

Alamance Lutheran Church

March 2024 News Notes



Our Mission: "Alamance Evangelical Lutheran Church empowered by the Holy Spirit, worships and praises our Lord, loves and serves others, as Jesus Christ taught, and shares the Good News of God's gift of salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Adopted 11-23-1997

*"If you have behaved badly, repent, make what amends you can and address yourself to the task of behaving better next time. On no account brood over your wrongdoing. Rolling in the muck is not the best way of getting clean." **Aldous Huxley**, forward Brave New World (1932)*

Words from our Pastor

While I have barely been at Alamance for two weeks, it is time to write my first short piece for our newsletter. So let me begin by greeting you, as I say at the start of every worship service, in the name of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ.

Since starting on Ash Wednesday (for there is nothing like getting thrown into the deep end by starting a new parish in Lent) you have all made me feel so welcome. There is a lot for me to learn, starting with your names. I have several names down already but for the next few weeks, please help me, especially on Sunday mornings, by giving me your name. I will do my best to work on remembering them. I also need to learn more about the community around our congregation as well as the community of faithful believers who are Alamance Lutheran Church.

The Congregation Council is determined to establish a good sound means of communication during this transition period. You will be hearing regularly from Ted Milling and other members of the Council. This is an important piece of the overall transition itself.

Meanwhile I will serve as your interim pastor. From my experience, that means I will be with you for at least a year, perhaps a little longer depending upon how smoothly the call process goes. I will be at Alamance for most Sundays, except for a couple where I have other commitments. I plan to do some teachings on our faith and our Lutheran tradition during the year, so watch for that. I plan to visit those who are homebound, and I will do all in my power to be available to those who need pastoral care, especially if you are ill or hospitalized.

The major difficulty of course is that I am a) only part time in this position and b) I live in Raleigh which is about a 1-hour drive away. I also have commitments to several other groups, especially to lead retreats around the country. But I have always made this balancing act work in other interims (this is my 7th interim) so I just ask for your patience as we establish a new routine in the life of the parish.

Meanwhile we are plunging deeper into the season of Lent and all that that means for our lives of faith. We will prepare for Easter most especially when we begin Holy Week with Palm Sunday followed by services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. And then there will indeed come that great celebration of Easter itself, a day of resurrection when we will remember again just how it is that God has, and continues to do, great and marvelous things in our midst.

Please know that all of you and the whole community of faithful believers at Alamance Lutheran will be in my daily prayers. In return I covet your prayers for my ministry among you. If there is anything you need, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In Christ

Pastor Rooney

Saying Hello: We welcome our interim Pastor, Patrick Rooney, to Alamance Lutheran Church. He has a lot of experience serving as an interim Pastor, having served congregations in Pennsylvania and North Carolina since he retired 10 years ago. He has been married for 44 years. He has two children and three

grandchildren. He relocated to the Raleigh area to be closer to his children and grandchildren.

Pastor Rooney is looking forward to serving us during this period of transition. Our current agreement with him is for 20 hours a week plus mileage and travel expenses.

From the Council: The Council held an excellent retreat on February 24th, led by Pastor Danielle DeNise from the North Carolina Synod staff. Pastor Danielle led us through conversations about finding and expressing our core values and congregational life cycles. Core values extend in a congregation beyond individual pastors, and it is especially important that a congregation be able to articulate those values as they go through the call process. The congregational life cycles move from intense vitality that starts before a congregation is sustainable to sustainability with declining vitality, ultimately becoming unsustainable. We believe Alamance Lutheran Church has many assets and is still sustainable, we must find renewed vitality.

The Council met again on February 25th for our regularly scheduled monthly meeting. Going forward, we have much to do. In March, we will be focusing on “blocking and tackling.” Filling the functions that Pastor Ron took care of and we took for granted. Thanks to Ted Milling’s prework, we worked through a list of activities and communication links that needed to be filled. We believe we have a handle on most of them. It will require teams and members to step up and do things we have not handled in the past.

April through June, we will clarify and articulate our core values and discern where God is at work within us and our community of faith. Later in the summer, we will gather the components of the call process and proceed. Hopefully, with the Spirit’s guidance, we will be close to knowing who our new pastor will be late in 2024 or early 2025.

We know these are unsettled times for all of us as we grieve about our loss of Pastor Ron, while also wishing him all the best with his new call and dealing with the interim period and call process.

Pastor Rooney has shared one of his favorite Scripture passages: *“The hour is near. Nothing must make you anxious. In every need make your requests known to God, praying, and beseeching and giving thanks as well. So may the peace of God, which passes all understanding, watch over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus Our Lord.”* (Philippians 4:6-7)

Marty Adams was elected our Council Secretary at the Council meeting on the 25th. Thanks to Brenda Smith for serving in this position for many years.

Ted Milling will be providing regular updates at our church services. We plan to hold a Congregation Meeting on March 17th to review 2023 annual reports and provide more information. Our next Council meeting is also scheduled for March 17th.

Do not be afraid and pray for the Spirit’s guidance these months ahead!

From the Worship and Music Team: March is a busy month for us. Midweek services will continue March 6th, 13th, and 20th. Light soup supper at 5:30, service at 6:00 led by Pastor Rooney.

Holy Week starts with Palm Sunday on March 24th and concludes with Easter’s celebration of the resurrection on March 31st. There will also be a Maundy Thursday service at 7:00 pm on the 28th and a Good Friday service on the 29th at 7:00 pm. Easter Service at 10:00 am on March 31st. At this time, we are not planning a Pastor led sunrise service on Easter morn.

The Worship and Music Team has greatly expanded with returning and new members. Clarine (Clare) Holtz has been elected team leader. Thank you, Clare, and for all the team. They will be meeting on March 13th at 5:00 pm.

Staff Support: For a variety of reasons, we have not filled the Parish Administrators position. Thanks to Sharon Ward and Marty Adams, records have been maintained and updated. Many obsolete records and items have been destroyed. We previously prepared a job description for the position, and it is time for us to create a job posting and hire a part-time parish administrator. The administrator will be a tremendous help as we move through the interim period without a full time pastor.

The administrator cannot be a member of the congregation. If you have ideas about where we should look for an administrator or know someone who could be a potential candidate, please let Kirk Tucker know. This could be an ideal position for a young mother who could bring her child (or dog) to work with her. Hours would be flexible up to 20 hours/week. A person able to maintain confidences is vital. Computer and social media skills are also important. An aptitude to learn church software is a plus.

From Evangelism/Social Ministry: Our primary focus has been, and will continue to be, on feeding ministries. Food insecurity continues to be a big problem in Alamance County. Hard for many of us to imagine.

Thanks to everyone who has been donating food for the Blessing Box. It is seeing good use. Pastor Bob Hawkins will be keeping an eye on the box the next few months. Our Girl Scout troop is also contributing to the box and consider it one of their projects.

We are continuing to donate food to the DreamCenter. We will be collecting peanut butter in March, dry beans in April. Thanks to all of you who are donating food!

We are also helping Allied Churches with food preparation on the first Wednesday of the month. Don and Donna Eash in March. Craven and Sherry Ford in April. Kirk

and Lynn Tucker in May. Lynn Tucker is looking for volunteers and will maintain a schedule.

Men's breakfast and Bible study needs to be rescheduled in March and April. March 16th is the next men's breakfast and Bible study. In April, men's breakfast and Bible study will be on the 20th. The cook did not plan his vacations well.

The Lunch Bunch at Ferrera's in February was well attended. Food and fellowship were good. Our next Lunch Bunch will be on March 14th back in the Fellowship Hall at ALC. We will provide fried chicken from Lowe's Foods. We would appreciate a \$5/person donation for the chicken. Bring a suitable side. Kathy Ritchey will be providing a cake as it is her birthday. Let Kirk or Lynn know you plan to attend so we can order enough chicken.

Christmas Cheer: March 16. Christmas Cheer is bringing back an Alamance County favorite – Cheers for Chocolate Festival. If you are a chocoholic, check out the attached flyer and plan to come to Holly Hill Mall to support Christmas Cheer and feed your addiction. In 2023, Christmas Cheer and the generous people of Alamance County served 725 families (including 1,610 children) and 225 elderly.

Marty Adams is continuing to update the church website and keep the calendar up to date. Please let Marty know about any calendar updates and if you have plans to use the building. We are sharing the building with the Girl Scouts, Alamance Children's Theater, the Red Cross, ALANON, and others. All good things! We don't want to step on each other's toes!

Marty is also updating our membership lists to prepare for creating a new picture directory. We will be creating this directory ourselves using the technology most of us have on our phones. Details to follow.

“Be the Light” Campaign: Please support this important ministry of Lutheran Services Carolina. The Council was kind enough to use endowment funds

to support our commitment to “Be the Light” for 2023. If you have any questions about “Be the Light,” please reach out to Kirk Tucker.

Some Other Words: We need to spend some time in prayerful reflection to see where the Spirit guides us about our “Raise Your Spirits Fall Festival.” No one has offered to lead the planning for the festival this year AND Pastor Ron did a lot of work supporting the festival. If the Spirit guides us to hold the festival this year, it will take many of us to make it happen.

Pastor Ron was also the primary contact with the Village for Plaid Day, and we need to discern how we support this effort too.

Have you attended an Alamance Children’s Theater production? This March they are performing “Into the Woods.” Performances will be March 8th, 9th, and 10th, 15th, 16th, and 17th all at the Paramount Theater in downtown Burlington.

Elon University also has a number of events scheduled this Spring. Take advantage of the inexpensive, high-quality events. months. Go to: elon.universitytickets.com.

Schedule for March:

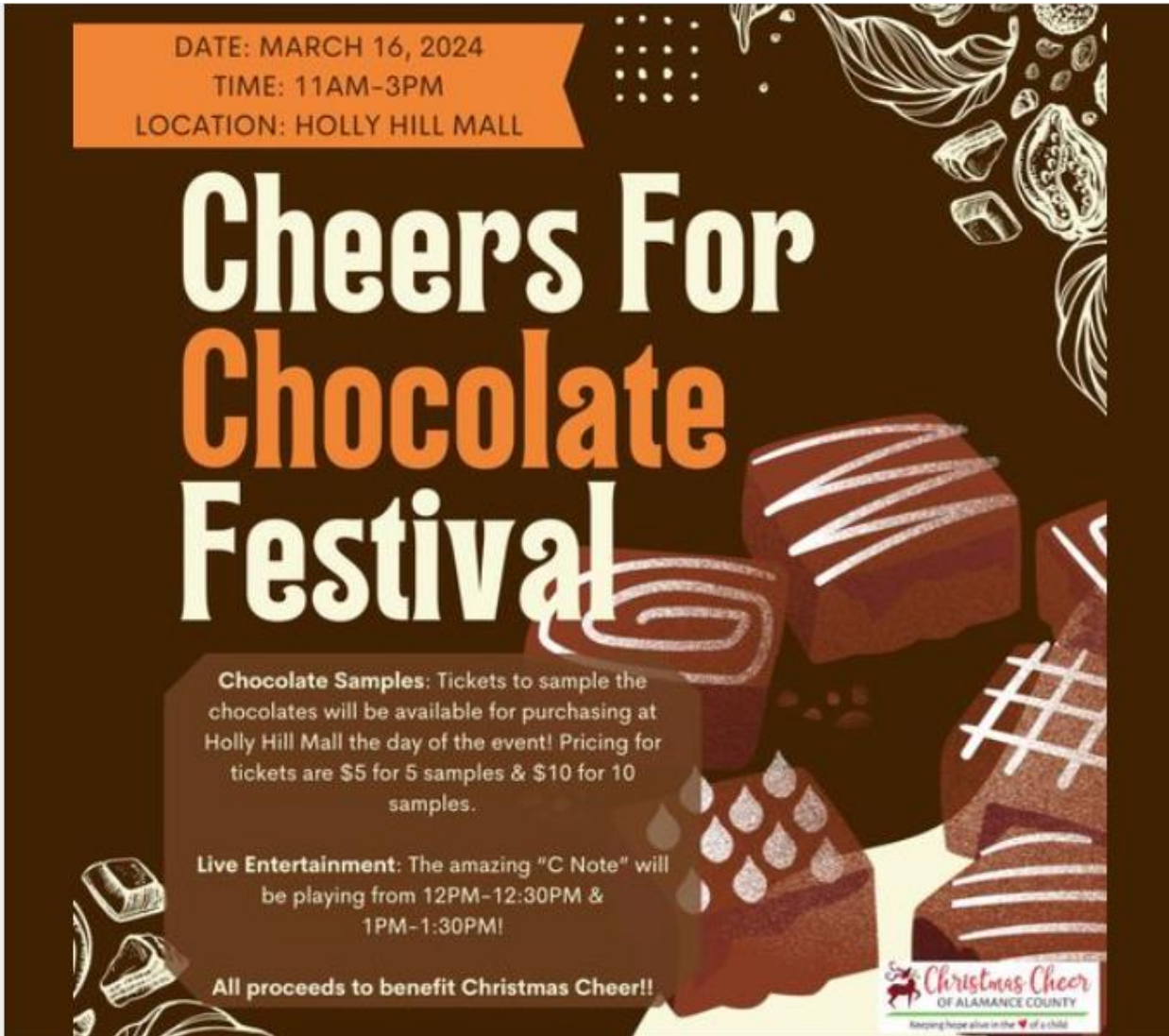
- March 2nd: Property Committee - 10:00 am
- March 6th: Food Prep at Allied Churches - 9:00 am; ALANON - 10:00 am; Worship and Music – 5:00 pm; Lenten Midweek soup supper - 5:30 pm; Lenten Service - 6:00 pm.
- March 9th: Stewardship Meeting – 10:00 am.
- March 10th: First day of daylight savings time. Set your clock ahead or you will be late for Church.
- March 13th: ALANON - 10:00 am; Lenten Midweek soup supper - 5:30 pm; Lenten Service - 6:00 pm.

- March 14th: Lunch Bunch in Parish Hall - 11:30 am. Fried chicken will be provided. Bring suitable sides. Let Kirk and Lynn Tucker know if you are coming; Evangelism/Social Ministry - 4:30 pm.
- March 16th: Men's Breakfast and Bible Study – 8:30 am; Cheers for Chocolate Festival Fundraiser for Christmas Cheer - 11:00 am to 3:00 pm at Holy Hill Mall.
- March 17th: Saint Patrick's Day. Congregation Meeting – 9:45 am; Church Council - 1:30 pm.
- March 20th: ALANON - 10:00 am; Lenten Midweek soup supper - 5:30 pm; Lenten Service - 6:00 pm.
- March 24th: Palm Sunday. Holy Week Starts.
- March 27th: ALANON – 10:00 am.
- March 28th: Maundy Thursday Communion Service – 7:00 pm.
- March 29th: Good Friday Service - 7:00 pm.
- March 31st: Easter Sunday Service. Christ has Risen! Noisy Offering Sunday.

Serving in March:

	Altar Set-up	Communion Set-up	Worship Assistant/ Reader	Greeters	Ushers
March 3	Diane Gural	Marty Adams	Marty and Terry Adams	Donna Eash Kerry Sullivan	Pastor Bob Hawkins Ted Milling
March 10	Diane Gural	Marty Adams	Ted Milling	Jerry and Sally Combs	Terry Adams Jerry Combs
March 17	Diane Gural	Lynn Tucker	Kirk and Lynn Tucker	Sharon Isley	John Ritchey Pastor John Weinbach
March 24	Diane Gural	Lynn Tucker	Kathy Ritchey	Katie and Roy Whitehead	Roy Whitehead Ted Milling
March 28 (Maundy Thursday)	Diane Gural	Sandy Kirkpatrick	Pastor John Weinbach	Sandy Kirkpatrick	Pastor Bob Hawkins John Ritchey
March 31	Diane Gural	Lynn Tucker	Pastor Bob Hawkins	Kirk and Lynn Tucker	Terry Adams Jerry Combs

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.




DATE: MARCH 16, 2024
TIME: 11AM-3PM
LOCATION: HOLLY HILL MALL

Cheers For Chocolate Festival

Chocolate Samples: Tickets to sample the chocolates will be available for purchasing at Holly Hill Mall the day of the event! Pricing for tickets are \$5 for 5 samples & \$10 for 10 samples.

Live Entertainment: The amazing "C Note" will be playing from 12PM-12:30PM & 1PM-1:30PM!

All proceeds to benefit Christmas Cheer!!

 Christmas Cheer
OF ALAMANCE COUNTY
Keeping hope alive in the heart of a child