

# Alamance Lutheran Church

## November 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*

*"Life is not a static thing. The only people who do not change their minds are incompetents in asylums, who can't, and those in cemeteries."* **Everett M.**

**Dirksen**, press conference, Washington DC, Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1965

### *Words from our Pastor*

Who Knew? Who knew that our balmy weather would end with a scarry snap of *chill* on Halloween? Although it often does, we get used to our easier temperatures and comfortable clothes. Many of our favorite bird varieties have packed up their nests for another season in favor of those easier conditions elsewhere. I wish those buzzards that stand on top of our steeple cross would take a hike elsewhere!

Many seasons ago, my brother Jim invited me to leave mom and dad behind and move to Florida to enjoy great weather, and work pouring concrete and digging ditches with him. I thought to myself "absolutely how hard could it be?" The weather wasn't the hard part at all, the blistered hands and feet from digging ditches *was!*

The Third Annual Raise Your Spirits Fall Festival has just ended the Saturday before Reformation Sunday. It seems to get easier each year as the wrinkles are smoothed out and experience is capitalized on. The attendance continues to grow as does the enjoyment of the overall

experience. There are weary muscles and creaking bones but the spirit for adventure to reach out to the community with a free event has not diminished.

I am proud of your willingness to forge forward for others making use of this expansive acreage ALC has been entrusted with. How could this valuable resource provide revenue for future projects? How can it be utilized to impact the kingdom of God in the future? Create a land trust to allow the use of our woodlands for public use? Create *Stations of the Cross* in the woods for others to meditate? Develop the connections with the local Radio Stations to offer Contemporary Christian concerts and Gospel Festivals at the ball field? Deepen the relationship with the Village of Alamance to promote the Plaid Festival? How could we honor the gift of land that Roy and Aitha Eulis gave for a parking lot? Grade the dirt into the ravine next to the Boy Scout Hut to create another green space for families. What would it look like if the Boy Scout Hut was transformed into an outdoor pavilion worship space? What if the 10,000 cars that pass by ALC each day could see the activity that happens here throughout the week, by the cars in a new parking lot? A parking lot that wraps around a new updated playground? What will we say to our current and future brothers and sisters who are handicapped by their mobility issues, or hearing issues, or sight issues if money is not consistently used and contributed towards making this building and expansive acreage accessible to all people?

Birds are not the only ones who seek an easier way of life, people do too. However, we know that just going to Church does not give witness to future generations. What you are doing now will. We read in 2 Thessalonians 3:13 "As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good." And in 1 Chronicles 16:11 "Seek the Lord and his strength; seek his presence continually!"

There are great joys we get to experience as a community of faith of Alamance Lutheran Church. Hands do not have to be blistered to serve Christ's mission, but it does take consistent work. There are others out there who do not know hope or authentic love like you experience here at ALC. How will you continue the legacy others have paved for you here? In another month we will be setting up our Live Nativity and all of us, young and old, mobile or not, can participate in telling Christ's story like we have through the decades in different ways. I invite you to join your brothers and sisters and wrap up in a warm coat to be part of the greatest story ever told, which happens to be TRUE!

On Christ's mission with you, Pastor Ron Philabaum

***Live Nativity News from the Village of Alamance/***

***Bethlehem:*** Have you got your costume for the Live Nativity yet? See Esther so you can join us. Let's have some fun like we did last year as we gather and rejoice the newborn King!

***From the Council:*** The Council met on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. We had intended for the Council to approve the 2024 budget at this meeting. For a variety of reasons, the budget is still a work in progress. We plan for the Council to approve the budget later in November and present it to the congregation in a rescheduled congregational meeting in December.

Girl Scout Troop 13012 will be using Alamance Lutheran Church as their home base. Thirty-two girls are members of the troop (and growing), and they will meet one Saturday a month. So long as any scheduling conflicts can be avoided with Alamance Children's Theater and the needs of the congregation, the Council supports a Girl Scout troop

meeting at ALC. It is great that our building is being used throughout the week and not just on Sunday.

We are still seeking new Council Representatives. We are looking for folks who want to be part of setting the future of ALC. We have found two volunteers who you will be voting to confirm at the congregational meeting. We could use more folks to share in the leadership of ALC. We can't take the future of ALC for granted. If the future of ALC is important to you, please say yes if asked, or volunteer!

We will hold a Council retreat on February 24<sup>th</sup> at Twin Lakes from 9:00am to 5:00pm. We want to ensure Council members, both new and old, will have clear schedules and be able to attend the event.

***“Be the Light” Campaign:*** Please continue to support this important ministry of Lutheran Services Carolina. If you have any questions about “Be the Light,” please reach out to: [Kirk Tucker](#)

***From the Finance Team:*** Through September 2023, total General Fund Giving YTD was \$137,244. Operation Expenses YTD were \$161,476. Loss YTD is **\$22,876**. Thanks to all of you who continue to provide financial support to our ministries. We ask you to prayerfully consider increasing your giving to help close the deficit. It continues to be important for us to grow our congregation to support our ministries and share our financial needs. Expenses will continue to increase for maintenance and improvements to our facilities, insurance, salaries, and benefits, and most important, growing our ministries.

## ***From the Christian Education and Youth Team:***

A memory and reflection from Ted Milling:

*Thelma Nesbitt was my Sunday School teacher. There are scores, if not hundreds, of people I don't remember from 50+ years ago, but I remember Mrs. Nesbitt. Why? Because she made an impact.*

*Children are precious gifts from God. They learn, experience, and grow through interaction with adult leaders. This growth carries them through the rest of their lives – it has mine.*

*Your Christian Ed ministry team is wrestling with ways to rise to the opportunities we have when youth are worshipping with us. There are many options available. Whether any or all of them can be implemented depends on the availability of special individuals that want to make an impact. Folks that will commit as little as 30 minutes a month to those who have the passion to commit to helping develop a program that will help youth develop a foundation in Faith.*

*“But there aren't any youth” you say. Great, help us develop a positive, impactful ministry that attracts youth. Please indicate your interest on a connection card. Be a Mrs. Nesbitt.*

The National Youth Gathering will be held again in 2024. We have three potential candidates that may be able to attend. Early registration is in November. The Bishop and Synod have an ambitious plan to raise funds to support sending youth to the gathering next year.

## *From Evangelism/Social Ministry:*

**CHRISTMAS IS COMING!** As our service project for the month of December, we will be sponsoring one family and one elderly person through Christmas Cheer again this year. Christmas Cheer has been serving Alamance County for over 100 years ago. They are devoted to seeing that no child or forgotten elderly person in Alamance County wakes up on Christmas morning without a present under their tree. In 2022, they served over 600 families (which included 1557 children) and 180 elderly people. For our part, we will be collecting money until **DECEMBER 3**. We will use that money to fulfill as many of the wishes of the children in the family as possible, provide support to the adults in the family, and give gift cards to a food store so they can have a Christmas dinner. We will do the same for the elderly person we sponsor. A description of the people we will be sponsoring is below. Please be generous in your donations – this may be the only gift they receive all year. Your donations can be put in the collection plate, just be sure to write Christmas Cheer on the envelope. If you have questions, please contact [Marty Adams](#)



### Schedule:

- Collect Money until December 3
- Shopping Lists Prepared by December 7
- Shoppers (**we need at least five people**) Complete Shopping by December 20
- Congregation Wide Wrapping Party December 21 (dinner provided!)

Who we will serve:

*Mr. Hubert is 79 and lives alone in Burlington with very little family in the area. He is diabetic but gets around pretty well without any devices.*

*The De Lac family lives in Graham. The mom (Victoria) is raising three kids on her own while working AND going to school to get her Bachelor of Science in Nursing. They live with her mom (Henrietta) to share expenses. Preston (10) has learning disabilities, ADHD, and epilepsy. Athena (4) has a clotting disorder and epilepsy. Natyleigh (12) also has a learning disability. Victoria obviously has her hands full!*

Thank you for continuing to support food donations for the Dream Center. We will be collecting *tuna* for the Dream Center in November. *Beans* in December.

We help Allied Churches with food preparation on the first Wednesday of each month from 9:00-11:00am. Don and Donna for November, Kirk and Lynn for December, Marty, and Terry for January. Lynn is preparing the schedule. See her if you want to volunteer.

The Lunch Bunch had a GREAT turnout at the Red Bowl Asian Bistro in October. Second time was the charm! We will be meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup> at the Rise and Shine Diner 640 East Harden Street, Graham at 11:30am. Come and join us! All are welcome, we just need to know you are coming.

We have an automatic defibrillator which we will install after some members receive some training. Thanks to Barry Crouse, the fire department will provide the training. We need to finalize the date for the training.

We will be moving ahead with the Blessing Box. Tony Lewis thinks it will be better for us to go ahead and build our own rather than buying one which won't match our needs. Thanks for your support! Food insecurity is a big issue for many in Alamance County. We have found a design we like. Need to get it into Tony's hands for an estimate.



Visit the ALC website to see the improvements. One area of emphasis this past month is ensuring that our [church calendar](#) is up to date. More and more people are making use of our space (that's a good thing), but it also means we must be careful about not overbooking. **If you are planning on using any space for an event or meeting, please let [Marty](#) know so that she can make sure it is added to the calendar.**

Our next meeting will be December 14 at 4:30 pm.

***From Worship and Music:*** We have greatly enhanced our on-line streaming technology. We now can provide a high-quality experience when folks cannot be present for worship. (It is better if you come and be physically present, not just for you, for all of us and our faith community.) Thanks to John and Kathy Ritchey for the donation of all the new technology. The new system uses three HDMI cameras and a video switcher which provide a quality video stream. The audio is connected through the sound system rather than using a cell phone microphone.



The new system will allow direct streaming to Facebook Live. The streaming feed will be provided on both Facebook and Zoom through November as we learn to use the new tools. Beginning in December, we will use Facebook exclusively for worship streaming and end support on Zoom. You do not need a Facebook account to access the live stream on Facebook. Just go to the Facebook website.

***From the Cemetery Team:*** All residents are resting peacefully. Pastor Ron and Wanda Patterson have been working to clear up the cemetery plot map as some plots have previously been reserved for people that have moved away or have died and were buried in other places. There are plenty of luxurious plots available with excellent woodland and ballfield views. Any voting member of the Congregation is eligible for a free plot. Some family members of previous members will retain rights to some plots that were designated prior to the current ***ALC Bylaws and Constitution.***

***From the Hospitality Team:*** The next “Because of You” luncheon will be on **November 5<sup>th</sup>**. Topic is Christmas Cheer, as we will have another Christmas Cheer drive in November. We plan to hold our next “Because of You” luncheon in January with Connect for Faith on human trafficking. January is human trafficking month.

Goodies are being provided in the Gathering Space for some social time following our services. Thanks to Kathy and Cindy for the work they are doing.

Despite some scheduling problems with folks signing up for the Red Cross Blood Drive on the 13<sup>th</sup>, we had a record-breaking result with almost 40 usable units of blood collected. Cindy is excited!

***From the Stewardship Team:*** The Stewardship Team did not meet in October, but plan to meet November 11th at 10:00am.

***From the Property Team:*** We are continuing to work with Pastor Ron to secure quotes from new lawncare and custodial providers with updating statements of work. Anticipate increased costs for improved service. We plan to use Gilmore endowment funds to fund improved service.

We are working on our accessibility issues. We had an Engineering firm look at possibilities. Terry Adams' came up with a ramp idea that is better than what had been first proposed and will be the primary path pursued to enhance access to the restrooms and main level from the sanctuary. The ramp is anticipated to cost \$50K, but we need to see the itemized scope of work to see if there are ways to cut the cost. There is a longer-term goal for an elevator to further enhance accessibility.

We have completed some plumbing repairs in the bathrooms.

We will be removing the Bartlett Pear trees in front of the church that block access to the sign in December.

***Fall Festival:*** THANK YOU to all who helped make our third Raise Your Spirits Fall Festival a GREAT SUCCESS! Special thanks and

recognition go to Kathy Ritchey for leading the planning effort and doing so much to make the festival a success and to Sharon Ward for all the work she did reaching out and organizing the vendors that attended the event, a first for our fall festival.

***Some Other Words:*** Planning for next year's Plaid Day has already begun. It will be held in May at Alamance Lutheran Church again because of the Church's historic significance to the community. We hope to build on the success of this year's event and continue to build on our long-term relationship with the village.

What do you say when someone asks you what church you attend? Here is the RIGHT ANSWER (per Pastor Ron): "I believe in Jesus Christ my Savior and Lord, and I attend the community of faith of Alamance Lutheran Church."

Look into Alamance Children's Theater offerings, the extensive offerings from Elon University, and Studio One provides great theater at reasonable prices. We are blessed to be here!



*HOPE 104.5 - Have you discovered Alamance Counties newest Christian radio station? Give it a listen!*

Pastor Ron had an opportunity to be a DJ on both Hope and Maverick radio stations in October. Did year hear him? A great opportunity to spread the word about ALC's ministries.

## ***Schedule for November:***

- *November 1<sup>st</sup>: Food Prep at Allied Churches 9:00am. ALANON 10:00am.*
- *November 4<sup>th</sup>: Men's Breakfast and Bible study 8:30 am.*
- *November 5<sup>th</sup>: DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS: YOU GET TO SLEEP ANOTHER HOUR!" Because of You" potluck (covered dish) with Christmas Cheer acting executive director Betty Hall following church service.*
- *November 7<sup>th</sup>: Election Day. Even though it is only municipal election, don't forget to VOTE! Democracy is a bottom-up process.*
- *November 8<sup>th</sup>: ALANON 10:00am.*
- *November 9<sup>th</sup>: Lunch Bunch at Rise and Shine Diner 640 East Harden Street Graham 11:30am*
- *November 11<sup>th</sup>: Stewardship Meeting 10:00am*
- *November 15<sup>th</sup>: ALANON 10:00am*
- *November 18<sup>th</sup>: JJ Millings First Birthday Party; All are invited 2:00pm*
- *November 22<sup>nd</sup>: ALANON 10:00*
- *November 23<sup>rd</sup>: THANKSGIVING DAY! We have much to be thankful for!*
- *November 26<sup>th</sup>: Noisy Offering Sunday. Finance Committee 5:00pm. Church Council 6:00pm*
- *November 29<sup>th</sup>: ALANON 10:00am*

## Serving This Month

### SERVING DURING NOVEMBER

	Altar Set-up	Communion Set-up	Worship Assistant/ Reader	Greeters	Ushers	Technologist
<b>November 5</b>	Diane Gural	Marty Adams	Pastor John Weinbach	Jerry and Sally Combs	Jerry Combs Ted Milling	Bob Hentze
<b>November 12</b>	Diane Gural	Marty Adams	Terry and Marty Adams	Donna Eash	John Ritchey Roy Whitehead	Bob Hentze
<b>November 19</b>	Diane Gural	Marty Adams	Ted Milling	Pastor John Weinbach	Terry Adams Pastor Bob Hawkins	Bob Hentze
<b>November 26</b>	Diane Gural	Lynn Tucker	Roy and Katie Whitehead	Kerry Sullivan	John Ritchey Hugh Smith	Bob Hentze

*Please let Kirk Tucker ([kirktucker44@gmail.com](mailto:kirktucker44@gmail.com), 262-853-0373) 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.*

# Alamance Lutheran Church

## 2023 – 2026 Big, Hairy, Audacious Goal

In June, your Church Council held a strategic planning/visioning meeting to explore our strengths and areas for improvement and to establish goals for the future. We started with three questions posed by Council President Ted Milling: What is Alamance Lutheran Church? Five years in the future, how would you describe Alamance Lutheran Church? And if you were to move, what would you miss the most about ALC?

The obvious news is that we have many strengths to build upon. Here are just a few that were identified:

- Reinforced faith community
- Pastor
- Diverse acceptance
- Financial resources (cell tower, endowments)
- Real estate – 33-acre campus
- Ability to be part of an empowered ministry team
- “Everyone knows your name” (personalized communion)
- We notice when you aren’t there
- Liturgical structure
- Grace theology/identity
- Building momentum – the sense of hope

As with any organization, there are always areas in which we could improve. None of these are insurmountable, but give us some areas we know we need to improve:

- Property stewardship
- Low volunteerism
- Complacency (been there, done that, served my time)
- Lack of follow through when people do volunteer
- Not being able to let go of our “pews”/”stake”
- Finance/stewardship disincentive

We next posed the question ***Where Do We Want To Be in Three Years??***

In simple terms, we want to continue the momentum we have been building and address our areas of improvement.

***Our Three-Year Goal: Double the number of people regularly worshipping  
at Alamance Lutheran Church***

Sounds easy, but in these post COVID times of decreased church attendance, it is going to take some effort to achieve this goal. So, what does this mean? **Our actions need to support this goal. Each worship committee will focus their efforts on meeting this goal. Resource decisions (time and money) will be made with this goal as the driver. This does not mean that we will not do anything else, it just means that our driving focus will be to meet the goal.**