

## Important Dates for NCLC This Month

Sunday School each Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

– Adults focus in Lent on Max Lucado's *He Chose the Nails* video/discussion

Worship each Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

Each Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. – Bible Study via Zoom on I & II Timothy

Each Thursday beginning at 10:30 a.m. – Bible Study and Prayer

Tuesday, February 3 – Old Men's Breakfast at 9:00 a.m. at Timberwoods

Sunday, February 8 – Souper Bowl of Caring after worship

– Food Collection Sunday

Wednesday, February 11 – Church Council Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, February 18 – Ash Wednesday Service at 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 21 – Men's Ministry 9:00 a.m. at church

Sunday, beginning February 22 thru March 22

– Lenten Study, lunch, and fellowship immediately after worship

Wednesday, February 25 – NCLC Women's meeting at 1:00 p.m.

– Church and Community Life meeting at 2:00 p.m.



† Howy Copenhaver – 17

† Pam Henderson – 22

If we missed your birthday, please let Beverly or Dianne know.



*Hope in the heart puts a smile on the face.*



# New Covenant News

Volume 7, Number 10

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A Monthly Publication of the Congregational Activities of  
New Covenant Lutheran Church in Morganton, NC



MISSION STATEMENT: New Covenant Welcomes God's People  
Founded in Faith, United by Love, and Gifted to Serve

## Walking with Christ Through Lent

As we enter the season of Lent, we join Christians around the world in a time of reflection, repentance, and renewal. In the North American Lutheran Church, Lent is a season that draws us back to the heart of our faith: **Jesus Christ and His saving work for us.**

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, when we hear the sobering yet hope-filled words, *"You are dust, and to dust you shall return"* (Genesis 3:19). These words remind us of our mortality and also point us to the mercy Christ who conquered death for our sake. Lent invites us to return to the Lord with honesty about our sin and confidence in His grace, echoing the call of Joel 2:13: *"Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love."*

During these forty days, let us focus on Scripture, prayer, and the journey of Jesus toward the cross. You may choose to take on a spiritual discipline—daily Bible reading, a renewed prayer practice, or acts of service or to set something aside to make more room for God's Word and presence. These practices are not requirements but opportunities to grow as disciples, remembering Jesus' invitation in Matthew 16:24 to *"take up your cross and follow Me."*

As a mission-driven church, the NALC also encourages us to look outward during Lent. This season also calls us to compassion for our neighbors with generosity toward those in need. *"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."* (Galatians 6:2)

While Lent is a solemn season, it is never one of despair. Every step of our Lenten journey leads us toward the joy of Easter morning. Let us walk through these weeks with our eyes fixed on Jesus—His suffering, His sacrifice, and ultimately His victory—the One who loved us all the way to the cross.

(See Pastor's message about our Lenten Studies on following page and the invitation to Lenten fellowship after worship each Sunday.)



## A Word from Pastor Weisner

I am thankful to the leadership of our congregation for their support and helping plan for Lent this year.

Our emphasis will not be weekly "Lenten Services," but "Lenten Study." Indeed, we shall offer prayers of thanksgiving and intercession while we meet, but that will not be the main focus.

In our last newsletter (January), I mentioned some names from early Church history.... Clement of Rome, Clement of Alexandria, Irenaeus, and others. These Church teachers and leaders contributed significantly in guiding and teaching the Church during its first 300 years. They are the early generations of Christians following the apostles. Should their descriptions of "Church" and "Christian Faith" have any influence on us? If so or if not, why? If so, how (and how much)?

We will have our usual Sunday morning liturgy at 10:00. After the liturgy we will have a simple (very simple) snack-lunch with something to drink for about 20-or-so minutes, and then settle down in our new narthex to spend some time in Lent getting to know our Christian ancestors better.

Thank you for your kindness to me and to each other in our congregation. "The peace of the Lord be with you..."

The Pastor  
828.781.1110

## Lenten Opportunities

- † Ash Wednesday is February 18. There will be the imposition of ashes that evening at 6:00 p.m. in the sanctuary.
- † Each Sunday during Lent- February 22<sup>nd</sup> through March 22<sup>nd</sup>, we will have a special Lenten study. Stay after our worship service for a light lunch with fellowship time and then a short study afterwards with Pastor Weisner.



The Lenten season serves as a time of repentance, self-examination, and spiritual renewal in preparation for the joyous celebration of Easter. Make plans to join for this special time together to reflect on the season!

## Sharing Christ's Love at Salem Elementary School on Valentine's Day

This Valentine's season, the Church and Community Life Commission will have the joy of delivering sweet treats to the teachers and staff at Salem Elementary School. What a blessing it will be to brighten their day and remind them how deeply appreciated they are!

As a congregation, we believe that showing Christ's love begins right here in our own community. Our local teachers pour their hearts into shaping young minds, offering patience, encouragement, and stability to children every single day. This simple Valentine's outreach will be our way of saying, "We see you. We value you. We are praying for you."

As 1 John 4:19 reminds us, "*We love because He first loved us.*" Our hope is that these gestures of love will help establish a bond between our church and the Salem Elementary School community, opening doors for future partnership and support.

Thank you, in advance, to everyone who plans to donate sweet treats, pack bags, pray over the outreach, or help deliver the gifts. Your generosity will make a meaningful impact.

May we continue to look for ways—big and small—to share God's love with our neighbors throughout the year.



## Quilting for NALC Disaster Response

Starting **February 10 at 1:30 PM**, needles and thread will be flying as our quilting ministry begins at the church! This joyful group will gather **every second Tuesday of the month at 1:30 PM** to create quilts that share comfort and care with those in need.

Whether you're an experienced quilter or have never picked up a needle before, **everyone is welcome** to come join the fun, lend a hand, and enjoy fellowship while serving others.



We are also collecting materials to support this ministry. Do you have bedsheets or cotton fabric tucked away in a closet or box "just in case"? **New Covenant is in need of fitted or flat bedsheets and unused cotton material** to make quilts for **NALC Disaster Response**. No size is too small—sheets that can't be used for quilt backing can still be cut into quilt blocks.

Thank you for your generous support as we share God's love and warmth through quilts with those in need.

### **Call Committee Update: A Joyful Conclusion to Our Work**

Over the past two years, our Call Committee has prayerfully and diligently sought the Lord's direction for the pastoral leadership of our congregation. We entered this process with open hearts, trusting that God would guide us toward the shepherd He had already prepared for our church. We are grateful to share wonderful news.

After much conversation, prayer, and discernment, Pastor Weisner has made an offer we could not refuse. He expressed his willingness to remain with us as our pastor for the next several years. What began as a stand-gap season has grown into a shared sense of calling—both from him and from our congregation. In this, we see God's faithfulness to His promise: *"And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding"* (Jeremiah 3:15). We rejoice in the stability, continuity, and pastoral care this brings to our church family.

Because of this development, the Call Committee has completed its work and will now be formally disbanded. While our task comes to an end, the spirit in which we served continues: a commitment to seeking God's will, supporting our pastor, and strengthening the ministry of this congregation.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to each member of the committee (Julie Copenhaver, Shawn Keller, Conrad Raymond, Lloyd Wallace, Beverly Watts) for their time, prayer, and thoughtful service. Their dedication has been a blessing to our church, and I am deeply grateful for the unity and discernment we shared throughout this process. I also want to thank the congregation for their support and encouragement through the process.

Let us give thanks to God for His provision and pray for Pastor Weisner as he continues to lead us in faith, hope, and love. May this next chapter be marked by renewed energy for ministry and a deepening sense of God's presence among us.

In Christ's service,  
Dianne Hermanson, Facilitator

### **Ministry Opportunities**

*Glen Alpine Food Pantry* – New Covenant donated 140 pounds of food to the Glen Alpine Food Pantry for the month of January. We will continue to collect non-perishable foods the first Sunday of each month. Thanks to all who faithfully support this important ministry.

*James 2 15-17 tells us "Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."*

Our New Covenant family is so very faithful in our mission to help feed the community!

### **Share Love with Our Neighbors**

The J Iverson Riddle Developmental Center has asked the community for help! The residents that live at the facility are adults with developmental delays. These precious folks LOVE getting mail and cards, so the Volunteer Services Department is hosting a community valentine card drive for the residents! They welcome handmade and store-bought cards. Please no candy, gifts, or small items glued to the cards. Also, please sign the cards! You can sign your name or just sign - from New Covenant Lutheran Church! The valentine card drop is in front of the Administration Building. They are collecting cards until February 10.

If you bring signed cards to the Church no later than Sunday February 8th, Angela Williams will deliver them to the special mailbox!



### **Souper Bowl of Caring**

Sunday Feb 8th - Make plans for our Annual "Souper Bowl" event on Super Bowl Sunday, February 8. There will be several pots of various soups/chili and crackers/bread/desserts immediately after our worship service. You will also have the opportunity to contribute monetarily as we will be taking up a collection for donation to the Glen Alpine Food Pantry. This will also be our canned food collection Sunday!

### **Caring and Sharing Forms**

Forms will be distributed this month. Watch your mailboxes in the weeks to come. Please prayerfully review the forms. Consider what you can do to support the mission of New Covenant and help us move forward and grow in the coming year!

Stewardship encompasses not just financial support but also the use of time, talents, treasure in ways that honor God and further his kingdom! Everyone is needed and has talents to share!

### **More exciting things coming soon!**

*The "Chrismoneers" will be ramping up again very soon! Watch the bulletins for dates!*

## What is Valentine's Day?

Valentine's Day blends history, legend, faith, and romance. Saint Valentine symbolizes love, sacrifice, and devotion and its meaning continues to evolve.

Who was St. Valentine? A 3rd-century Christian priest (or bishop) in Rome who lived during a time when Christianity was illegal. He was a priest who secretly performed marriages against the orders of Emperor Claudius II. Valentine allegedly sent a note signed 'From your Valentine' to a jailer's daughter whom he had healed. This legend inspired romantic associations. He was known for his courage, compassion and devotion to Christ and was martyred for his faith around AD 269. Valentine was canonized by the Catholic Church. His feast day was established by Pope Gelasius I in 496 AD.

Valentine's Day has evolved from a religious feast to a romantic celebration with handwritten notes and poems exchanged. It is now highly commercialized with many symbols used in celebration globally with cultural variations:

- ♥ Hearts represent love and emotion.
- ♥ Cupid originates from Roman god of love, Eros.
- ♥ Roses symbolize passion and romance.

Valentine's Day is not just chocolates and romance. It is a day to remember

- ♥ God's love for us
- ♥ Our call to love others sacrificially
- ♥ The courage of early Christians



## Join the Children's Ministry Task Force: Help Us Shape the Faith of the Next Generation

Our church is forming a Children's Ministry Task Force—a team dedicated to praying, planning, and shaping the future of New Covenant's children's programs. Please prayerfully consider being part of it.



### ❖ Why This Matters

Children are not just the church of tomorrow—they are the church of today. Their spiritual formation begins now, and the way we invest in them shapes their understanding of God for years to come. By serving on this task force, you help ensure that our ministry is:

- Christ-centered
- Safe and welcoming
- Creative and engaging
- Supportive of families
- Equipped to grow

### ❖ Who We're Looking For

You don't need to be a teacher, a parent, or a children's ministry expert. We're seeking people who:

- Care about the spiritual growth of children
- Bring fresh ideas and a willingness to listen
- Can commit to a few planning meetings over the next several months
- Want to help build a ministry that reflects the love of Christ

Whether you're gifted in organization, creativity, hospitality, prayer, or simply have a heart for kids, your voice matters.

### ❖ What the Task Force Will Do

The team will:

- Set up a children's ministry structure
- Identify needs, strengths, and opportunities
- Pray together for God's direction
- Recommend curriculum, safety, volunteer support, and family engagement programs
- Help shape a vision that will guide our ministry for years to come

This is a meaningful way to serve—even if you can't volunteer weekly with children.