

# Alamance Lutheran Church

## June 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*

*"None who have always been free can understand the terrible fascinating power of the hope of freedom to those who are not free." Pearl S. Buck "What America Means to Me." (1943)*

## Words from Pastor Aaron

Dear Beloved People of Alamance Lutheran Church,

I want to take a moment to sincerely thank you for the warm and generous welcome you extended to Pastor Julie Tonnessen during her time with you. She shared with me how much she appreciated your openness and kindness as she led worship in my absence. I'm grateful to share that Pr. Julie has graciously

offered to return and lead worship two more times while I fulfill my military duties, and potentially on future occasions as needed.

Your support, both in spirit and in action, makes it possible for me to serve in this unique and important way. I do not take lightly the gift of being your pastor, and I am deeply humbled by your willingness to share me with others during these times. Your understanding and encouragement remind me again and again of the strength and generosity of this community.

When I am called away for military service, I go not just as a soldier, but as your pastor: representing you, our congregation, and the ELCA in places where the presence of Christ and the reassurance of God's grace are deeply needed. In this way, you are not just releasing me; you are sending me. You are participating in a wider mission, sharing the good news beyond our walls, and offering hope where it may be scarce.

Thank you for being a church that understands ministry is not limited by geography but carried out wherever God sends us. I am proud to serve you, and I am honored to serve on your behalf with the North Carolina Army National Guard.

With gratitude and peace,

Pastor Aaron

## **North Carolina Synod Assembly & ELCA Assemblies**

Cindy Milling, Pastor Aaron, and Kirk Tucker attended the Synod Assembly. During the Assembly we made some important decisions and made history by electing the first female bishop to the North Carolina Synod. The theme of the Assembly was "God is Calling!" Attending the assembly reinforced that we are members of an organization bigger than ourselves. Over 600 pastors, retired pastors, deacons, synod authorized ministers, and lay members attended the assembly along with other attendees.

Bishop (now Bishop Emeritus) Tim Smith shared that while overall churchwide attendance continues to decline, not all congregations are declining. The recent “Small, Scrappy Congregations” workshop Lynn, Sherry, and I attended was mentioned several times. Bigger is not always better. Bishop Tim shared: “Everything we need is here, we have God, the Sacraments, and a God who knows the way out of the grave.” Might not be everything we want; it is what we need.

We approved the Synod budget for the next two years. We approved a 10% mission support goal for congregations in support of the Synod. The Synod in turn sends over 30% of its budget to the ELCA. We approved compensation guidelines for the next two years. We elected a new Synod Council Vice President and Secretary. We also elected both rostered and lay members of the Synod Council. We approved a resolution to reach out to our legislatures at the State and National level, not just in writing; asking to meet with them to reaffirm support for legal refugees and immigrants, refuting lies from the administration about us money laundering and asking for funding to be returned supporting legally vetted displaced persons.

After five ballots, we made history by electing Pastor Emily Hartner as Bishop for the North Carolina Synod. Bishop Hartner was ordained in 2010 and has been serving as Pastor of Holy Trinity in Charlotte, NC. The three finalists for Bishop were all female. Bishop Hartner led the balloting on all but the first ballot.

Go to **[nclutheran.org](http://nclutheran.org)** if you would like to see more information about the Synod Assembly and more information about our new Bishop.

The ELCA will be meeting in July 28<sup>th</sup> to August 2<sup>nd</sup> in Phoenix, Arizona. We will be electing a new Presiding Bishop for the ELCA as Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton is retiring. We will begin updating the Church Constitution. We know ALC’s Constitution is out of date and will need to be revised to conform to the new ELCA Constitution once it is available.

The Council will be looking for help and input from the Congregation on this important task. More information about the upcoming churchwide meeting can be found at [elca.org](http://elca.org).

## Council

The Council met on May 4<sup>th</sup> and on June 1<sup>st</sup>. We confirmed Council will continue to meet on Sundays at 1:30 for the near future. We provided feedback to the Stewardship Team on the proposed policy for **memorials and honors** and hope to finalize the policy when we meet on June 29<sup>th</sup>.

Pastor Aaron affirmed improving accessibility is a high priority. Elizabeth has received a new quote for the project from a contractor who has done work for her and the Church. Our goal is to have final quotes and drawings for the lift at the meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup>. The project is anticipated to be less than \$120K. After council approval the project will be presented to the congregation. We hope to schedule a congregational meeting in July to present the project and seek approval. The council also made a motion to approve a project to repair crumbling brick work along the ramp and in front of the church. Funds for the lift project and the brick repair will come from the Gilmore Endowment Fund.

Pastor Aaron is also prioritizing much needed pastoral care. He is planning on establishing a Lay Eucharistic Team for homebound members providing Communion at least once a month. Prayer requests have also been added to the Connection Card.

We are hosting a “Family Fun Fest and Movie Night” June 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. on the ball field and in lieu of the Fall Festival, as well as a Reformation Day event the last weekend in October to celebrate our Lutheran traditions. More to come on both events.

## Finance Team

Although expenses have exceeded income year to date, we had an excellent April with income slightly exceeding expenses. Our total year to date loss is less than \$14K. The Cell Tower Reserve Fund is almost \$90K and will cover shortfalls in current expense at the year end.

The Gilmore Endowment Fund is slightly more than \$1M with available funds to cover the cost of the lift and brick repair in excess of \$200K. The Black and General Endowment Fund is currently slightly less than \$200K.

The next Finance Team Meeting is planned for June 21<sup>st</sup> at 9:00am

## Hospitality Team

A “Because of You” covered dish was held on May 4<sup>th</sup> featuring “Meals on Wheels.” The annual Mother’s Day Tea was held on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

Another Red Cross Blood Drive will be held on June 6<sup>th</sup> from 1:30 to 6:00. Sign up online. A “Because of You” covered dish is planned in July with the Red Cross as the topic.

A baby shower for Pastor Aaron and Joanna is scheduled for June 14<sup>th</sup> at 2 PM.

The Team will be meeting on June 7<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am.

## Worship and Music Team

A new Paschal Candle is being ordered as the current candle is not staying lit. Eucharistic communion sets have been received for Lay Ministers to offer homebound members communion as they desire.

After a brief break the choir and handbells are practicing again. We hope to see them soon at a service.

Technical alternatives for providing music when Matt is not available are going to be explored too.

## 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. We will be collecting **beans** in June and **rice** in July. If you are a Thrivent member and eligible for a \$250 grant, please consider applying for a grant for food especially for the Blessing Box.

The **Lunch Bunch** will be meeting at the Mellow Mushroom (767 Huffman Mill Road) on June 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:30. Let Katie Whitehead know if you are attending.

Pastor Aaron is taking steps to reach out to our homebound members with much more to come.

## Property Team

Facility improvements and repairs continue. Ramp repairs have been approved by the Council and will be completed as soon as the contractor can get to them. As mentioned in the Council Report, we should have plans and quotes for the lift this month. Pastor Aaron has affirmed improving accessibility as important for ALC.

Parking spaces near the Fellowship Hall door will be designated for visitors.

A property use policy is currently being developed.

## Stewardship Team:

The **Memorial/Honor Fund Policy** has been reviewed by the Council. Pastor Aaron and Sherry will do some final wordsmithing on the document prior to final Council approval. The policy is to better manage how memorials and honor projects and fund contributors are recognized after they are received. The Council will generate a list of potential memorial projects at the beginning of each year.

The “**Above and Beyond**” campaign is continuing. Thanks to those of you who have already donated toward the campaign. If you are looking for an easy, low-cost item to donate, we still need copies of the new song books. We now have 24 books, which is not quite enough to use on a regular basis. The cost is \$17.05/book.



## Youth/Christian Education Team

A three-day Arts Camp - “And God Said Sing, Dance, and Celebrate” – will be held July 29 – 31, 9:00-12:30, with lunch provided. A link will be provided on the ALC website for pre-registration. Sharon Ward has made a flyer.

Pastor Aaron is providing “Safe Haven” training for Sunday School teachers and Youth leaders. One session has already been held and more are planned.

A Bingo Night is planned in August.

The next Team meeting is on June 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:30.

## Cemetery Team

The Team continues to consider several changes to our policies and practices. Such things as charging an annual maintenance fee for every two plots and assessing a fee for replacing crumbling headstones are being considered. We do not have the resources or budget to maintain all the headstones, so without support from the families with loved ones in the cemetery, headstones and vases or other memorial items may be removed. There will be fees associated with new plots requested by members. This fee would be in lieu of annual fees for up to 10 years. The possibility of family members who are not Church members requesting a plot is being considered.

Clearly, policy and practice updates are required. The Council has requested the Cemetery Team prepare a new **Cemetery Policy** for the Council to approve.

## Some Words from the Council President Kirk Tucker

The Synod Assembly was a positive experience for me. Bishop emeritus Tim gave a great sermon at the opening worship service and sang about “his favorite things” during his farewell reflection. There was a message throughout the Assembly about the power of collaboration. We as Lutheran Congregations should collaborate with each other, and with other ecumenical kindred spirits. (Maybe they don’t even have to be kindred spirits!) We can all learn from each other. My sense is if we don’t collaborate, we are competing with each other.

Lynn, Cindy, Pastor Aaron and I participated in the Preassembly workshop, which was focused on Lutheran Disaster Relief, particularly the projects in Western North Carolina which are continuing and probably will continue for the next 10 years. LDR is focusing on “Bridgebuilding” where over 5000 private bridges must be replaced because of Helene.

## Schedule for June

**The Editor has made the decision to no longer attempt to publish a monthly schedule as part of News Notes. It is out of date as soon as it is published. Lenise is doing a great job listing events in weekly bulletins and helping Marty and Pastor Aaron maintain the Church Calendar on our website: [alamancelutheran.org](http://alamancelutheran.org). 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.” You will have a current schedule of events if you use these resources.**

Please contact Lenise at: [ParishAdmin@alamancelutheran.org](mailto:ParishAdmin@alamancelutheran.org) if you would like to add a Church related event or meeting to the Church Calendar.

Thanks for all you do Lenise!



## Serving in June

	Communion Setup	Reader	Assisting Minister	Greeters	Ushers
June 1	Sandy Kirkpatrick	Terry Adams	Marty Adams	Kirk and Lynn Tucker	Don Eash Elizabeth Powell
June 8	Sandy Kirkpatrick	Craven Ford	Kathy Ritchey	Jerry Combs Sidney Dill	Ted Milling Jaxon Richards
June 15	Sandy Kirkpatrick	Kathy Ritchey	Pastor Bob Hawkins	Katie Beard Elizabeth Powell	Jerry Combs Hugh Smith
June 22	Sandy Kirkpatrick	Lynn Tucker	Kirk Tucker	Don and Donna Eash	Elizabeth Powell Roy Whitehead
June 29	Sandy Kirkpatrick	Sidney Dill	Marty Adams	Roy and Katie Whitehead	Don Eash Ted Milling

*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.*



**WELCA Women of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America.**

*Mobilizing women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.*

**MONDAY**

**June 16, 2025**

**6:00 pm**

**WELCA - What is it?**

**Bring a snack to share.**

**All women are welcome.**



*A Little*  
**SILLY**  
*Goose*  
IS ALMOST HERE!

please join us for a baby shower honoring

*Joanna Spangler*

Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup> at 2pm

4008 South NC Highway 62 Burlington, NC

RSVP to Elizabeth at

336.266.7316

*Registered at*  
*Target*



**REGISTER NOW**

at [AlamanceLutheran.org](http://AlamanceLutheran.org)

**Open to all ages!!**

**Last Day to Register**

**Monday, July 7, 2025**

