

## *The Beacon*

*"With God all things are possible."*

*Matthew 19:26*



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**St. James Lutheran Church NALC    Telephone: (828) 464-1953    Fax: (828) 465-2084**

**1942 St. James Church Road    Website: [stjameslutherannewtonnc.com](http://stjameslutherannewtonnc.com)  
Newton, NC 28658    *Follow us on Facebook*  
E-mail church office: [secretary@stjameslutherannewtonnc.com](mailto:secretary@stjameslutherannewtonnc.com)**

**Rev. Kenneth (Ken) Reed Jr.  
[kenreed803@gmail.com](mailto: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:    Wesley Stinson (Vice Chair), Karen Stewart (Secretary),  
Celia Reece (Treasurer), Robert & Darbie Crouch, Robin Sigmon,  
Victor Paquin, Christopher Painter, and Kristen Link**



**Epiphany Sunday  
January 5<sup>th</sup> 10:30am**

### **THE SEASON OF EPIPHANY: Let Your Light So Shine!**

The word **Epiphany** comes from the Greek word that means "appearance." In the New Testament, it refers to the first and second coming of Jesus Christ. Epiphany (January 6) celebrates the coming of the Magi (Wise Men) to worship the baby Jesus (Matthew 2:1-12). Because God led them by a star, the star is the chief symbol of the season. At Christmas, Jesus was revealed to the shepherds as representatives of Israel. The Wise Men represent the revelation of Jesus to the Gentile world as God in the flesh.

On the First Sunday after the Epiphany, the season continues with the baptism of Our Lord, when Christ was anointed for his messianic office and declared to be God's Son (Matthew 3:13-17). Jesus' miracle of turning the water into wine at the Cana wedding (John 2:1-12) is the traditional reading for the next Sunday. The Epiphany season focuses on the miracles of Jesus, which reveal his divinity and are "signs" pointing to the truth of his Word. The final Sunday after the Epiphany is the Transfiguration of our Lord, when Jesus gives a brief glimpse of his divine glory before heading to the cross.

The color white is used for the festival days at the beginning and end of the season, portraying Jesus' divine glory. On Sundays in between, the color green is used. In the early part of February, it is traditional to keep singing Christmas carols. This extension of Christmas ends on February 2, when we celebrate the Presentation of Our Lord in the temple (Luke 2:22-39).

*Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the lord, the righteous judge, will award me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have*

*loved his appearing (epiphany). 2 Timothy 4:8*

*("Lutheranism 101: Worship." Concordia Publishing, St. Louis, 2017, p. 120-121)*



## A Letter from Bishop Daniel Selbo

Recently I visited one of our congregations, celebrating their 200th congregational anniversary. A man named Bob came up to me and thanked me for the visit. I assumed he was simply being polite and offering a word of thanks for joining them on such a milestone occasion. He went on to describe, however, how good it feels for them to know, even as a smaller congregation, that they are not alone. They are part of something much bigger than themselves, sharing in a ministry and a witness that has not only shaped his own life, but that of his entire family. As he spoke, I saw small tears forming in his eyes, and as those tears formed in his, so they were being formed in mine.

As I travel throughout North America, I am encouraged by what I hear. The Holy Spirit is alive and well, working in ways we will never fully know this side of eternity, touching and changing lives for the sake of the Gospel and for the building and growing of Christ's Church.

**God is working through the North American Lutheran Church to lead people to a living faith in Jesus Christ.** Through the ministries of our congregations, the faithful work of our pastors and members, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, God is using our collective witness and proclamation of the Gospel to transform lives for the Kingdom.

**We are now celebrating our 15th year as a denomination. We now have 520 congregations in our fellowship; 99 have been added in the past five years. We've added 158 pastors and deacons to our clergy roster during that same period, strengthening our capacity to serve and lead. The number of global workers we support has increased to 22,** enhancing our international mission efforts as vocational missionaries are commissioned to serve around the world.

In our North American Lutheran Seminary, it's no different. With the addition of a recruiter on our staff, a strong and growing faculty, and an increased emphasis in congregations to encourage their students and adults to consider a path toward ministry, **we now have 64 students in our seminary network and more than 300 individuals who are discerning a call to vocational ministry.**

None of this would have happened without the generous and sacrificial gifts of our members, nor will it be able to continue without your ongoing support.

As we come to the close of another year, **I am asking for your financial support for our shared efforts.** Opportunity is available to support the ongoing work of our denomination through the Operating Fund, our mission work through the Great Commission Fund, and the training of future pastors through the Theological Education Fund.

**You are touching and changing lives in real and tangible ways.**

Bob's is just one story. If we were to listen to all the stories, the tears from and behind those stories would be many. In the Church, we know where the partnership we share is found and the One in whom our witness is given. His name is Jesus. He died for us. He gave His life so we could live. Now it is our chance to give and to live for Him.

May God bless you in your life and ministry, as together we serve our faithful and Triune God.

In Christ,

Bishop Dan Selbo

A Letter from the

CROSSNORE COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN

Dear St James Friends (Women of the Church).

In this season of giving, thank you so very much for caring about the well-being of the children and families served by Crossnore Communities for Children! **We are grateful for your gift of \$ 1,098.98** on December 20, 2024 (from the annual Church Bazaar). Thanks to donors like you, our children are receiving precisely the kind of supportive care they need. Your gift provides critical support that allows our full continuum of care to consistently produce incredible outcomes. Because of you, children and families throughout North Carolina are stronger, healthier, safer, and better prepared for future success.

Since the devastation of Hurricane Helene, Crossnore staff have worked tirelessly to insure there is safety, stability, and necessary resources for those in our care, as well as our employees and their families who have been so greatly impacted by the devastation throughout Western North Carolina. We have responded to each challenge with an inspiring degree of resiliency and positivity, and now the path to recovery will be long. Thank you for all your generosity! Merry Christmas!

With gratitude, Brandon Cathy / Vice President of Development

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jan. 6 - Mon. Women’s Meeting (7:00 pm).
- Jan. 8 - Wed. Evangelism Committee Meeting (6:30 pm).
- Jan. 10 - Fri. Laity Committee Church Directory Meeting in Library (10:30 am).
- Jan. 15 - Wed. Red Cross Blood Drive (2:30 - 7:00 pm). Sign up online.
- Jan. 26 - Sun. Men’s Breakfast (8:00 am).
- Mar. 13, 14, 15 Photography Sessions in the Fellowship Building.



Tuesday Nights @ 7:00pm, Fellowship Building

A weekly study of the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday worship service.

Thursday Mornings @ 10:30am, Sanctuary with Pastor Ken

Jan. 2	No Class	Jan. 30	Matthew 10:24-42
Jan. 9	Matthew 8:1-17	Feb. 6	Matthew 11:20-30
Jan. 16	Matthew 9:9-34		
Jan. 23	Matthew 9:35-10:23		

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SCHEDULE

4th - 12th Grades

- Jan. 5 (Sun) 3 pm: Family Volleyball, Fellowship Building
- Jan. 19 (Sun) 3 pm: Bible Study and Shut-In Cards
- Feb. 9 (Sun) 6 pm: Super Bowl Party



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



- 2. Victor Lineberger
- 3. Amy Brown, Brandon Nelson
- 6. Linda Sipe, Preston Workman
- 8. Seth Ford
- 9. Regina Lee
- 10. Shanna Smyre Rabon
- 13. Judy Brown, Taylor & Zach Harris, Ron Sipe
- 14. Colby Collins, Max Lowman
- 16. Heather Hagan
- 18. Susie Devine, Earl Sipe
- 20. Annabelle Hernandez
- 21. Kristy Estep
- 22. Allison Ford
- 23. Bill Armstrong, Joseph Reitzel, Dwayne Sipe
- 25. Kaitlyn Stewart
- 26. Lynn Hill



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

- 1. Mr. & Mrs. Kelly York
- 3. Mr. & Mrs. Charles Sipe
- 6. Ps. & Mrs. John Lingle
- 9. Mr. & Mrs. Victor Paquin
- 21. Mr. & Mrs. Robert Smyre

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**THE LAITY TEAM**

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. God's continued blessings and peace to everyone. The committee consists of Robin Burgess, Betty Hawn, Sue Lindley, and Claire Sipe.

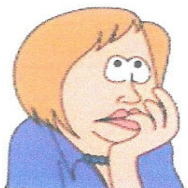
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**EVANGELISM COMMITTEE**

We hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable Christmas and know what the true meaning of Christmas is all about. We are looking into having a movie night in January; we will let you know the date and time along with the movie title soon. NOW, we are giving you some homework. Can you find the hidden books of the Bible?? There are 16 books in the Paragraph. P.S. (See if you can find more than Pastor Ken did). Don't tell him I said this!! Hope you have a great 2025 year.



**CAN YOU FIND THE HIDDEN**



**BOOKS OF THE BIBLE?**

Read the following paragraph and see if you can find the name of sixteen books of the Bible that are hidden in the text:

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a lulu, kept people looking so hard for facts and for other it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books were not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others, it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. YES, THERE WILL BE SOME REALLY EASY ONES TO SPOT. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. One little lady says she brews a cup of tea, so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now for there are really sixteen names of books of the Bible in this story.





EVERYONE is invited to a Baby Shower for Freddie & Kristen Link in the St. James' Fellowship Building.

Sunday, January 25, 2025                      2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

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SPECIAL DATES IN JANUARY

- Jan. 1            New Year's Day
- Jan. 6            Epiphany
- Jan. 20          Martin Luther King Jr. Day



2025: A Promising New Year! Let's step into it with this thought in mind -

What God Hath Promised

God hath not promised skies always blue,  
Flower strewn pathways all our lives through;  
God hath not promised sun without rain,  
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.  
But God hath promised strength for the day,  
Rest for the labour, light for the way,  
Grace for the trials, help from above,  
Unfailing kindness, undying love.

Annie Johnson Flint

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BLESSING BOX PANTRY

Our "Blessing Box Pantry" is running low on non-perishable food items and needs to be restocked. Can you help us? The Blessing Box is located in the church parking lot and is a community resource available to those in immediate need of food. It's replenished daily from the pantry inside the church.

We need: soups (chicken noodle, tomato, vegetable), canned meat (tuna, chicken, spam), canned spaghetti, dried pasta and sauce, macaroni & cheese, crackers, and cereal.

Please put these items in the pantry which is located outside of the offices.

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THE 16 ANSWERS... from page 4

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a lulu, kept people looking so hard for facts and for others it was a revelation. Some were in jam, especially since the names of the books were not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others, it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. YES, THERE WILL BE SOME REALLY EASY ONES TO SPOT. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. One little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now for there are really sixteen names of books of the Bible in this story.

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Christmas at  
St. James  
2024



Children's  
Christmas  
Play





## WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA 2024



Procession



National Anthem: LaKeisha Ross-Johnson



Guest Speaker: Lee Ross Patton



Presenting the Flag



American Legion Post 16 Honor Guard



Laying of wreaths at graves



American Heritage Girls

Troop 0333



Maiden JROTC

Color Guard

