

Sharon Sharings

Monthly publication of Sharon Lutheran Church | Grand Forks, ND

January 2026



As 2025 ends, another year begins. Each year seems to go by faster and we wonder where the year went. As children, time seems to move slowly and we proudly proclaim when we are a year older. Even the halves are important. "I am 5 and a half!" proclaims the child. But at some point, in a person's life it changes and we no longer want to tell our age or maybe even celebrate a birthday or another year. I am 53 'n a half and I am glad! Glad that I have been blessed with another year and a half! I thank God for it, and I hope you are able to say that as well. I know that for some 2025 or this past year since your birthday, maybe wasn't easy. I empathize with you and I pray that next year is better. And I invite

you to look back at the year and see the ways that God was with you through the ups and downs.

January is not only the beginning and celebration of a new calendar year. It is also the time when we gather as a faith family to celebrate everyone's birthday. On Sunday, January 11 we will have a birthday party for you and for everyone! We invite and hope you will come to South Hall at 10:00 for cupcakes, fellowship and conversation. If you are coming for Church School or worship, please come early or stay after the 9:00 service. The

Birthday
—continued on Page 2

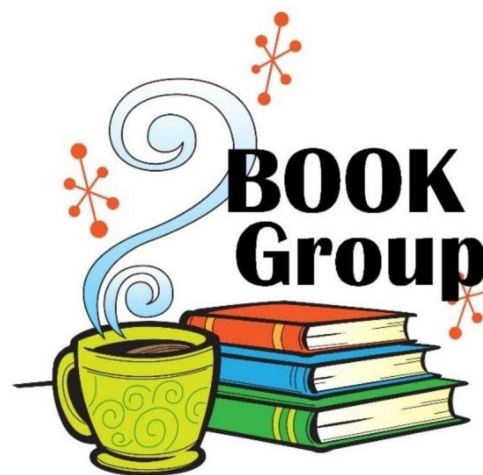
Sharon Book Group

Sharon Lutheran's Book Group will meet at 7:00 pm on the dates below in the Sharon Library and via Zoom. For more information on each meeting, please contact Rod Gigstad at gigstad@gmail.com

January 20, 2026

Spell Freedom: The Underground Schools that Built the Civil Rights Movement by Elaine Weiss

The acclaimed author of the “stirring, definitive, and engrossing” (NPR) *The Woman’s Hour* returns with an eye-opening and inspiring account of four activists—Septima Clark, Myles Horton, Esau Jenkins, and Bernice Johnson—and their work to ensure the voting rights of Black Americans. In the summer of 1954, Esau Jenkins and Septima Clark travelled to Tennessee’s Highlander Center, a rural interracial training school for social change founded by Myles Horton, a white educator with roots in the labor movement.



February 17

The Museum of Failures by Thrity Umrigar

An immersive story about family secrets and the power of forgiveness. When Remy Wadia left India for the United States, he carried his resentment of his cold and inscrutable mother with him and has kept his distance from her. Years later, he returns to Bombay, planning to adopt a baby from a young pregnant girl—and to see his elderly mother again before it is too late.

Birthday
—continued from front page

“Everyone Has a Birthday” celebration is an opportunity to say thanks to God for our birth and another year. It is also an opportunity to say Happy Birthday to those who may not get a normal birthday party because they don’t have local family or friends to celebrate with. So, no matter when your birthday is, please join us to celebrate you and others on January 11. Happy Birthday and God Bless!!

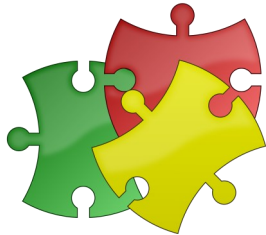


- Deacon Jamie Travers

Think Summer at Red Willow Bible Camp

With the theme "Wear Love," Red Willow Bible Camp's 2026 schedule has opportunities for those from K to 12. From a one day Seekers Day for younger students, to week-long camps leadership experiences for high school students, activities include worship, learning scripture, music, and fun. Get more information and register at redwillowministries.com.

Our free puzzle exchange is still available for your enjoyment! Come take a look near the Welcome Center!



Wednesday Morning Bible Study

Each Wednesday morning at 9:45 there is an hour long Bible Study on the Scripture text for that coming Sunday's worship service. Anyone is welcome to attend.



The Bible Study goes on all year long with some breaks now and then. People are welcome to participate on whichever Wednesdays work for them.

We are happy to be able to meet in person in South Hall. An online option will also continue, so people can join in person or online. The online link is e-mailed out on Mondays. **If you don't already receive that link and would like to, please let Deacon Jamie know. His email is: jtravers@sharonlutheran.org**

"Welcome to Baptism" Orientation

If you are planning a baptism in your family, plan to come to a one-hour orientation called "Welcome to Baptism." Our next scheduled gathering is planned for Sunday, January 18 at 4:00 pm.

To register for the class, please call the church office by Friday before the class at 772-3122; or email the church office at office@sharonlutheran.org; or speak to Deacon Jamie or Pastor Tawanda.

Sponsors are welcome too, in addition to parents.

The class is designed to help answer questions about baptism, including:

- **What is baptism?**
- **When should baptism occur?**
- **What is my role as a parent, sponsor, or family member of the baptized?**

If you have any questions about this class, please speak to one of the Rostered Ministers.

Faith Formation Ministries

January News

**GOT
STOCK?**

IT'S YOUTH STOCK TIME!

**GET
STOCK!**

It is time once again for our Youth Stock fundraiser! Have you been wondering what it means when you hear people talk about Youth Stock? Your investment in Youth Stock helps support Faith Formation Ministries at Sharon Lutheran. Some of these ministries are summer mission trips for middle school and high school students, weekly programs for 3rd-12th graders (3-4-5 Alive, 5G, RAFT), Bible studies, scholarships and camperships, Castaway retreats, service opportunities, and special events for all ages.

We hope you appreciate this fundraiser because instead of buying a product, you are investing directly in our students and changing lives. Your Youth Stock donation helps provide faith-centered opportunities for our youth to gather, serve, learn, and grow together. Thank you for your continued assistance throughout the year. We are grateful for your prayers, your listening ears, and your financial support.

Youth Stock sells for \$20 per share, but feel free to donate any amount you wish! Throughout this month, we hope you will visit the Youth Stock table or grab a Youth Stock envelope as you enter or leave worship and purchase stock to support these young people. If you don't get a chance to stop by, a student from Sharon will be calling you on Sunday, January 25th. Thank you for your support!

CHURCH SCHOOL (Preschool through 5th grade) NEWS

Thank you for a WONDERFUL Christmas Season filled with two delightful Christmas Programs. All Church School children did a wonderful job telling the story of the birth of Jesus, our Lord and Savior!

NEWS FOR ALL AGES!

Please mark your calendars for the All Ages Ski Trip to Buena Vista (Bemidji, MN), which is coming up on Saturday, February 28th. More information will be shared as that date gets closer. We would love for you to join us!

UPPER ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS:

3-4-5 Alive! (weekly fellowship program for 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders) meets on Sundays from 3:45—4:45 pm in the Living Room (lower level youth room). 3-4-5 Alive will resume on Sunday, January 11th and will also meet on January 18th and 25th. There is no cost or registration, and friends in third, fourth, or fifth grade are always welcome!

5G (weekly fellowship program for 6th-8th graders) will resume on Wednesday, January 7th and will also meet on January 14th and 21st. 5G will not meet on Wednesday, January 28th, as that night is our Grand Forks Areawide Confirmation Event at Calvary Lutheran Church.

Faith Formation Ministries

Greetings and Encouragement to You All!

I hope that you all had a wonderful Advent season and Christmas celebration filled with family and friends. As you pack away your decorations for another year, I encourage you to leave one item out for the entire year where you can see it. Use it as a reminder of the spirit and blessings of the holiday season and of Jesus, the greatest gift of all. **Blessings and peace, Dave**

January is a time of new beginnings in many ways. I hope that you and your families had a wonderful and meaningful holiday season and that you can now “settle in” for the less hectic months of winter and find joy in each new day---even when the days are short and the winter starts to feel long--there is much to be thankful for and to relish with each new day.

May God Bless You, Heather

Faith Formation Important Dates:

Sunday, January 4th: NO CHURCH SCHOOL or 3-4-5 Alive (Holiday Break); Youth Stock campaign begins

Wednesday, January 7th: Wednesday Church School, 6th-9th grade Confirmation instruction, 5G, and RAFT resume

Sunday, January 11th: Sunday Church School and 3-4-5 Alive resume

Sunday, January 25th: Youth Stock Calling Night (3:00 - 8:00 p.m.)

Wednesday, January 28th: Grand Forks AreaWide Confirmation Event for all 6th-9th Grade Confirmation students at Calvary Lutheran Church (7:15-8:30 p.m.); no 5G or RAFT on this night

Amount needed in Operating Revenue each month

Revenue	November 2025-2026	YTD Actual 2025-2026
Current Ministry Gifts	\$57,646	\$296,032
Loose/Misc. Offering Gifts	\$1,679	\$6,539
Operating Fund Memorial	\$-	\$20
Church School, Confirmation	\$150	\$6,900
Benevolence Gifts	\$399	\$3,428
Other Gifts and Donations	\$2,281	\$16,979
Total	\$62,154	\$329,898

	Novem- 2025-2026	YTD Actual 2025-2026
Operating Expenses	\$70,795	\$336,437
Mortgage Debt Reduction	\$1,063	\$5,450
Total Expenses	\$71,858	\$341,886
 Revenue Exceeding	 \$(9,703)	 \$(11,988)

November Designated gifts received:

Noisy Offering-Lutheran Disaster Response	\$369
Building & Grounds-Properties	\$97
Backpack Program	\$490
Fellowship Donations	\$338
Higher Ground Memorials	\$150
Thrivent Choice Dollars	\$591
Undesignated Memorials	\$110
Choir Fund Memorials	\$168
Christmas Flowers	\$220
Bathroom Remodel	\$100
Projector	\$200
Church School Offerings	\$178
Faith Formation	\$25

TOTAL: \$3,036



January's Noisy
Offering will
benefit CVIC

Sharon Lutheran's Backpack Program

On the second Sunday of each month, we will collect food items for Ben Franklin Elementary School to provide meals for the whole school-year.

You can drop these at the church in the boxes marked for the Backpack Program. For questions, please contact the Community Connections Team or Pastor Tawanda.

A list of items that are needed are:

Ravioli (must have pull-open top)

Soup (must have pull-open top)

Mac & Cheese (Easy Mac or Velveeta Cups)

Juice Boxes/Capri Sun

If you or someone you know is sick, in the hospital or facing challenges, please let us know.

We want to include you in our prayers, and the Prayers of the People during worship if you would like to be included in them.

We are here for you!

Golden Age Club Friday, January 9 at 2:00 pm

Come join us for an interesting presentation by the Grand Forks Police Department about various scams and what to watch for. Golden Age will meet at 2:00 on Friday, January 9th. All are welcome.



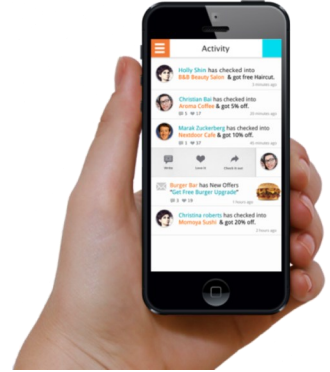
Text to Give!

DID YOU KNOW? Sharon Lutheran can accept offerings and donations through Text Giving. Giving to the church via a text is fast, easy, and versatile.

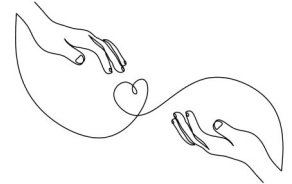
You can make a weekly offering or respond to a specific need in seconds.

Just text to 73256, hit next, type Sharon 1720, (One word!) hit send.

You will receive a message to click to complete your gift to Sharon Lutheran Church.



Women of Sharon Corner



The Women of Sharon invite you to join one of our circles and/or attend our monthly WELCA Board meetings. The January WELCA Board meeting will be held on Monday, January 12 at 7:00 pm in the Rose of Sharon Lounge. All are welcome to attend!

Hannah Circle

Meets the **THIRD Monday** of each month at 1:00 pm at SLC in the Lounge. Contact Karen Axvig, 701-610-1056

Mary Circle

Meets the **THIRD Tuesday** of each month at 1:00 pm in a member's home. Contact Ruth Thorson, 701-775-2706

Sarah Circle

Meets the **THIRD Thursday** of each month at

1:00 at SLC in the Lounge. Contact Jeannie Sollom, 218-779-8646

Rachel Circle

Meets the **THIRD Wednesday** of each month at 1:30 pm at SLC in the Lounge. Contact the Church Office, 701-772-3122

Deborah Circle

Meets the **LAST Monday** of the month at 7:00 pm at SLC in the Lounge. Contact Heather Peters, 701-429-7087.

January 2026

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

For information on
AA Meetings held at
Sharon Lutheran,
please see
aanorthdakota.org

January Noisy Offering will benefit CVIC

1 5:00 pm NA 8:00 pm AA Unity OFFICE CLOSED FOR NEW YEARS	2 12:00 pm AA Serenity 7:00 pm Al-Anon TGIF	3 9:00 am AA-Women Carrying the Message 8:00 pm AA Unity
8 8:30 am Faithfully Fit 9:00 am Quilting 1:00 pm Sharon Cares 5:00 pm NA 5:30 pm Worship Team 6:30 pm Community Connections Team 8:00 pm AA Unity	9 12:00 pm AA Serenity 2:00 pm Golden Age 7:00 pm Al-Anon TGIF	10 9:00 am AA-Women Carrying the Message 8:00 pm AA Unity
15 8:30 am Faithfully Fit 5:00 pm NA 8:00 pm AA Unity NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	16 12:00 pm AA Serenity 7:00 pm Al-Anon TGIF	17 9:00 am AA-Women Carrying the Message 8:00 pm AA Unity
22 8:30 am Faithfully Fit 9:00 am Quilting 5:00 pm NA 8:00 pm AA Unity	23 12:00 pm AA Serenity 7:00 pm Al-Anon TGIF	24 9:00 am AA-Women Carrying the Message 8:00 pm AA Unity
29 8:30 am Faithfully Fit 5:00 pm NA 8:00 pm AA Unity	30 12:00 pm AA Serenity 7:00 pm Al-Anon TGIF	31 9:00 am AA-Women Carrying the Message 8:00 pm AA Unity

4 9:00 am Worship— Sanctuary 10:30 am Worship— Celebration Hall No Church School	5 12:00 pm AA Noonday 8:00 pm AA Unity	6 8:30 am Faithfully Fit 9:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry 5:00 pm OA 5:00 pm De-decorate Church 5:30 pm Stewardship Team 7:00 pm Al Anon Primary Purpose 8:00 pm AA Primary Purpose	7 9:45 am Bible Study 12:00 pm AA Noonday 6:00 pm Worship—CH 6:00 pm Church School 7:00 pm Choir Practice 7:15 pm Confirmation 8:15 pm RAFT 8:15 pm 5G
11 9:00 am Worship— Sanctuary BACKPACK PACKING BETWEEN SERVICES 10:00 am Everyone has a Birthday! 10:30 am Worship— Celebration Hall 10:30 am Church School 3:45 pm 3-4-5 Alive!	12 12:00 pm AA Noonday 7:00 pm WELCA 8:00 pm AA Unity	13 8:30 am Faithfully Fit 1:00 pm Mary Circle 5:00 pm OA 6:00 pm Properties Team 7:00 pm Al Anon Primary Purpose 8:00 pm AA Primary Purpose	14 9:45 am Bible Study 12:00 pm AA Noonday 1:30 pm Rachel Circle 6:00 pm Worship— Celebration Hall 7:00 pm Choir Practice 7:15 pm Confirmation 8:15 pm RAFT 8:15 pm 5G
18 9:00 am Worship— Sanctuary 10:30 am Worship— Celebration Hall 10:30 am Church School 3:45 pm 3-4-5 Alive! 4:00 pm Baptism Orienta- tion	19 12:00 pm AA Noonday 1:00 pm Hannah Circle 8:00 pm AA Unity	20 8:30 am Faithfully Fit 5:00 pm OA 6:00 pm Church Council 7:00 pm Al Anon Primary Purpose 8:00 pm AA Primary Purpose	21 9:45 am Bible Study 12:00 pm AA Noonday 1:30 pm Rachel Circle 6:00 pm Worship— Celebration Hall 7:00 pm Choir Practice 7:15 pm Confirmation 8:15 pm RAFT 8:15 pm 5G
25 9:00 am Worship— Sanctuary 10:30 am Worship— Celebration Hall 10:30 am Church School 3:45 pm 3-4-5 Alive! NOISY OFFERING	26 12:00 pm AA Noonday 1:00 pm Hannah Circle 7:00 pm Deborah Circle 8:00 pm AA Unity	27 8:30 am Faithfully Fit 5:00 pm OA 7:00 pm Al Anon Primary Purpose 8:00 pm AA Primary Purpose	28 9:45 am Bible Study 12:00 pm AA Noonday 6:00 pm Worship— Celebration Hall 7:00 pm Choir Practice 7:15 pm Confirmation 8:15 pm RAFT 8:15 pm 5G NOISY OFFERING



Sharon Lutheran My Ministry Form

We're so glad that you are a part of our congregation. We're eager to connect you to ministry opportunities. Please check any boxes that apply to you and leave this form in the boxes in the narthex.

Today's Date: _____

Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Contact Preference: ☐ Phone Call ☐ Text ☐ Email

Worship: Service attended (check all that apply)

☐ 9:00am Sunday, Sanctuary Worship ☐ 6:00pm Wednesday, Celebration Worship
☐ 10:30am Sunday, Celebration Worship

Learn: I am interested in (*Someone will be in touch*)

☐ Bible study (Weekly or Monthly)
☐ Young Adult Ministry and Events (ages 18-35ish)
☐ I need information on registering my child(ren) for church school/confirmation/Vacation Bible School

Serve & Share: I am interested in: (*check time and circle specific interests*) - someone will be in touch

I can help serve

☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Annually ☐ Special Events

Serve:

Weekly/Monthly

- ◇ Worship Assistance (usher, reader, communion preparation/clean-up)
- ◇ Education/Faith Formation Ministries: church school teacher, confirmation small group leader, etc.
- ◇ Music Volunteer (vocal or instrumental)
- ◇ Altar Guild (Weekly cleaning and preparation of worship spaces)
- ◇ Media & Technology: computer visuals attendant, live stream attendant, photographer, etc.
- ◇ Welcome Center or Baptism greeter

Monthly

- ◇ Ministry Teams (see attached list & note those of interest)
- ◇ Fellowship (before/after Worship): bring treats or serve/clean-up treats

Annually

- ◇ Vacation Bible School
- ◇ Attend Synod Assembly *First weekend in June*
- ◇ Help serve at outreach events in the community (Love Feast, Mission Picnic, LaGrave on First picnic, Free Lunch Friday at Christus Rex)
- ◇ Fall Bazaar (make items for bake sale, make crafts for sale, assist with event) *First Sat. in November*
- ◇ Christmas decorating/de-decorating *First Week*
- ◇ Spring Rummage sale (set-up/sort, assist at sale, clean-up) *Middle of May*

Special Events

- ◇ Funerals (prepare meal, serve, bring bars)
- ◇ Lefse Preparation
- ◇ Craft making—Quilters, card ministry, liturgical decorations
- ◇ Meal Ministry (bring meals to individuals experiencing illness/hospitalization/loss)
- ◇ Shut-in Visits (visit members who are unable to leave their homes)
- ◇ Prayer Chain (receive emails with prayer requests)
- ◇ Backpack food program (assist in packing week-end food for area children in need)
- ◇ Help with office tasks (mailings, receptionist, etc.)
- ◇ Help with internal and/or external maintenance of the church building
- ◇ Care for flowers in worship spaces and/or outdoor gardens

Share:

I have a special/unique skill or interest I can share (*job, hobby, life skill—graphic design, theater, budget, etc.*):

Needs of the people in our congregation, community and world:

What ministry at Sharon has impacted or met my needs? *(Circle all that apply)*

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| ◇ Worship | ◇ Youth Ministry |
| ◇ Teaching | ◇ Children's Ministry |
| ◇ Serving | ◇ Music |
| ◇ Pastoral Care | ◇ Other: _____ |

Share: What talents or interests do you have? *(Circle all that apply)*

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| ◇ Music | ◇ Leadership |
| ◇ Reading | ◇ Praying |
| ◇ Teaching | ◇ Hands on Labor |
| ◇ Volunteering | ◇ Visiting/Listening |
| ◇ Public Speaking | ◇ Other: _____ |

Description of Ministry Teams

Community Connections Team - Heightens congregational awareness of societal issues and provides an avenue for members to address these issues.

Education Team - Plans, administers, directs, and supervises the total educational program of the congregation.

Fellowship Team - Strengthens the fellowship between the members of our church, both spiritually and socially.

Properties Team - Assures the proper maintenance and repair of church property, and ensures general protection of the congregation against loss or damage of whatever nature.

Stewardship Team - Develops effective stewardship within the congregation around faithful giving and service.

Sharon Cares Team- Helps the church stay connected to those members who are unable to attend Sharon and its activities, have experienced a death in their family, and/or are experiencing health concerns. The team also provides staff recognition and thank yous, supports the transportation ministry and the hands up ministry.

Youth Ministry Team - Involve the young people of the congregation in the work of Christ, provide for their spiritual growth and nurture, and promote genuine Christian fellowship for the young people of the congregation.

Outreach Team—The Outreach Team works to build connections between our church, our members, and our community; with the goal of providing opportunities for everyone to know and experience the love of Jesus.

Worship Team—The Worship Ministry Team is responsible for the supervision of the entirety of congregational worship.



2026 Estimate of Giving

“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” ~ Luke 12:34

- ☐ I/We will uphold the congregation with my prayers, presence, gifts, and service.
- ☐ My/Our estimate of giving is \$_____ (per week, per month, or per year) to the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ through Sharon Lutheran.
- ☐ I/We would like to use Direct Giving (formerly Simply Giving) for all or a portion of my commitment. Please check all that apply of the following:
- ☐ I/We are currently enrolled in Direct Giving.
- ☐ Please increase my/our donation effective _____ (date) by \$_____.
- ☐ I /We wish to enroll in Direct Giving (Please fill out and return form on the back)
- ☐ I/We would like information about Sharon Lutheran’s Endowment Fund.
- ☐ I/We would like to talk to a pastor or other leader about how I/we can be more involved at Sharon Lutheran.
- ☐ I am/We are not able to estimate my/our giving at this time.

My/Our 2026 Estimate of Giving is \$_____ (please circle one: per week, per month, per year)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email: _____

Envelope # (if known) _____

The goal of our Stewardship Ministry is to help God’s people grow in their relationship with Jesus through the use of the time, talents, and resources God has entrusted them.



1720 South 20th St
Grand Forks, ND 58201

701-772-3122
www.sharonlutheran.org

By God's Grace...
Created to Worship, Called to Teach, Committed to Serve



**Join us Tuesday, January 6 at
5 pm to help take down
Christmas Decorations!**

Church Office Hours

Monday - Friday 8:30 am to 5:00 pm

Worship Times

Sundays

9:00 am Sanctuary,
10:30 Celebration Hall

Wednesdays

6:00 pm Celebration Hall