

The Beacon

"From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised."

Psalm 113:3



Volume 8

December 2023

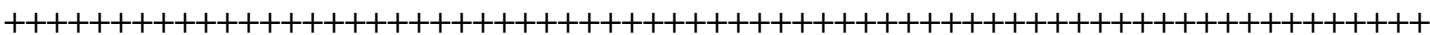
Issue 93

St. James Lutheran Church NALC Telephone: (828) 464-1953 Fax: (828) 465-2084
1942 St. James Church Road Website: stjameslutherannewtonnc.com
Newton, NC 28658 Follow us on Facebook
E-mail church office: secretary@stjameslutherannewtonnc.com

Rev. Kenneth (Ken) Reed Jr.
kenreed803@gmail.com
Pastor, St. James Lutheran Church
1940 St. James Church Rd.
Newton, NC 28658
704.796.1764

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

Council Members: Robin Burgess, Lori Devine, Julia Seitz, Keeley Stikeleather
Betty Hawn, David Arndt, Benjamin Stewart, Gary Reitzel
Wesley Stinson, Victor Paquin, Christopher Painter



Advent Message



Advent is a mysterious & wonderful time for the Christian Church. The season of Advent has a unique quality to it. Usually, we are swept away during this time of year by holiday preparations and gatherings. Ideally, Advent is not something we rush through. Advent is God's time for the church to sit back, breathe deeply and absorb the wonder, expectation, and miracle of the coming of the Christ-child.

As we watch and long for his promised return, look for the symbols that reflect and point to the two natures of Christ: human and divine. The wreath and candles, the greenery and tree, the music and nativity scene are just a few. It is good for us to be in worship this Advent as we **WAIT**, **WANDER**, and **WONDER** amid God's Holy presence. For your personal bible study, here a few scripture readings that embrace the coming of the Christ-child:

Old Testament prophets that point to Jesus' coming

Jeremiah 33:14-16, Malachi 3:1-4, Micah 5:2-5a, Isaiah 12:2-6, Zephaniah 3:14-20

New Testament people chosen to help make the way for Jesus coming:

Luke 1:11-20, Luke 1:26-38, Luke 1:39-45, Luke 1:46-56, Luke 1:68-79, John 3:1-6

May God grant you an Advent that is full of **WAIT**, **WANDER** and **WONDER**!

DECEMBER ACTIVITIES

Santa at St. James is Saturday, Dec. 2nd from 10:00 - 12:00 Noon.

The **Ladies' Quarterly Meeting/Christmas Party** will be Monday, Dec. 4th at 7:00 p.m. in the Assembly Room. Everyone is asked to bring finger foods and a wrapped ornament to exchange.

Legacy Task Force will meet on Dec. 7th and 21st at 7:00 p.m. in the Library.

Worship & Music will meet on Thursday, Dec. 7th at 6:30 p.m.

Cemetery Clean-up will be on Saturday, Dec. 9th at 8:00 a.m. at St. James and Haas cemeteries. All summer flowers are to be removed prior to the clean-up.

The **Annual Congregational Meeting** will be held following the Worship Service on Sunday, Dec. 10 to vote for the 2024 budget and new council members.

The **Evangelism Committee** will meet on Wednesday, Dec. 13th.

Wreaths Across America is on Saturday, Dec. 16th at 12:00 noon rain or shine. There will be light refreshments following the ceremony. The congregation is invited to attend.

December 17th: The **Choir Cantata** will be performed during the worship service. The **Trail Life Award Presentation** will be held at 2:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary with a reception following.

Council Meeting with Meal will be on Wednesday, Dec. 20th at 6:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held on Sunday, Dec. 24th at 7:00 p.m.



The **Men's Breakfast** will be on Sunday, Dec. 30th at 8:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Building

A **Daytime Ladies' Circle** will begin in January, 2024 with meetings starting at 12:00 noon on the first Thursday of each month. A light lunch will be served.

+++++

#



#

We Have Four Weekly Bible Study Opportunities

Tuesdays @ 7:00 pm (Fellowship Bldg.)
(studying scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday)

Thursdays @ 10:30 am (Sanctuary)
(currently studying the Psalms)

Sundays @ 9:30 am (Fellowship Bldg.)

Sundays @ 9:30 am (Library)

Come join us! We have a place for you!

DECEMBER

Birthdays & Anniversaries

3. Chase Arndt, Michael Smith
5. Wilma Hedrick
6. Bryson Clark, Aiden Stikeleather,
Katherine Thompson
7. Amber Ford
8. David Link
10. Freddie Link, Reggie Sipe
11. David Moose, Lula Poteat, Joel Reece
13. Anna Clark
15. Erica Paquin
17. Ben Young
22. Tom Devine
23. Ilysa Barr
30. Ps. John Lingle

2. Mr. & Mrs. Michael Smith
4. Mr. & Mrs. John Houser
6. Mr. & Mrs. Robert Dixon
14. Mr. & Mrs. Rick Heavner
20. Mr. & Mrs. Mickey Bell

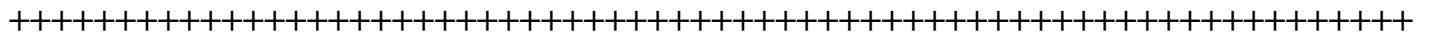


17. Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Sipe
29. Mr. & Mrs. Charles Smyre

JANUARY

Birthdays & Anniversaries

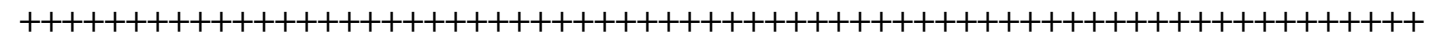
1. Marshall Sigmon
2. Robert Lineberger
6. Jeff Arndt, Logan Arney, Jean Harris,
Dakota Smith
7. Darbie Crouch
8. Joe Devine
10. Todd Sipe
11. Sue Lindley
15. Nell Houser
17. Dottie Rudisill
18. Ray Ford, Jr., Jimmy Long, J.C. Sipe
19. Jamie Smyre Smith
20. Betty Hawn, Tracy Montgomery
21. Trudie Warren
22. Reagan Saunders, Charlie Sigmon
24. Averie Crouch O'Brien
25. Kay Sigmon
27. Jeremy Clark, Tammy Link, Amber Crouch
28. Joe Dean Sigmon
29. Teresa Turner



THE LAITY TEAM

Laity Team works include praying, caring, sharing, encouraging, helping, and supporting each other. Everyone in keeping with our Lord's calling is a Laity Team member.

Please contact co-chairs, Kristy Painter or Keeley Stikeleather, at any time to pray and support members with health issues. God's continued blessings to all.



IMPORTANT DATES IN NOVEMBER

1st Sunday in Advent	Dec. 3	4th Sunday in Advent	Dec. 24
2nd Sunday in Advent	Dec. 10	Christmas Eve	Dec. 24
3rd Sunday in Advent	Dec. 17	Christmas Day	Dec. 25
First Day of Winter	Dec. 21	New Year's Eve	Dec. 31



The remaining **2024 contribution envelopes** are ready for pickup. They are located on the table outside of the church office. If you do not have an envelope number, please see Sherrie in the church office to obtain one.

The **Christmas Card Mailboxes** are on a table outside of the church office.

Household Information Changes: The end of the year is fast approaching. If you have any changes in your address, phone number, email address, have gotten married during the year, etc., please notify the church office of these changes for the 2024 Yearbook.

Christmas Luminaries: To enhance the beauty of our Candlelight Service, the Evangelism Team will be placing luminaries in the cemetery and around the walkways of the church on Christmas Eve (weather permitting).

We invite you and your family to our 2nd annual Santa at St James! Families will have the opportunity to visit with Santa in a quiet Santa/family environment. There will also be games, crafts and a live nativity scene to enjoy while waiting for your visit with Santa. This is a free event, but we are kindly asking for any monetary donations to help families in need this Christmas. We have an angel tree available prior to this event if you wish to shop for a child for Christmas. Gifts for our angel tree children can be dropped off during this event. Please call or text Lori Devine 828-320-1922 for more information. Bring your camera for many photo opportunities!

+++++

THE SEASONS OF LIFE

There was a man who had four sons. He wanted his sons to learn to not judge things too quickly. So he sent them each on a quest, in turn, to go and look at a pear tree that was a great distance away.

The first son went in the winter, the second in the spring, the third in summer, and the youngest son in the fall. When they had all gone and come back, he called them together to describe what they had seen.

The first son said that the tree was ugly, bent, and twisted.

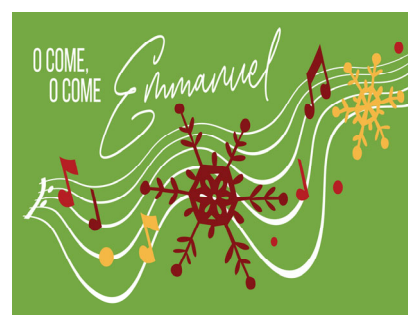
The second son said no - it was covered with green buds and full of promise.

The third son disagreed. He said it was laden with blossoms that smelled so sweet and looked so beautiful. It was the most graceful thing he had ever seen.

The last son disagreed with all of them. He said it was ripe and drooping with fruit, full of life and fulfillment.

The man then explained to his sons that they were all right because they had each seen but one season in the tree's life. He told them that you cannot judge a tree or a person by only one season, and that the essence of who they are — and the pleasure, joy, and love that come from that life — can only be measured at the end when all the seasons are up. If you give up when it's winter, you will miss the promise of your spring, the beauty of your summer, and the fulfillment of your fall.

Don't judge a life by one difficult season. Don't let the pain of one season destroy the joy of all the rest. God grants us these seasons and with His divine help, we will weather them all in the fulfillment of our time.

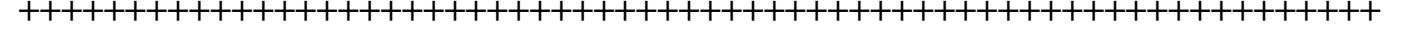


NOVEMBER HAPPENINGS AT ST. JAMES



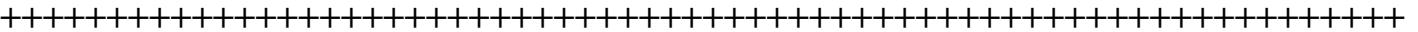
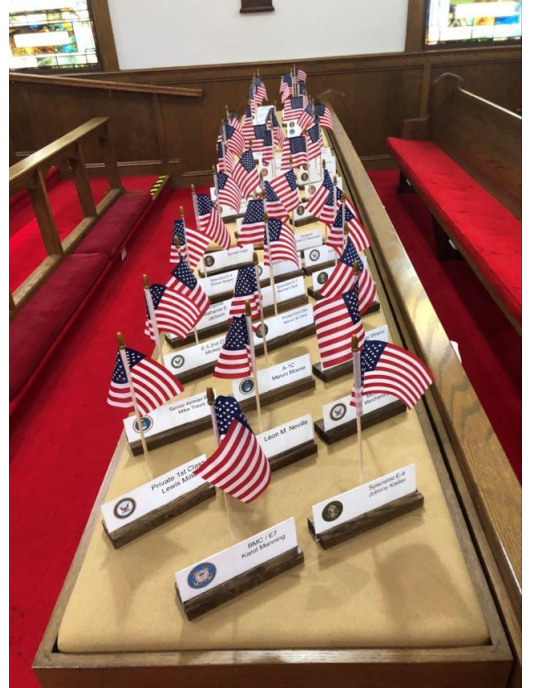
Pastor Reed explained All Saint's Sunday to the young children and told them why there were eleven candles on a table in front of the altar.

Gabby and Jessie rang the bell and lit each candle as the names of this year's Saints were read.



VETERAN'S DAY

David Link, Randy Cline and Pastor Reed collaborated on the service. Ben and Ashley Young and Pastor Reed read the names of 107 veterans from all branches of the service that were submitted by the congregation.



Every Sunday, Pastor Reed asks a young person to help light the Christ Candle during his Children's Sermon. Sometimes a parent needs to help...and sometimes an adult gets volunteered when there are no children.