needed.

For those wishing to play progressive pinochle, small prizes will be awarded for the top point totals. Four hands will be played at a table, with winners staying and losers moving to the next table. A drawing will be held for initial partners. Partners switch after 4 hands. Participants must keep track of their own points at each table played and for total points (honor system).

We will break for lunch and socializing at approximately noon and resume playing pinochle at approximately 1:00 p.m. Playing until approximately 4:00 p.m. Please bring something to share for lunch. The Hospitality Committee will provide liquid refreshments.

Some pinochle decks will be provided, but if you have a deck of pinochle cards, please bring it.

Come and bring friends and family. Have a good time socializing and playing pinochle! A sign-up sheet for attending and bringing something to share is on the bulletin board in the Narthex.

## **RESOURCE & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Per Capita Special Offering is a special offering of our church that extends the entire year. We mention the Per Capita Special Offering starting in January and request that each member consider giving a gift to the church of \$50 to cover their share of the church's financial obligation to the larger church. If you are a member that pledges income each year to the church, and would like to be able to help support other members who might find it financially unfeasible to pledge or to make the separate per capita donation, your separate gift of \$50 will help cover the cost of membership for that less fortunate member of the church. You can make your per capita gift to the church simply by making out a check with per capita written in the memo blank on the check.

Thank you,

Resource Management Committee



## ***SAVE THE DATE***

Our commitment for "The Banquet" at the Dream Center

**Thursday, September 24, 2026**



**Thursday, November 26, 2026** sponsoring the Thanksgiving Day meal

Both events will need several volunteers... watch for sign-up sheets.

**The First Presbyterian Church Scholarship Committee** is pleased to announce the availability of a limited number of scholarships for our church community. Applications are now being accepted from students within our Congregation who are enrolling or are already enrolled in higher education. The **deadline for applications is May 15, 2026.**

To be eligible for consideration, a student must be an active member of First Presbyterian Church of Bismarck or have been an active participant in the life of the church for at least three years. Students at any level of study beyond high school are eligible to receive a scholarship award. Students are eligible to receive a scholarship for a maximum of four years: the years do not need to be consecutive. Graduate students may apply for scholarships, providing they are within the four-year maximum.

Generous, education-minded members of our Church who were anxious to help students accomplish their academic and technical goals gifted monies to scholarship endowments within our church since 1985. Since the scholarship program was established our Church has provided \$194,700 in educational assistance to students over the past 40-years!

Applications are available in the church office and for download from the front page of the church website at [www.fcpbismarck.com](http://www.fcpbismarck.com). The deadline to apply is **4:30pm on Friday, May 15, 2026.**



**Brag Box: Eleanor Sand  
Celebrated her 95th birthday  
March 2, 2026!**



**Thanks to all who came  
to help us celebrate!**

## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

March 24, 2026

### Clerk's Report

The death of Joanne Bavendick on February 25, 2026 was recorded. Membership is 282.

### Financial Report

Total Income YTD Actual	\$97,068	Budget \$65,458
Total Expense YTD Actual	\$103,728	Budget \$110,872
NET Income	-\$6,660	Budget -\$45,414

### Committee Reports

**Administrative and Personnel**—Dale Hoerauf is helping with staff meetings and Parish Nurse Carmen Bryhn is making hospital visits.

**Hospitality**—A pinochle event is scheduled for April 11, 10am-4pm. Outdoor worship and picnic will be held in June.

**Proclamation - Christian Education**—The teens have completed the painting of their room downstairs. Teens are planning to attend the Youth Retreat in Moorhead in May.

**Property and Equipment**—The pews in the choir area have been reupholstered. An inventory is being completed of all items in storage spaces in the church.

**Resource Management**—The committee added Keith Magnusson as a new member and may add another member if they change their meeting time. No decision has been made concerning a company to do an audit as they are waiting for more information.

**Board of Deacons**—With the “end” of flu season, it was suggested that handshaking at worship would be reinstated.

### New Business

The Presbytery meeting held March 21, at the University of Jamestown was attended by Jim Skaret (in person) and Alice Nix (via zoom). The proposals to hire an Executive Presbyter and to fund new Vitality Grant Program were passed. The Presbytery investment funds totaling over one million dollars have been earning enough to fund these 2 new additions. Pastor Deanna Reikow finished her time as Presbytery Connectional Care Pastor and will return full-time to Mandan FPC. Three Commissioned Lay Pastors have been certified and will be able to fill calls to churches.

Alice Nix, Clerk of Session (with notes from Juanita Hocking and committee reports)





**BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES**

**APRIL 2026 - BIRTHDAYS**

April 4	Sydney Henriksen
April 4	Fred Larson
April 6	Becky Mahlum
April 6	Donna Richter
April 9	John Richter
April 10	Rose Trenbeath
April 11	Peggy Hoge
April 13	Jodi Bjornson
April 16	Seth Peterson
April 19	Steve Adair
April 19	Violet Spitzer
April 26	Audrey Simmons
April 28	Anna Bitz
April 30	Gail Christianson

**APRIL 2026 - ANNIVERSARIES**

April 21	Bill & Laura Jensen
----------	---------------------



**Please let us know if we've made a mistake, omission or if you would prefer not to have your special day published.**  
 ~ Thank you ~



**First Presbyterian Church**

214 East Thayer Ave.

Bismarck, ND 58501

Phone: 701-223-6091

[firstpresbyterian@fpcbismarck.com](mailto:firstpresbyterian@fpcbismarck.com)

[www.fpcbismarck.com](http://www.fpcbismarck.com)

Sunday Worship: 10:00 am

Office Hours: 8:00 am - 4:30 pm



**Pastor**

*Rev. Dr. Leanne Simmons*

**Finance Assistant**

*Carol Thompson*

**Administrative Assistant**

*Maureen Chrest*

**Parish Nurse**

*Carmen Bryhn*

**Maintenance**

*Erik Hein Sr*

**Christian Ed. Youth Director**

*Mark Jensen*

**Organists**

*Arvy Smith & Gail Snustad*

**Chancel Choir Director**

*Debi Rogers*

**Westminster Chimes Director**

*Lael Hoerauf*

**Membership Services**

*Judy Lentz*

**Audio/Visual Specialist**

*Josh Stokka*

**Nursery**

*Mary Jones & Laci Rauser*

**Sunday Security**

*Erik Hein Jr*

**Christian Ed. Intern**

*Connor Svihovec*



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1</b> <b>Noon - Munch &amp; Mingle at Broadway Grill &amp; Tavern</b> 100 W Broadway Ave. 5:45pm PAC/Teens <b>NO Bells</b> <b>6:00pm Choir (in Mandan)</b> <i>NO Lay Pastors</i>	<b>2</b> <b>NO</b> Strength & Bal. Class  6:00pm Choir (in Mandan) <b>7:00pm Maundy Thur. at FPC Mandan</b>	<b>3</b> <b>OFFICES CLOSED</b>  <b>5:00pm GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE at Glencoe Sloan</b>	<b>4</b>  <b>11am-12pm The Great Vigil in the Chapel</b>
 <b>5 10am</b> Worship <b>Easter Sunday Communion</b>  <b>OGHS offering</b>	<b>6</b>  <b>1:30pm</b> Prayer Shawl 6:30pm Scouts <b>7:00pm</b> Chris. Ed	<b>7</b> 11am Strength & Bal. Class 2:00pm Yoga 5:30pm AA (#201) <b>5:45pm Prop. &amp; Equipment</b>	<b>8</b>  5:45pm PAC/Teens 6:30pm Bells 7:30pm Choir <b>6:30pm Lay Pastors</b>	<b>9</b>  11am Strength & Bal. Class  <b>6:30pm Hospitality</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>  <b>10am-4pm Pinochle Party in the Parlor!</b>
<b>12 10am</b> Worship  <b>2nd Sunday of Easter</b>	<b>13</b>  <b>5:30pm</b> Worship & Music 6:30pm Scouts	<b>14</b> 11am Strength & Bal. Class  2:00pm Yoga 5:30pm AA (#201)	<b>15</b>  5:45pm PAC/Teens 6:30pm Bells 7:30pm Choir	<b>16</b>  11am Strength & Bal. Class  <b>6:30pm Deacons</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19 10am</b> Worship  <b>3rd Sunday of Easter</b>	<b>20</b> <b>NO -Resource Management</b> <b>1:30pm</b> Prayer Shawl <b>4:30pm</b> Admin. & Personnel 6:30pm Scouts	<b>21</b> 11am Strength & Bal. Class 2:00pm Yoga 5:30pm AA (#201)	<b>22</b>  <b>11:15am Resource Management</b>  5:45pm PAC/Teens 6:30pm Bells 7:30pm Choir	<b>23</b>  11am Strength & Bal. Class	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Parish Nurse Carmen OUT OF OFFICE for training ~ April 20 - 22</b>						
<b>26 10am</b> Worship  <b>4th Sunday of Easter</b>  <b>9-10am &amp; 11am-12pm BP Clinic</b> (Last one until fall)	<b>27</b>  6:30pm Scouts	<b>28</b> 11am Strength & Bal. Class 2:00pm Yoga <b>2:00pm</b> Presby Friends 5:30pm AA (#201) <b>6:00pm</b> Session	<b>29</b>  5:45pm PAC/Teens 6:30pm Bells 7:30pm Choir	<b>30</b>  11am Strength & Bal. Class		<b>Mon. May 4</b> <b>6:00pm Suzuki Spring Recital in Sanctuary!</b>  