



The Flame

Byron United Methodist Church
Byron, MN

OCTOBER 2025

FROM THE PASTOR: Have you noticed a few extra lines of text in the bulletin this fall? They have started appearing underneath the sermon title, and they look something like this:

Sermon

“The Kingdom’s Cost”

Good News: God works with and within those who enter the covenant, so that we can fulfill our obligations.

Discipleship: Don’t just wait for the Lord. Do. Obey. Work. Love.

My Response:

The first line is the “Good News” statement. What is the good news in the scripture passage(s) for that particular worship service? Or, in other words, what does the Bible tell us that God does for us? It is good news for us that God doesn’t leave us to our own strength and devices to do what God expects of us. God works with and within us so that we can do it (*Philippians 2:12-13*).

But we know that God also expects each of us to do our part as followers of Jesus Christ who hope in his promises. We are supposed to love God and to love others, even our enemies, through acts of worship, devotion, justice, and compassion, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. And so, the second line is the “Discipleship” statement. What does the Bible tell us to do as Jesus’ disciples?

My question to you is this – are you accepting the Good News without engaging in the Discipleship? Do you rejoice in God’s abundant mercy and steadfast love while ignoring the obligations of life with God? Do you take the time to ask yourself these questions and to regularly examine your heart openly and honestly?

In this, too, God will work with you and within you! And I strongly encourage you to join a small group in our church. We dedicated our first covenant small group on Sunday, October 5th. Talk with Marlene Abel, Dawn Bowe, Terry Egbers, Chris Miller, Ann Riggs, or Kelly VanDeWalker about their experience in the group. They will be happy to tell you about it.

Work with God who works within you, do your part, and each week, you will know how to respond faithfully to Jesus’ call to discipleship.

Pastor Andy Petter

READY, SET, WORSHIP! and LIFT: The next Ready, Set, Worship! is on **Sunday, October 12th**. Note that we moved this service to the second Sunday of the month. Also, we started a new program to follow RSW! called LIFT (Living in Faith Together) that replaces the regular Sunday school and coffee fellowship. As with RSW!, LIFT will be for people of all ages. Lunch will be included as part of LIFT as we play together, pray together, study God’s word together, and eat together as a church family.



ANNUAL CHARGE CONFERENCE: Byron UMC will be joining with other area UM churches in a Cluster Charge Conference to be held on Sunday, October 26, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. at Christ UMC in Rochester. All are invited to attend.

CHOIR ANNOUNCEMENT: The Grace Notes Choir holds weekly practice on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. If you would like to sing with us, feel free to show up for rehearsal. Please contact Pastor Andy with any questions.

SUNDAY SCHOOL 2025-2026: We have classes for pre-K to 1st grade, 2nd to 3rd grade, 4th to 6th grade, and youth. All are welcome! If you have any questions or would be interested in helping with Sunday school, please speak with Kelly VanDeWalker.

FINANCE SUMMARY: The following is a summary of the General Fund ending Sept. 30, 2025.

beginning balance Sept. 1, 2025:	\$ 7,884.37
plus Sept. income:	\$ 11,736.00
plus transfer from memorial savings	\$ 615.48
less Sept. expenses:	\$ 13,944.58
ending balance Sept. 30, 2025:	\$ 6,291.27

CREATION CARE TIPS - The Great Climate Migration: Millions in the US are leaving their homes due to extreme weather. Is any place safe?

A Vermont real estate agent has been busy with clients and they are not looking for a change of scenery. People from New Orleans and Florida are trying to escape hurricanes. A couple from Austin, Texas were worried they might not survive if the air conditioning quit with 100 days of 100 degree temperatures. A family from Cape Cod thought their beach front home would probably be washed away in the next 15 years or be unsellable.

Besides weather, the cost of staying put has become unsustainable. Insurance premiums in high-risk areas have jumped 31% - if you can even find insurance. 5 million Americans are expected to relocate this year (1% of the population) and 55 million in the next 3 decades.

Climate havens like Duluth, MN and Asheville, North Carolina have drawn increasing numbers of migrants. People who fled from Hurricane Katrina or smoke in Colorado to Asheville discovered no matter how much research you do, no place is safe from the effects of climate change.

Not everyone can afford to move. The key to preventing a worsening crisis is to double down on global efforts to cut greenhouse gases, strengthen communities' ability to withstand and recover from climate related threats, upgrade infrastructure to withstand floods, invest in decentralized power grids, rebuilding wetlands and oyster reefs, invest in energy storage technologies, etc. to build resilience against climate disasters.

Solutions Vol.56. No.3 / Summer 2025 By Tom Clynes. Article submitted by Cathy Huntoon.

PRAYERS FOR ONE ANOTHER:

For those who need healing: God of compassion, source of life and health, strengthen, restore, and relieve those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, especially now: Ruth Wescott (cousin of Janet Sinning), Julie McCoy, Sandy Fitzpatrick (niece of Karin Byers), Suzy Anderson, Karin Byers, Loren Walters, Donna Walters, Claire Field, Nancy Kelly, Doris Frey, Treaver Bleichner (grandson of Julene Bleichner), Dick Hart (brother of Judy Luttmers), David Larsen, Calvin Bell, Vicki McIntosh, Paige Reder, Sara (granddaughter of Anita Carlson), Max Smith (son of Barb Smith), Wayne Petersen (friend of Julene Bleichner), Debbie Webb, so that they may receive healing and help in You.

For those who have died: Eternal God, by Your steadfast love, open Your arms of mercy to those who have died, especially now: Jared White; Jim Miller (brother of Suzy Anderson); Kirsten Hart (mother of Aubree, Gauge and Hunter); Patricia Klingsporn, Debbie Schwartz (sister of Kathy Nerlien); Dan McCollough, Russ Wright, Anita Nelsen, Rev. Deanna Woodward (daughter of the late Ken and Lennis Sigrist), Greg Rud, Dawn Bidwell, Jean Franklin (mother of Rev. Sharon Nelson), Loyola Shappell, William 'Dirk' Dehn, Ron Fogelson; that they may find their place with You.

For those who mourn: Gracious God, whose Son knew our sorrows, our tears, and our death, look with compassion on those who grieve, especially now: the family of Jared White; the family of Jim Miller; the family of Kirsten Hart; the family of Patricia Klingsporn; the family of Debbie Schwartz; the family of Dan McCollough; the family of Russ Wright; the family of Anita Nelsen; the family of Rev. Deanna Woodward; the family of Greg Rud; the family of Dawn Bidwell; the family of Jean Franklin; the family of Loyola Shappell; the family of William 'Dirk' Dehn; the family of Ron Fogelson; and all their friends who mourn with them, so that they may be comforted by Your sure presence and filled with hope in Your goodness.

For the homebound, those in care facilities, and their caregivers: God of all seasons of life, bring comfort to those who are vulnerable, tired, or weak, especially now: Suzy Anderson, David Larsen, Nancy Kelly, Bette Josephson, Calvin Bell, Loren Walters, Donna Walters, Alan Bourquin, Debbie Byers, John Lloyd, Carol Ramthun, Barb Smith; so that they may be blessed and at peace each day. Inspire and encourage those who care for them, so that their work may be filled with grace and their love may be multiplied.

For those who celebrate: God of blessing, we praise You for the joy we have received and the gift we have in one another. We lift up special thanks for those who celebrate milestones in life – birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, the birth of a child, graduations, promotions, and new jobs – and we ask Your continued blessing upon them, now and always.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

If you or someone you know would like to be included in these prayers, please contact Pastor Andy directly at 210-288-9477 or Andrew.L.Petter@gmail.com.

BEARPACK PROGRAM: Byron UMC continues its pledge to give \$200 monthly (Sept. – May) toward the BearPack Program with Byron Schools. This program helps those families with children in need in our schools. *All donations at coffee fellowship time go toward this fund.* Please consider supporting this great need in our community by giving generously to the cookie jar each week!

TRUSTEE'S SEEKING VOLUNTEERS: The trustees are always seeking volunteers for any variety of jobs, anywhere from mowing the lawn, maintaining the flower bed, or any special inside cleaning or upkeep that either you see needing to be done and are willing to do. Use your time and talent to help keep your church in good shape. Contact Roger Vick with any questions or ideas.

WOMEN'S SHELTER AND SUPPORT CENTER: Byron UMC's ongoing mission is support for the Womens' Shelter and Support Center. They also shelter men and their families (pets are welcome too) that need to get out of an abusive situation as well. Once they have a safe place to live they need to set up house and we can help by donating items to the shelter for them. There is a receptacle in the narthex for your donations. You aren't obligated to donate expensive items or donate at all. Help if you can. Here is a list of needed items:

School supplies: Scissors, Folders plastic (Red, Blue, Yellow and Green), Crayons, Colored pencils, Highlighters, Markers, Pencils (sharpened preferred), Erasers, Glue (bottles and sticks).

Gift Cards - Visa, Target, Walmart, Hy-Vee, Kwik Trip (Gas, Food, Supplies, Car Repairs, etc.)

Kids Activities gift cards i.e. Movie passes, Bowling, Bounce House, Dairy Queen, McDonalds, Pizza places, Arcade, etc.

Adult color/activity books & colored pencils

Non-Perishable Food / Snacks (individual packets, i.e. Potato chips, granola bars, fruit bars, pretzel bits, raisins, fruit packets, animal crackers, and microwave popcorn

Baby wipes, Pull-ups (size 3-4T, 5-6T).

Paper products (toilet paper, napkins, tissues); **Cleaning Supplies** (dish soap, toilet bowl cleaner, disinfectant spray)

Eco-friendly plates, bowls (microwaveable) **cutlery.**

Kitchen Utensils (spatulas, whisks, wooden spoons, measuring cups/spoons, peelers, graters, cutting boards, knife sets, ladles, can openers, kitchen scissors, baking sheets, pot holders)

New Pots & Pans, Small Appliances (Coffee pots, mixers, can openers, etc.)

New Pillows, New Bath Towels, New Twin Sheet sets, Women's PJ's - all sizes

New Laptops & Tablets, New Tracphones

Shampoo and conditioner (full-sized)

If you have something you think they could use not on the list, please contact Janet Sinning at jsinning@charter.net or 507-251-1657.

LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING MINUTES: September 17th at 7:30 p.m.

In attendance – Terri Nelson, Cathy Huntoon, Roger Vick, Kelly VanDeWalker, Holly Rolandson, Pastor Andy Petter.

Welcome time - Terri Nelson, chair.

Old Business: Mystery Guest – Pastor Andy continues to work on options for a Mystery Guest program.

New Business: No new business at this time.

Committee Updates:

Trustees: Roger Vick shared information on the UM Builders Club Scholarship Program. We have missed the deadline for this year but the trustees will be working on submitting a request for 2026. Potential projects include stair treads, asbestos removal, lawn mower replacement. The committee reviewed the facilities inventory management spreadsheet. Additional updates included window replacement. Xcel Energy billable demand rate was exceeded this summer which means the previous basic rate charges changed to general service rate charges which impacts our electric cost for the church. Roger and Karen will monitor and provide an update at our next meeting. Roger will develop a “how to start the boiler” instruction sheet which will be posted by the boiler.

Finance: Al Miller provided the treasurer report as of 8/31/2025. General checking balance - \$12,358.33. Memorial account balance - \$11,160.76. Savings account balance - \$10,475.34.

SPRC: Job descriptions are completed. The SPRC team will continue to roll out the “Rule of Christ” training. The team will also be working with Finance to complete the pastor compensation package for 2026.

Missions: Solar kits have been purchased. Confirmants and other interested youth will be working on October 22nd to complete the kits.

Education: Sunday School classes have started - four classes and confirmation are meeting. This year the theme is Fruit of the Spirit. Third graders will receive their Bibles in October.

Pastor Report: Pastor Andy has started a monthly Bible study for residents at Madonna Towers. Pastor Andy has been approached by Butch Lewellin to engage in justice work with ISAIAH; request pending. The church has been contacted by Olmsted County Commissioners to use the building for a public Q&A session they are holding on Oct 2nd, members supported the request. On Oct 5th, a covenant service will be held with conference superintendent Rev. Michelle Hargrave providing the sermon. The service will be lifting up the fruits from the covenant group which recently formed. Pastor Andy is looking into providing ministry at the Olmsted County Adult Detention Center. Living in Faith Together (LIFT) sessions will continue to be held on the 2nd Sunday of each month. Funding to purchase more LIFT curriculum will be needed. The size of the confirmation class will be 2-4 people.

Follow-up Items for October Leadership meeting – mission projects for Advent and Christmas; time for Christmas Eve service. Next meeting is scheduled for October 8th at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting was closed with prayer. Minutes submitted by Terri Nelson.

ONLINE GIVING: Offerings can be made using electronic fund transfers from your bank account or by credit/debit card and have the option to be set as a recurring gift. Please go to <https://byronmn.umcchurches.org/giving> which takes you to the giving page or scan this QR code with your smartphone. Once there, follow the instructions for registration.



USE FULL CHURCH ADDRESS FOR MAILING: When sending mail to the church, please be sure to include the P.O. Box 146 in the address. The post office has been returning mail to senders when the PO Box # is not included. Please use 503 1st Ave. NW, PO Box 146, Byron, MN 55920.

CHURCH CONTACTS:

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