

Alamance Lutheran Church

December 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*

"All religions united with government are more or less inimical to liberty. All separated from government are compatible with liberty." **Henry Clay**, speech, U.S. House of Representatives, March 24, 1818.

Words from Pastor Aaron

Dear Beloved People of Alamance Lutheran Church,

As we enter into this time of Advent, I am slightly bewildered that I began my time with you in Easter, and now the end of the calendar year is already here. Yet in the life of the Church, Advent isn't an ending at all. It is actually the beginning of a whole new church year. In that sense, these weeks are less about wrapping things up and more about starting fresh. Advent gives us a way to begin again with intention, grounding ourselves in the promises God holds for the world and for us.

In this season, we have four common themes associated with each week: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Each one is an extension of Jesus' mission and the light he brings into our world. Hope reminds us that God keeps God's promises for a renewed world. Peace assures us that God is always healing what feels fractured.

Joy inspires us to notice the goodness God is already growing around us, even in small and ordinary ways. And Love, the love of God, draws us into a renewed community that reflects the life and light of Christ into a broken world.

My prayer is that these themes guide us into this new church year with open hearts and steady faith. As we look ahead, I am grateful for the ministry we share and excited for the ways God will continue to shape us as a people who carry Christ's light with hope, peace, joy, and love. May this Advent season set the tone for a year filled with grace, possibility, and faithful service together.

Council

The Council unanimously approved the proposed budget presented by the Finance Team at the November 23 meeting. A congregational meeting to approve the budget is scheduled for December 14th. Notice about the meeting has been given to the congregation and information supporting the meeting will be available in the first week of December.

Year to date, we have added 14 new members. Something to be proud of and to celebrate!

Pastor Aaron is asking if there is a way for the congregation to engage in refugee relief. The North Carolina Council of Churches can provide a toolkit on how we can support immigrants and welcome strangers. More information will be provided, and more conversation will be held at the December 21st Council meeting.

Pastor Aaron has created a rough draft of an annual calendar which will be distributed to all the Ministry Teams.

Pastor Aaron, John Ritchey, and Kirk Tucker will form a team to begin looking at updating our Constitution to meet ELCA Model Constitution guidelines early in the New Year. We are also forming a team to begin planning ALC's 100th Anniversary Celebration in 2029. Let us know if you are interested in serving on either of these teams.

Finance Team

Year to date, through October, our expenses have exceeded our income by \$28,340. The Finance and Stewardship Teams will collaborate to address the shortfall. The greatest challenge is on the income side as receipts in October were \$10,571, less than our usual monthly average. We have been experiencing a trend of lower income in 2025.

The proposed budget will ask for an additional \$10,000 in annual receipts. We are currently facing some financial challenges. Clearly, we need to reverse the trend.

Hospitality Team

The Team supported a number of activities in November. Happy New Church Year! December will be another busy month with the midweek Advent meals and services. Midweek services will be held on December 3, 10, and 17th. New soup cookers are being sought.

A Blood Drive is also scheduled for December 5th. Donna Eash is ready to pass on responsibility for coordinating the blood drives to someone else. This is a pretty easy task, with most of the work done via computer from home. Please consider stepping into the role.



Worship and Music Team

In addition to the Advent midweek services in December, other unique worship opportunities are available in December. **Open Chapel** continues Thursdays from 10:00-11:00 in the Chapel. **A Longest night/ Blue Christmas Service** will be held in the Chapel on December 21st at 7:00 pm. Two services will be held on December 24th: a **Family Oriented Service** at 11:00 am, and a **Full Service with Communion** at 11:00 pm. Please come for some spiritual reflection and practice. Pastor Aaron is considering an evening session too.

We will have a poinsettia tree for Christmas, and the Sanctuary will be decorated for Christmas later in the month. Please look for the information on how you can purchase poinsettia for the tree. Remember, Advent lasts until Christmas Eve. We are reflecting, anticipating, and preparing!

Through it all, we will be blessed with Matt's singing and playing along with the Choir and Hand Bells. We are well blessed!

Evangelism/Social Ministry Team

Thanks to all of you who are donating food for the **Blessing Box** and the **Dream Center**. **The Blessing Box** continues to see heavy use. The **Girl Scout Troop** has been successful in increasing donations for the Blessing Box. We will be collecting Pasta in December and **Tuna** in January for the **Dream Center**. Feeding people is an important part of who we are.

Joanna Spangler has joined our team to help with branding. Joanna will be creating a new brochure.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who has donated to help bring Christmas joy to our two elderly recipients and a local family. Thanks to our wonderful shoppers - Kirk and Lynn Tucker, Rebecca Maness, Kathy Ritchey, Kathy Youngblood, Donna Eash, Lisa Lewis, and Marty Adams - holiday preparations are already underway!



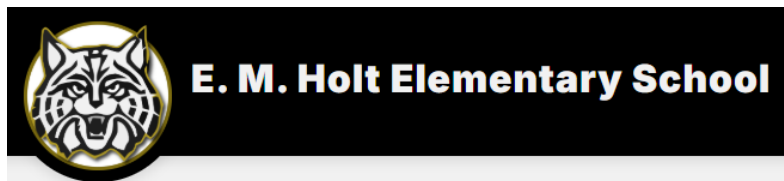
Please join us on **Monday, December 15th at 5:30 PM** for a festive evening featuring a sloppy joe dinner and gift-wrapping party. Together, we'll share good food, laughter, and the true spirit of giving.

Meet Those We're Sponsoring:

Mr. Hubert - We're honored to sponsor Mr. Hubert for the third year. He's 81, lives alone in Burlington, and has limited family nearby. Despite arthritis and diabetes, he remains independent and active.

Ms. Cousins - Now in her second year with us, Ms. Cousins is 65 and lives alone in Burlington. She suffered a severe back injury four years ago that left her partially paralyzed. She once ran track in high school and still carries that resilient spirit.

The Carter Family - Dana, a 60-year-old grandmother in Mebane, is raising her three grandchildren: **Ma'Khia (10), Missiah (9), Autum (8)**. Dana faces serious health challenges including a stroke, diabetes, seizures, and severe anxiety. Unable to work, she's doing everything she can to provide a safe and loving home for her grandchildren.



We were hoping to recognize the work the **EM Holt** staff does by asking for you to provide recognition

cards for the staff around Thanksgiving. We will defer support for the **EM Holt** staff until after the first of the year along with a supply drive for the teachers. Joanna will create some cards, and the Girl Scouts have created a mailbox for the cards. We are also planning to provide supplies for the teachers sometime after the first of the year.

Evangelism: We earned around \$500 from the sale of magnets and are assessing whether we should buy some more. Sherry is proposing we hold a community Bingo event. We have many craft supplies in the Church, and we are considering scheduling an adult craft event that might appeal to members and friends that have not participated in other events.

We are concerned that we are not keeping informed about each other when life events occur. There are many kind hearts in the Congregation. We want to provide transportation, meals, and visitations. We are exploring ways to be more organized and provide members with a way we can improve how we care for and support each other during our life journeys.

The **Lunch Bunch** will be meeting at Grill Worx on Web Avenue (1233 West Web Avenue, Burlington) on December 11th at 11:30. Folks really enjoyed Grill Worx when we were there earlier this year. Let Katie Whitehead know if you are attending. Come and join us!

The team will be meeting on December 11th at 4:30.

Property Team

We are under construction! The lift project is underway! Our new sign with the Lutheran Rose has been installed.

The team is looking at a new concept for providing a lift/ramp from the Sanctuary to the office/classroom level.

Pastor Aaron and Elizabeth Powell are working on a Facilities Use Policy.

The ball field will see more use this coming year. One of the users is proposing to install lights in the infield.

We are looking to improve lighting at the two parking lot entrances.

We are blessed to have an active, involved Property Team. Thanks to all of you who keep our facilities looking nice and running smoothly.

Stewardship Team

Stewardship is about our discipleship and our way of life. Let's ask ourselves "How adequately does my giving of my time, talents, and finances reflect my gratitude to God for all the blessings I have received?"

New **Time and Talent Forms** have been handed out. Please take the time to complete the forms and return them to Sherry in the next week or two.

As we move into Winter and the New Year and we look forward to our ministries in 2026, we pray that our Stewardship Ministry will help each of us to grow in our relationship with Jesus through the use of our time, talents, and finances God has entrusted to us.

Youth/Christian Education Team

A lot continues to be happening with this busy, growing group.

Rebecca gave a Children's Sermon and handed out Advent Calendars for the Children on November 30th. ATTAGIRL Rebecca!

Three different Sunday School Classes for children and youth continue. Teachers and assistants have been assigned through January.

We are beginning conversations about summer Bible School programs, days, and dates.

The Youth Group will be decorating cookies on December 7th.

Adult classes are held in the Parlor every Sunday at 9:00 am. We currently are studying "*Would You Baptize an Alien.*" See John Ritchey or Kirk Tucker for more information. On December 7th, Kirk will be using Bible Project videos on Advent while John is away.

Ladies Bible study continues Tuesday mornings. Men's breakfast and Bible Study continue on the first Saturdays.

The next meeting will be on December 4th at 4pm.

Cemetery Team

We are working on updating our cemetery policies. The Cemetery team is beginning the work after many years of inattention. A number of changes to our policies and practices are needed. We want to ensure plots are available for members who want them in the future and do not plan on selling plots to nonmembers. Fifty plots are currently available.

The fallen gravestone will be raised and resealed as soon as the company is able to fit us into their schedule.

WELCA

What is WELCA? It's an easy way to say Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. According to the WELCA website "Our organization includes Lutheran women who gather in more than 4,500 locations in the U.S. and the Caribbean, for service, study, advocacy, fellowship and more! WELCA embraces all kinds of ministries that support our mission of mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ. "

Our WELCA group sponsored a caroling event on December 1st where members sang for residents of the Home Place Burlington.

Look in the bulletin for meeting dates and events.

Words from the Council Vice President, Kirk Tucker

Happy New Church Year! Advent is a special time of year as Fall wraps up, and we celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas. I personally have a bias toward the moodier music of Advent. I am sure that is no surprise to some of you. Advent is a time for reflection, anticipation, and preparation for Jesus' birth (thanks Copilot). Let us reflect on our blessings, how God has been in our lives; let us anticipate the future and how we can help make the future better for as many people as we can; and let us be prepared for that future.

Schedule

Questions about when things are happening? Check the church calendar on our website: alamancelutheran.org and the weekly bulletin. To find the calendar on the website, click on the three bars on the upper right-hand corner of the homepage, then click on “Resources.” The Church Calendar is one of the “Resources.”

The information printed in the church bulletin is only as accurate as the information on the calendar. If you have an event or meeting scheduled at church and it is not already on the calendar, please contact Lenise at:

ParishAdmin@alamancelutheran.org to add it to the calendar. Thanks for all you do Lenise!



December Birthdays

1st – Jaxon Richards

3rd - Lisa Lewis

5th – Aaron Spangler

6th – Eli Morrison

8th – Clare Holtz

10th – Sandy Kirkpatrick, Luke Lewis

12th – Terri Crouse

14th - Scott Smith

16th – Holly Mills

17th - Craven Ford

24th – John Skenes

27th – James Thomasson



Serving in December

	Communion Setup	Reader	Assisting Minister	Greeters	Ushers
December 7	Sandy Kirkpatrick	Terry Adams	Marty Adams	Roy and Katie Whitehead	Lisa Cates Elizabeth Powell
December 14	Lynn Tucker	Holly Mills	Kathy Ritchey	Katie Beard Jerry Combs	Jerry Combs Roy Whitehead
December 21	Kathy Youngblood	Lynn Tucker	Kirk Tucker	Don and Donna Eash	Terry Adams Ted Milling
December 24	Marty Adams	Terry Adams	Marty Adams	Kirk and Lynn Tucker	Elizabeth Powell Roy Whitehead
December 28	Holly Mills	Sidney Dill	Pastor Bob Hawkins	Elizabeth Powell Kerry Sullivan	Don Eash Hugh Smith

Please let Kirk 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 in the last week of the preceding month.

