

# Alamance Lutheran Church

## February 2025 News Notes



*Our Vision: To be a beacon of Christian faith, love, and compassion where all are welcomed with open hearts.*

*Our Mission: We are called by God's spirit to:*

- *Worship and Praise God*
- *Serve in Faith*
- *Share God's story*

*"I always avoid prophesying beforehand, because it is much better policy to prophesy after the event has already taken place."* **Sir Winston Churchill** Press Conference, Cairo, 1943

### **Words from Pastor Rooney:** MOVING FORWARD

As Chair of the Call Committee, Marty Adams recently gave us an update, both in church and in a follow-up email, on the overall process and where we now stand. Clearly it is a disappointment that we were not able to secure a candidate, especially given that the Committee had in fact agreed on an individual who then declined to move forward.

But that action points to a very important understanding in this whole process and that is that this is a dual discernment process – the Call Committee and eventually the congregation are seeking to discern whether this is the person that God is calling among us. And, at the same time, the candidates are seeking to discern whether this is the place to which God is calling them. We might get excited about a candidate and truly believe he/she is the one. But if they don't discern the same sense of call, then it is just not a true call – again as disappointing as that may be.

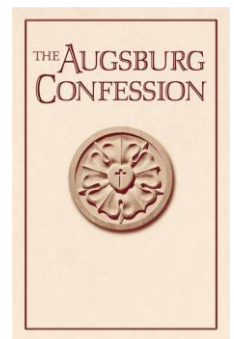
And the Call Committee has another burden and that is that they are working under a process of consensus. Now consensus is not a sort of majority vote but rather a process by which each member of the Committee spends time listening to the other members so that eventually, when they are getting closer to a

decision, they may say I am not sure I agree with everything about this candidate, but I see the Spirit moving us forward and therefore I will put my own feelings aside and follow that Spirit.

And even though this round of candidates did not work under the mutual discernment process, we should not lose heart for God still has a plan for us and we simply need to take some more time to pray and talk and listen as we move forward. And to that end I will commend to you one of my favorite passages from Scripture which is **Isaiah 43** which reads, “But now thus says the Lord, he who created you O Jacob, he who formed you O Israel – do not fear, I have called you by your name you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through the fire you shall not be burned and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the holy one of Israel, your Savior.”

## What Do We Profess to Believe?

It's still not too late! Join us on Sundays at 9:00 in the Parlor for our continuing discussion of the Augsburg Confession. The Augsburg Confession is the primary confession of faith of the Lutheran Church and one of the most important documents of the Protestant Reformation. Join us to get a better understand of what Lutheran's believe.



## Call Process

The Synod is providing additional candidates for the Call Committee to begin discernment conversations. We are blessed to have such a dedicated, hardworking Call Committee. **Pray for them and the call process, support them, and thank them for what they are doing for all of us in the Faith Community of Alamance Lutheran Church.**

Confidentiality must be maintained until the committee submits the name of a primary candidate to the Council for approval. After Council approval, the primary candidate will meet with the Congregation for their approval and approval of a mutually agreed upon financial package. While a minimum of 2/3's majority is required for the call, it is common for a pastor to look for a vote over 9/10s majority from the Congregation to sense the Congregation supports the call. A simple majority is required to approve the financial package.

## Synod Assembly

The 2025 Synod Assembly will be held at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro from May 29<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>. ALC needs to send two voting members to the Assembly, a man and a woman. Early registration ends on March 15<sup>th</sup>, and we would like to identify our representations prior to that time. This is an important Synod Assembly as a new Bishop for the North Carolina Synod will be elected along with other business. More information can be found on the [nclutheran.org](https://nclutheran.org) website including who can vote and responsibilities for voting members. If you are interested and willing to attend, let Kirk Tucker or Marty Adams know by the February 23<sup>rd</sup> Council Meeting. The Council will appoint our Synod Assembly voting members. ALC will cover registration and room expenses (if necessary).

## Council

The Council met on January 19<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was different than we had hoped. We had hoped to be sharing information about a Primary Candidate with the Council. That didn't work out, so we moved forward. Council supported the Finance Teams' farewell gift for Kay Howe. We executed an extended month by month service contract for Pastor Rooney that will take effect in February. This month-to-month agreement will extend until we call a new Pastor or if we or Pastor Rooney chose to end it with a 30-day notice (not that we want to). The Council supported Marty Adam's proposal to condition the moving expense reimbursement for a new Pastor for differing time periods, depending on cost. For example, if a new Pastor chose to leave within the time period of the agreement, they would need to reimburse ALC for the moving expenses. Kirk Tucker and Sherry Ford will be attending a Small Congregation Workshop in the Salisbury area February 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>.

Because the Call Process is extended, the Council decided to move ahead with a **Council** election. If you are interested in serving on Council, let Kirk or Marty know by February 9<sup>th</sup>. **We hope to elect new Council members at a February 16<sup>th</sup> Congregation Meeting.** We are looking for up to four new Council members. Following the election, the Council meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, which will be a reorganization meeting that will select new Council liaisons and Team leaders. Both Ted Milling and Katie Whitehead will be stepping down from Council. We thank both for their faithful service. Kirk Tucker is willing to continue to serve.

## Finance Team

Lenise Meeks, our Parish Administrator, has stepped into the role of Bookkeeper. She prepared the financial reports for the January meeting with some assistance from Kay Howe. Finance did not have the opportunity to review the reports prior to the meeting although, in general, they looked good. Kay will assist Lenise in preparing the end of the year reports. So long as we continue with an interim Pastor, expenses should be less than budgeted expenses. **However, revenue growth is important for us to meet future budget expenditures with a full time Pastor. Please prayerfully consider increasing your weekly/monthly giving in this new year.** The Call Committee also shared that there appears to little interest in a new Pastor using the parsonage. While we shouldn't act before we call a new Pastor, it appears we should plan on renting the parsonage.

## Hospitality Team

The luncheon and reception in honor of Kay Howe's service to the Congregation went well. Thanks to all that provided sides or the meal, and a special thanks to Cindy Milling for all the hard work she put into the event. Hospitality will be hosting a Red Cross Blood Drive on February 7<sup>th</sup>.

## Worship and Music Team

Thanks to the efforts of Sherry Ford, we have a number of new volunteers to serve in our worship services. We are planning on some orientation sessions for the volunteers, both new and old, soon.

Choir practices are now being held on Thursday evenings at 6:30 in the Choir Room. Talk to Matt if you are interested in joining.

Ruth (Ruthie) Thompson will be leading our renewed hand bell choir. She is holding an organization meeting February 2<sup>nd</sup> following our Church service. A number of people have expressed an interest in joining the hand bell choir. They hope to perform quarterly.

Lent is coming! Ash Wednesday is March 5<sup>th</sup>. This year, St. Paul's will be coming to Alamance for Ash Wednesday service. We are planning midweek services on Wednesdays with a simple soup supper at 6:00 pm through Lent. There will be five midweek Lenten services (March 12<sup>th</sup>-April 9<sup>th</sup>). We will hold a Maundy

Thursday service on April 17<sup>th</sup>, a Good Friday service on the 18<sup>th</sup>, and Easter Celebration on April 20<sup>th</sup>.

## Evangelism/Social Ministry Team

We were pleased that one of our visitors, Donna Moss, a new resident at Twin Lakes, joined us for the meeting.



The numbers are in: For the 2024 Christmas season, Christmas Cheer served 762 families, which included 1665 children and 242 elderly. Unfortunately, the numbers were up from last year, but

thanks to generous sponsors like you, all were served and woke up Christmas morning feeling the love of the community. THANK YOU!

Thanks to all of you who are donating food for both the **Blessing Box** and the **Dream Center**. Donations are especially needed for the **Blessing Box** which is continuing to be used regularly by the community. The Dream Center is always appreciative of our donations. We are collecting Canned **tuna** in February and **Rice** in March for the Dream Center.

We continue to help **Allied Churches** with food preparation on the first Wednesday of the month. **Marty and Terry in February**; Don and Donna in March; Kirk and Lynn in April. Lynn Tucker continues to look for volunteers and maintains a schedule.

The **Lunch Bunch** will be meeting at the Next Door Eatery (2703 Ramada Road) on February 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:30. Let Katie Whitehead know if you plan to attend by February 9<sup>th</sup>. While we had a small turn out at the Dream Center on January 9<sup>th</sup>, we enjoyed the food and the ambiance.

We are planning a **Because of You...** luncheon after Church in March, and hope to have Jackie Cole come and talk to us about **Meals on Wheels**. Members of ALC are currently scheduled for one week of service each month and more volunteers are always welcome. More information to come as plans become more definite.

We are sending letters from Alamance Lutheran Church to new residents of **Twin Lakes Community** inviting them to experience our faith community. We have seen some new faces from Twin Lakes Community thanks in part to the letters we have been sending.



Sherry Ford is taking the lead in a number of **Evangelism** efforts. She is looking for volunteers interested in Evangelism, visiting people in our community, spreading the good news. Being aware of members who are hospitalized, or dealing with health issues is also important. We need to improve our communication links with each other and our Faith Community.

## Property Team

New counter tops and a sink have been installed in the kitchen in preparation for the installation of a new dishwasher. The countertop had to be installed prior to installing the dishwasher. The new countertops and dishwasher are, and will be, a great improvement for the kitchen. One of our furnaces needed to be repaired and is now back in service.

## Stewardship Team

ALC has received thank you letters from Lutheran Disaster Response for donations in support of recovery efforts in Western North Carolina, Habitat for Humanity, LEAF (Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Friends at Elon University) for the financial donations we have given them.

Sherry is reaching out to ALC members that have not provided Stewardship forms indicating areas of interest for service within the congregation. We have already identified new folks willing to serve in a variety of areas. Thank you, Sherry, for your effort!

We want to establish a **Memorial Fund** and improve how we recognize memorial contributions. Continuing to work out the details and establishing a policy. Having a Parish Administrator is a big help in this effort.

The “**Above and Beyond**” campaign is continuing. Thanks to those of you who have already donated toward the campaign. If you are looking for a low-cost item to support, **we still need donations toward the All Creation Sings**



**songbooks. They are \$17.05 per book.** So far, we have purchased 14 – not quite enough to use on a Sunday morning. For those of you who have made donations not designated for a specific item, we have pooled those monies to support the infrastructure needed to install the new dishwasher. THANK YOU!

## Youth/Christian Education Team

Children’s Sunday School is continuing thanks to Rebecca for all her efforts. Pastor Rooney’s adult class continues to have good attendance. The Tuesday Morning Women’s Bible Study led by Casey has restarted. Men’s Breakfast and Bible Study continues with steady support on first Saturday mornings.

Another Bingo night is being planned. Need to confirm dates. Thinking about a Taco night during Lent or Easter season.

## Cemetery Team

The team has been in touch with Synod to better understand the policies around ELCA cemeteries. More work needs to be done to understand the implications for us.

We need to clarify **policies** and practices about eligibility for free burial plots in the cemetery. Current voting members are eligible for a free plot. Some former members have been grandfathered to have plots, albeit there appears to be some confusion about how many plots they may be eligible for. Just because a family member is buried in the cemetery does not mean all their relatives who have never been a member of ALC are eligible for a plot. We also need to determine if we will reserve plots for members only or be willing to sell plots to nonmembers. We will be preparing a new **Cemetery Policy** to clarify our practices going forward.



## “Be the Light” Campaign

Please support this important ministry of Lutheran Services Carolina (LSC). The *Be The Light* campaign represents LSC’s commitment to help overcome some of the challenges preventing some of our North Carolina neighbors from living full and abundant lives. *Be The Light* underwrites many of the LSC’s programs and is a critical fundraising source that enables them to expand services to meet the unique needs of the people they serve.

“Be The Light” Goals:

- Guide Children and Families
- Expand Services for Adults
- For the Children Endowment

If you have any questions about “Be the Light,” please reach out to Kirk Tucker.

## Some Words from the Council Vice President

Without sounding like a broken record, there is no question I am disappointed we are not moving ahead with a primary candidate at this time. Perhaps it was a message from God keeping an eye on us. We are blessed to have Pastor Rooney as our interim Pastor. Many congregations in the Synod have different Pastors serving as supply Pastors on a weekly basis during an interim period. Our own Pastor John Weinbach has been serving in this manner for a long time. Let’s be positive. Count our blessings. Confident that God is with us as our search for a new Pastor continues. We are blessed!

## Schedule for February

- February 1<sup>st</sup>: Men’s breakfast and Bible Study - 8:30 am; Property Team – 10:00 am.
- February 2<sup>nd</sup>: Hand Bell Organizational Meeting – 11:00 am.
- February 4<sup>th</sup>: Women’s Bible Study - 10:30 am.
- February 5<sup>th</sup>: Food Preparation at Allied Churches – 9:00 am; ALANON - 10:00 am.
- February 6<sup>th</sup>: Choir Practice – 6:30 pm.
- February 7<sup>th</sup>: Red Cross Blood Drive - 1:30 pm to 6:00 pm.
- February 9<sup>th</sup>: Nominations for Council Representatives are due; Let Katie know if you will attend Lunch Bunch February 13<sup>th</sup>.
- February 11<sup>th</sup>: Women’s Bible Study – 10:30 am.
- February 12<sup>th</sup>: ALANON - 10:00 am.



- February 13<sup>th</sup>: Lunch Bunch at Next Door Eatery (2703 Ramada Road, Burlington) – 11:30 am; Evangelism/Social Ministry Team Meeting - 4:30 pm; Choir Practice – 6:30 pm.
- February 14<sup>th</sup>: **Happy Valentines Day**
- February 16<sup>th</sup>: Congregational Meeting following Church service.
- February 18<sup>th</sup>: Women's Bible Study - 10:30 am.
- February 19<sup>th</sup>: ALANON- 10:00am
- February 20<sup>th</sup>: Choir Practice – 6:30 pm.
- February 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>: Small Congregation Workshop
- February 23<sup>rd</sup>: Noisy Offering Sunday; Church Council Reorganization Meeting - 1:30 pm.
- February 25<sup>th</sup>: Women's Bible Study - 10:30 am.
- February 26<sup>th</sup>: ALANON - 10:00 am.

## Serving in February

	Altar Setup	Communion Setup	Worship Assistant/ Reader	Greeters	Ushers
<b>February 2 Sanctuary</b>	Rebecca Maness	Marty Adams	Kathy Ritchey	Sherry Ford  Jerry or Sally Combs	Roy Whitehead  Hugh Smith
<b>February 9 Sanctuary</b>	Rebecca Maness	Marty Adams	Kirk and Lynn Tucker	Donna Eash  Sharon Isley	Jerry Combs  Pastor Bob Hawkins
<b>February 16 Sanctuary</b>	Rebecca Maness	Marty Adams	Katie and Roy Whitehead	Sandy Kirkpatrick  Kerry Sullivan	Terry Adams  Ted Milling
<b>February 23 Sanctuary</b>	Rebecca Maness	Marty Adams	Kathy Ritchey	Kirk and Lynn Tucker	Roy Whitehead  Sherry Ford

*Please let Kirk Tucker 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.*