

Alamance Lutheran Church

January News Notes



Our Mission: "Alamance Evangelical Lutheran Church empowered by the Holy Spirit, worships and praises our Lord, loves and serves others, as Jesus Christ taught, and shares the Good News of God's gift of salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Adopted 11-23-1997

"Resolve to perform what you ought. Perform without fail what you resolve."

Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography, (1791), 2

Words from our Pastor

Dear Church,

The start of a New Year often begins with New Year's resolutions. Often people think they will exercise more and eat less, or at least healthier, as part of the promises they make to themselves. Maybe you have noticed the increase of exercise equipment advertisements and diet pills and plans that also promise to help you achieve all that you dream. I have fallen prey to the same.

Business people are also busy setting their goals for the year, if they have not already, and what they will do to achieve them. They may subscribe to motivational seminars and books with the same good intentions as those of us who hope to achieve slimmer waistlines, lower cholesterol, lower blood pressure, and a less wrinkled appearance.

The truth is, no matter what season of life or work that we find ourselves in, the reasonable goals we set now give us something to aim for. My Grandpa often encouraged our ability to accomplish whatever

we put our minds to, when we would “keep our nose to the grindstone.” I have often quoted the late motivational author Stephen Covey who said “begin with the end in mind” because setting reasonable goals is true. In fact, that is what led America to put a man on the moon when President John F. Kennedy set that goal. That intentionality has also led Alamance Lutheran to continue to expand in various ways with capital improvements and in mission by listening to the Holy Spirit’s inspiration.

When Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 3:7-9 he was encouraging them to remain faithful.

⁷For this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith. ⁸ For now we live, if you are standing fast in the Lord. ⁹ For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God.

Alamance Lutheran can draw great comfort knowing that we remain faithful to serving Christ and looking forward to being inspired by the Holy Spirit’s inspiration. Although our waistlines may not change or that exercise bike may sit in the spare room untouched, the community of faith of Alamance Lutheran will continue to remain faithful to serving Christ with our tithes and our presence in gratitude to Jesus.

Epiphany Blessings,

Pastor Ron Philabaum

Live Nativity: Thanks to all who helped make the Live Nativity a success. Special thanks to Esther for managing the costumes, Kathy for the hot chocolate, and John R. with the sound and video. Thank God for the great weather too; one little shower.

From the Council: The Council met on December 17th. We appreciate the support from the Congregation for the 2024 Budget recognizing there are some significant increases. We also appreciate your support for the election of Claire and Rhoda as our new Council members. The first meeting of the new Council will be on January 28th where we will elect new officers and adjust our ministry team liaison assignments.

At the Council meeting, the Finance team made a recommendation to move money from the Wells Fargo investment account to the checking account to be available for expected endowment grants. Fifteen thousand from the Black and General endowment fund and \$10K from the Gilmore Fund. Two grants from the Black and General endowment fund were proposed. These grants are \$2K to support our 2023 commitment to the “Be the Light” campaign, and \$6K to increase our 2023 Synod support, which has been significantly below synod guidance the past several years. The grants are consistent with the terms of the Black and General endowment fund to use earnings from the fund to support specific ministries. The transfer of the Gilmore fund will be used to fund the initial engineering work on the new accessibility ramp in the Sanctuary.

We expressed appreciation for the years Cindy Milling has served on the Council. Thank you for your service, Cindy!

Our Council retreat is scheduled for February 24th at Twin Lakes. Ted will be asking the Synod for assistance providing a facilitator for the retreat.

“Be the Light” Campaign: It is apparent we need to help the Congregation have a better understanding of what Lutheran Services Carolina is wanting to achieve with this campaign. The focus is on helping brain injured individuals in our communities, many of whom are veterans, by providing seed money to expand services. We will be providing more information soon. If you have any questions about “Be the Light,” please reach out to: [Kirk Tucker](#)

From the Finance Team: Through November 2023, total General Fund Giving YTD was \$161,613. Operation Expenses YTD were \$196,289. Loss YTD is \$34,677. We anticipate our year end deficit to be about \$40,000, which can be covered with tower fund revenue.

As we look around at each other, there is no question we are an aging congregation. Generous donors in the past have provided ALC endowment funds and property that surrounds our church. Are you thinking about the legacy you can provide to ALC in the future just as those generous donors have done in the past?

Our three-year goal is to double the number of active participants at ALC on a regular basis. It is important for us to welcome new members to support and grow our ministries and share our financial needs. Expenses are increasing for maintenance and improvements to our facilities, insurance, salaries and benefits, and last but not least, expanding our ministries.

From the Christian Education and Youth Team:

We hope to have candidates attend The National Youth Gathering in 2024. The Bishop and Synod have an ambitious plan to raise funds to support sending youth to the gathering next year.

We are also looking for unused musical instruments you might have tucked away in the attic, garage, or closet. If you have any you are willing to part with, we believe they can be part of a future youth ministry. Talk to Ted if you have something to donate.

From Evangelism/Social Ministry: Our Christmas CHEER PROJECT was a massive success thanks to this small, mighty, loving congregation! We collected over \$2000 and were able to give



Mr. Graves and the De Lac family a wonderful Christmas. When Lynn and Kurt Tucker delivered the gifts to Mr. Graves, he repeatedly said how thankful he was to be remembered on Christmas. Marty and Terry

Adams delivered the gifts to Victoria and her mom Henrietta. They had to take two cars because the two bicycles and mounds of presents for the three children wouldn't fit into one. Victoria sent an e-mail with some pictures (see below) after Christmas, again expressing how overwhelmed they were with our generosity. Even their dogs and cats expressed thanks for the large bags of food. In addition to the generous donations, there were many hands who made this all possible:

Shoppers: Marty and Terry Adams, Don and Donna Eash, Kathy Ritchey and Kerry Sullivan, Kirk and Lynn Tucker, Tony and Lisa Lewis

Wrappers: Becky Capps, Wanda Patterson, Ron and Esther Philabaum, Lisa and Tony Lewis, Kirk and Lynn Tucker, Marty and Terry Adams, Kathy and John Ritchey, Kerry Sullivan, Patrick Sullivan, Rebecca Maness, Roy and Katie Whitehead, Bob Hawkins, and Diane Gural

Dinner for the wrapping party: Kirk and Lynn Tucker

Christmas wrapping paper and bags: Diane Gural



Thank you for continuing to support food donations for the Dream Center. We will be collecting *rice* for the Dream Center in January. *Pasta* in February.

We are helping Allied Churches with food preparation each month. Marty and Terry for January. Pastor Bob and Pastor John in February. Lynn is preparing the schedule. See her if you want to volunteer.

Although some of our regulars were missing for the Lunch Bunch gathering in our Fellowship Hall in December, we had a good turnout. Sitting around the tables so we could see each other provided great fellowship. The fried chicken from Lowes Foods was delicious as were

the variety of sides provided by participants. We will be doing it again! In the meantime, the next lunch bunch will be at Mellow Mushroom, 767 Huffman Mill Road, Burlington, on **January 11th** at 11:30. Come and join us!

The Blessing Box outdoor food pantry has been installed. Thanks to Tony Lewis, with help from our new Girl Scout Troop, it has been built and delivered. Many folks helped to make this a reality. Food has already been placed in the box, even without any signage. Pastor John and Rhoda have received a Thrivent grant for initial stocking of the pantry. Katie and Roy used a Thrivent grant from 2023 to help with building supplies and will apply for another grant to cover further stocking of the pantry this year. If you would like to donate unexpired, nonperishable food items to the Blessing Box, they are welcome. Lynn will provide more information to the congregation about what we would like the pantry to be stocked with. More canned goods in the colder months, other nonperishable foods in the warmer months.

Our next “Because of You...” potluck luncheon will be held on **January 21st** following church with a presentation from Kelli Stutts, Founder and Executive Director at Connect4Faith. Connect4Faith is an Alamance County organization whose mission is to *“Prevent child sexual abuse, exploitation, and sex trafficking through providing knowledge, resources, awareness and action.”* Connect4Faith has been using office space at the church for the past year.

Visit the ALC website to see the improvements. One area of emphasis right now is ensuring that our [church calendar](#) is up to date. More and

more people are making use of our space (that's a good thing), but it also means we must be careful about not overbooking. **If you are planning on using any space for an event or meeting, please let Marty know so that she can make sure it is added to the calendar.**

Our next meeting will be January 4th at 4:30 pm.

From Worship and Music: We have greatly enhanced our on-line streaming technology. Have you tried it out? We now can provide a high-quality experience when folks cannot be present for worship. (It is better if you come and be physically present, not just for you, for all of us and our faith community.) John R. is looking to train some additional operators for the system.

The new system allows direct streaming to Facebook Live. You do not need a Facebook account to access the live stream on Facebook. Just go to the Facebook website.

We had a great turnout for the Christmas Eve service. Over seventy-five attendees. Matt also did a great job providing special music for the program.

From the Cemetery Team: All residents are resting peacefully. If you are a voting member or an immediate family member of a voting member, you qualify for a free space in ALC's cemetery or memorial garden. Let Pastor Ron know if you are interested.

From the Hospitality Team: We plan to support the January 21st "Because of You..." luncheon. Goodies are being provided

in the Gathering Space for some social time following our services. Thanks to Kathy and Cindy for the work they are doing.

The next Red Cross Blood Drive will be February 9th from 12:30-5:30pm. You can already sign up online. The last two drives have been very successful. ALC is a great location and has developed a group of “regular givers”.

From the Stewardship Team: The team did not meet in December but has already begun planning an exciting new initiative for 2024. Stay tuned.

Next Meeting: January 13 at 10:00am

From the Property Team: The trees are gone! Thanks to the lumberjacks that removed them and all the debris. It really clears the front of the church.

Engineering studies are underway on the new ramp proposal in the Sanctuary. We shared the concept with you at the December congregation meeting. The ramp is a first step. Our longer-term goal is for an elevator from the Fellowship Hall to the upper levels of our building.

Generous donors have provided funds for improvements to our facilities and for improved sound systems. John R. has provided the Council with proposals for the improved sound systems in the Sanctuary and the Chapel. We are truly blessed with generous anonymous donors.

Fall Festival: We are looking for someone to step up and lead the planning for our Festival in 2024. If you want more information or are interested, talk to Pastor Ron.

Some Other Words: Planning for next year's Plaid Day has already begun. It will be held at Alamance Lutheran Church again because of the Church's historic significance to the community in May. We hope to build on the success of this year's event. Continuing to build on our long-term relationship with the village.

SAVE THE DATE: Annual Mother's Day Tea - May 4, 2023

How have you experienced God in your life? Something to ponder and to share!

Schedule for January: The schedule is our best shot of what's happening looking from the end of the previous month. For a more accurate and up to date look at the calendar. Check the ALC website and weekly bulletin.

- *January 3rd: Food prep at Allied Churches 9:00am Marty and Terry. ALANON 10:00am*
- *January 4th: Evangelism/Social Ministry 4:30pm*
- *January 6th: Men's Breakfast and Bible Study 8:30am*
- *January 10th: ALANON 10:00am*
- *January 11th: Lunch Bunch lunch at Mellow Mushroom (767 Huffman Mill Road) 11:30am. Come and join us!*
- *January 13th: Stewardship Meeting 10:00am*

- *January 17th: ALANON 10:00am*
- *January 21st: “Because of You...” potluck 11:00 am – Connect4Faith presentation*
- *January 24th: ALANON 10:00am*
- *January 28: Noisy Offering Sunday. Finance Committee Meeting 5:00pm; Church Council 6:00pm*
- *January 31st: ALANON 10:00am*

Serving This Month

SERVING DURING JANUARY

	Altar Set-up	Communion Set-up	Worship Assistant/ Reader	Greeters	Ushers
January 7	Diane Gural	Sandy Kirkpatrick	Kathy Ritchey	Donna Eash	Terry Adams Ted Milling
January 14	Diane Gural	Sandy Kirkpatrick	Pastor Bob Hawkins	Wanda Patterson	Roy Whitehead John Ritchey
January 21	Diane Gural	Sandy Kirkpatrick	Marty and Terry Adams	Kerry Sullivan	Jerry Combs Pastor John Weinbach
January 28	Diane Gural	Sandy Kirkpatrick	Pastor John Weinbach	Roy and Katie Whitehead	Pastor Bob Hawkins Hugh Smith

Please let Kirk Tucker (kirktucker44@gmail.com, 262-853-0373) know of any Church related events or announcements to be included in future news notes. News notes for each month will be sent to members and friends of Alamance Lutheran Church the last week of the preceding month.

***Our Three-Year Goal: Double the number of people regularly worshipping
at Alamance Lutheran Church***

Our actions need to support this goal. Each worship committee will focus their efforts on meeting this goal. Resource decisions (time and money) will be made with this goal as the driver. This does not mean that we will not do anything else, it just means that our driving focus will be to meet the goal.