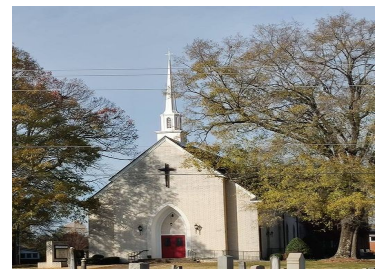


The Beacon

*"I can do all things through Christ
which strengtheneth me."*

Philippians 4:13



Volume 11

June 2026

Issue 121

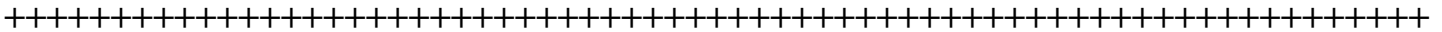
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**Sherrie McKean, Secretary
Office Hours: 9:00 am-1:00 pm
Monday-Friday
Gary Reitzel, Custodian**

**Council Members: Wesley Stinson (Vice Chair), Karen Stewart (Secretary),
Celia Reece (Treasurer), Robert & Darbie Crouch, Kristen Link,
Kristy Painter, Ashton Hatley, and Tanya Stinson**



GIVING THANKS FOR WORD OF GOD.

A Reflection and Prayer on Psalm 122

from Martin Luther

The 122nd Psalm is a psalm that gives thanks with joy for the Word of God, which in a specific city, namely Jerusalem, was given through a specific people, namely Levites and kings, and received by specific hearers, namely the tribe of Israel. How much it is to be lamented that, seeking everywhere to be God's Word and being nowhere able to find it, the children of Israel wound their way to idols? And we Christians did the same by running to pilgrimages and winding our way to the cloister. But the Holy Church is our Jerusalem, and Christ is our temple, city, altar, and mercy seat, to which, from which, and with which we seek and hear his Word.

*122 I was glad when they said to me,
"Let us go to the house of the LORD!"
2 Our feet have been standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem!
3 Jerusalem—built as a city
that is bound firmly together,
4 to which the tribes go up,
the tribes of the LORD,
as was decreed for Israel,
to give thanks to the name of the LORD.
5 There thrones for judgment were set,
the thrones of the house of David.
6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem!
"May they be secure who love you!
7 Peace be within your walls
and security within your towers!"
8 For my brothers and companions' sake
I will say, "Peace be within you!"
9 For the sake of the house of the LORD our God,
I will seek your good.*

Our hearts are glad and our souls rejoice before You, Lord, our God, because by Your Word of truth you have made us members of Your Holy Church, in which you daily and richly forgive the sins of all those who build their trust on Jesus Christ. Grant us grace to abide in the love of Your Word, purity of faith and in piety of life, even to our end.

("Reading the Psalms with Luther." Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis: 2007, p. 303-304)



JOIN US FOR BIBLE STUDY

Tuesday Nights - 7:00 pm in the Library to study the upcoming Sunday scriptures.



CATECHISM INSTRUCTION for 5th, 6th and 7th GRADERS

Confirmation Saturday

Sept. 19 9:30 am - 12:00 pm



WEEKLY SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES (9:30am)

Children	Upstairs	Infant - 4 years
Children	Upstairs	Grades K-4 th
Youth	Upstairs	Grades 5 th -12 th
Adults	Library	
Adults	Fellowship Building	

WOMEN'S GROUP meets on Monday, June 1st at 7:00 pm.

WOMEN'S CRAFT DAY is Thursday, June 4th at 2:00 pm.

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE meets on Wednesday, June 10th at 6:30 pm in the Library.

CHURCH COUNCIL meets on Thursday, June 18th at 6:30 pm in the Library.

WOMEN'S CRAFT DAY WITH LUNCH is Tuesday, June 16th at 10:00 am.

MEN'S BREAKFAST is Sunday, June 28th at 8:00 am.

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS are in the Secretary's office following Worship Service on Sunday, June 28th.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL - July 16th & 17th from 5-8:30 pm, with dinner starting at 5:30 pm each night. All ages are welcome. The Theme this year is "Let Your Light Shine".

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EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

In May the Committee handed out carnations to our mothers in the Congregation so that we could honor and remember them. So, as to not leave the fathers out.. on Father's Day, June 21st, they will be receiving something. I wonder what it could be?? You will have to wait and see!!

Be sure to put on your calendars that at 3:00 pm on Sunday, July 19th, the Cockman Family will be back after two years to sing and play for us in the Fellowship Building. We will be serving homemade ice creams and desserts. Tell all your family and friends!!

Thank you!
Gary

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This piano that has been in the Fellowship Building is available to anyone who would like to have it. We have a new keyboard and the piano is no longer needed. If you would like the piano, please let Pastor Ken know.



1. Donovan Painter, Daniel Sipe
2. Stephanie Dixon
3. Mildred Gilbert, Julia Seitz, Jerry Sipe
5. Daniel Clay Sipe
10. Ps. Ken Reed, Sue Rogers, Melinda Sipe
11. George Young
15. Terry Self
17. Rorie Grace Jordan, Janice Kelly, Hailee Moose,
18. Sharon Sipe
20. Ruby Sigmon
22. Brenda Schlie
23. Lori Devine
24. Zachery Link, Avalee O'Brien
25. Ben Devine
27. Lisa Chapman
28. Stephanie Heavner
29. Kevin Sipe
30. Clint Burgess

4. Benji Burgess
5. Chris Clark
6. Jerry Abernathy, Travis Lee
9. John Schlie, Jon Travis, Glenda Verbos
10. Wrenn Travis
11. Louis Setzer
12. Tina Beal, Brian Sipe, Sandra Turner
13. David Arndt
14. Rodney Miller
15. Riley Young
18. Marilyn Craig
21. Emma Dixon
23. Linda Carswell
25. Jean Link, Robin Sigmon, Brent Stewart
26. Gary Burgess, Reagan Painter
31. Noah Dixon



2. Mr. & Mrs. Steve Beal
9. Mr. & Mrs. David Hawn
11. Mr. & Mrs. David Link
15. Mr. & Mrs. David Arndt
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Seitz Jr
19. Mr. & Mrs. Earl Sipe
27. Mr. & Mrs. Wesley Stinson
29. Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Stikeleather

2. Mr. & Mrs. George Young
3. Mr. & Mrs. Bob Hullet
5. Mr. & Mrs. Ron Sipe
8. Mr. & Mrs. Jared Little
20. Ps. & Mrs. Ken Reed
Mr. & Mrs. Brent Stewart
22. Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Cline

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THE LAITY TEAM

The Laity Team plans to meet monthly to assess the current status of Church members. Prayers, cards, encouragement, and support to each other is our calling from our Lord.

Kristy Painter or Keeley Stikeleather, co-chairs, may be contacted. The committee consists of Robin Burgess, Betty Hawn, Sue Lindley, and Claire Sipe. God's continued blessings and peace to everyone.

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Reflecting the Father's Name



Renowned actor Sidney Poitier once said, "I decided in my life that I would do nothing that did not reflect positively on my father's life." For those blessed with a father they admire and respect, such a decision can be deeply shaping. How might it influence the way you set priorities, live with integrity, or serve as a positive example to the young people watching your life?

For all of us — children of the only perfect Father — may this be our prayer and intention:

God, while earthly fathers are a blend of strengths and flaws, you give yourself to us as our heavenly Father, wholly loving, kind and deeply invested in our good. Help me seek to reflect positively on you. May my life spread your love, kindness and care far and wide, and may others see you in me. Amen.

Report from the 2026 NALC Convocation of the Carolinas Mission Region

Pastor Ken with Celia & Joel Reece were St. James' delegates to this annual convocation that met May 1st and 2nd at Christiana Lutheran Church in Granite Quarry, NC. There are currently 58 congregations in the Carolinas (38 in NC and 20 in SC). Each day began and ended with meaningful worship with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

The agenda of the event included reports from each of the four Mission District Deans (Catawba Valley, Piedmont East, Southern Piedmont and South Carolina), committee reports, PCAT (Pastoral Care and Transition), mission partners, treasurer's report and breakout sessions.

We also met with all the congregation delegates and pastors of our Catawba Valley Mission District. Rev. Steve Johnson was re-elected as Dean, and Dieter Punt was elected to serve on the Regional Executive Committee.

Here is a summary of the minutes:

- Rev. David Keener, Southeastern Area Assistant to the Bishop spoke about the resources available from the NALC to assist congregations in their ministries, including Renew, Equip, and Transform; Rev. Teresa Peters and Youth and Family ministry. Two ordinations are planned: Robert Dernbach May 17 at Silverstreet Lutheran in Silverstreet, SC and Lucas Safrit in September to Christiana Lutheran, Granite Quarry, NC. Bishop Selbo and Dean Haynes recognized Rev. Bill White for his years of service as the Eastern Assistant to the Bishop, who spoke about evangelism and discipleship.
- North American Lutheran Seminary and Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary's Lutheran Studies Program were addressed by the Director of that program, the Rev. Dr. Nathan Yoder. We currently have 62 NALC seminarians in the NALS network. Steps are being taken to hopefully include the Lutheran Studies Program in the NALC budget. You can audit courses in the program for free if you attend the classes in person. Rev. Yoder thanked Rev. Carl Haynes for all the work he had done to initiate the course of studies at Gordon Conwell and his work on the Advisory Board.
- Convener Carl Haynes then recognized:
 - Pastors who are new to the CMR: Rev. Don Safrit (Interim Faith, Faith, NC), Rev. Peter Feige (Our Savior and Antioch, Dallas, NC); Rev. Terri Landers (Interim Mt. Calvary, Claremont, NC); Rev. Tony Metze (retired from St. Paul, Columbia, SC).
 - Pastors who received new calls: Rev. Rob Crawford to Grace, Washington, NC a Lutheran/Anglican shared congregation; Rev. David Keener to be Southeastern Area Assistant to the Bishop; Rev. David Hefner as Interim at New Jerusalem, Hickory, NC; and Chris Metze to St. Peter's, Chapin, SC.
 - Congregations new to the Mission Region: Silverstreet in Silverstreet, SC; Macedonia in Prosperity, SC; Cedar Grove in Leesville, SC; Mt. Tabor in Little Mountain, SC; St. Paul in Columbia, SC; Christ the King in Evans, GA
 - Candidates for Ministry: Master of Divinity students – Cody Carpenter, Lucas Safrit, James Price, Shane Honig, Melanie Corn, Robert Dernbach, Kyle Page. Deacon Track – Adam Foster.
- Bishop Dan Selbo addressed the convocation. He gave an update of our ministries of the 20/20 Vision. We have grown from 444 to 567 congregations; from 35 to 45 Mission Districts; from 5 to 21 global workers; and from 23 to 66 seminary students. Challenges before us: in the next 8 years about 240 pastors will retire. We have 35 full-time and 28 part-time pastoral vacancies. We are dealing with aging congregations in a changing culture and the political landscape is divisive. Our New Vision is to be striving for excellence – do what we do well. Use this vision to evaluate our pastoral candidates. Renew – know our calling and purpose. Equip – fill the gaps in our growth. Transform – outward-facing posture. Rev. Tom Brashears addressed the convocation concerning Renew, Equip and Transform resources. There are many areas in North America that need the presence of a moderate Lutheran understanding of the Christian faith.
- We gathered in the sanctuary of Christiana for Matins followed with Bible study led by Rev. Matt Knuppel of Grace Lutheran, Pfafftown, NC.
- We attended Breakout Sessions for our Mission District meetings.

Continued on Page 5

- The Council met with the newly elected members to elect a new Convener, since Rev. Carl Haynes would finish his term on the Council at the end of this Convocation, and a Vice President since Rev. Ric Smith resigned to take a full time call as Hospice Chaplain. Rev. Dawn Rister of South Carolina Mission District was elected Convener. Rev. Dieter Punt of the Catawba Valley Mission District was elected V. President. The next meeting date for the Council was set for July 30 at 10:00 am at Holy Trinity, Gastonia.
- A presentation by Rev. Dr. Andrew Weisner was given to Mr. Mervin Cloninger for his many years of service to our Lord Jesus Christ at Antioch Lutheran Church, Dallas, NC and the surrounding community.
- Election results:
 - Piedmont East: Dean, Rev. Heidi Punt, lay representative to Council Janice Poole
 - Catawba Valley: Dean, Rev. Steve Johnson (2nd term as Dean), lay representative Kay Weaver (2nd term), Rev. Dieter Punt to finish Rev. Ric Smith's term ending 2027.
 - South Carolina: lay representative Bradley Shealy
 - Southern Piedmont: Dean Rev. Steven P. King, lay representative Bruce Kiser
 - Convener: Rev. Dawn Rister
 - Vice President: Rev. Dieter Punt
- It was announced that the 2027 Carolinas Mission Region Convocation would be hosted by the Catawba Valley Mission District at St. John's Lutheran Church at 740 N. Center St. in Statesville, NC., April 30 – May 1, 2027
- At 4:05 we had closing worship using Responsive Prayer 2, Installation of the newly elected Council members, Convener and V. President by the Southeastern Area Assistant to the Bishop Rev. David Keener, and liturgy for closing of the Convocation.
- Final Registration: Clergy (voting) 37; Lay Delegates 52 for a total of 89 with voting privileges. Clergy visitors 7; Seminarian 1; guests/visitors 23 for a total of 31 visitors. Total registration 120.

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May 31, 2026 What a beautiful morning for an outdoor service! God's presence was clearly seen and felt: in the soft wind, fluffy clouds, birds twittering, butterflies hovering, and even a lightning bug wanting to see more.



The Ladies' Group would like to thank all who donated items for the Western North Carolina Relief program that Joe and Susie Devine participate in every Thursday.



Can't get to church on Sunday? No problem === you can watch it on YouTube in your pajamas. The Crouch boys didn't have to miss Pastor' Children Sermon.

Submitted by Darbie C.



Gary rang the bell on May 28 - no more cancer, no more chemo. **CONGRATULATIONS GARY!!**

Submitted by Robin B.

SPECIAL DATES IN JUNE

- June 14 Flag Day
- June 19 Juneteenth
- June 21 Father's Day
- June 21 1st Day of Summer

