

Important Dates for NCLC This Month

Sunday School each Sunday at 9:00 a.m.
Worship each Sunday at 10:00 a.m.
Each Tuesday beginning at 7:00 p.m. – Zoom Bible Study
Each Thursday beginning at 10:30 a.m. – Bible Study and Prayer
Sunday, January 5 –Food Donation
Choir after worship
Tuesday, January 7 – Old Men’s Breakfast 9:00 a.m. at Timberwoods
Wednesday, January 8 – Council Meeting 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, January 12 – special Council Meeting to review Workshop Results
Saturday, January 18 – Men’s Ministry 9:00 a.m.

January Birthdays

- John Parker – 6th
- Quez Little – 24th
- Joseph Starr – 30th

Please let us know if we have missed any birthdays.

New Covenant Choir

Help us make a joyful noise to the Lord! Join us on Sundays after worship, starting January 5, to organize a choir. No experience necessary. Just a love of the Lord and a voice to express your joy. Join us and let us REJOICE together.

Worship Schedule Change

Starting with our January 5 worship, the service will begin at 10:00 a.m. Sunday School remains at 9:00 a.m. for both youth and adults.



You won’t stumble in the dark if you walk in the light of God’s Word.



New Covenant News

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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

From the desk of Pastor Weisner...

In a Christmas sermon in Wittenberg sometime during the Reformation era (likely during the 1520s), Martin Luther proclaimed,

"Think, women, there was no one there to bathe the Baby. No warm water, not even cold. No fire, no light. The mother was herself midwife and the maid. The cold manger as the bed and the bathtub. Who showed the poor girl what to do? She never had a baby before! I am amazed that the little one did not freeze. There are many who are enkindled with dreamy devotion. When they hear of the poverty of Christ, they are almost angry with the citizens of Bethlehem and denounce their blindness and ingratitude, and think, 'If I had been there, they would have shown the Lord and his mother a more becoming service! They would not have permitted them to be treated so miserably!' But they do not look by their side to see how many of their fellow citizens need their help, who they let go on in their misery unaided."

Luther's Christmas criticism of the folks in Wittenberg -- that they claim that they would have taken care of Jesus and Mary at the manger but neglect them in their own town -- this cannot be said of the members at New Covenant in Morganton. Your generosity to others (especially a particular family devastated by Hurricane Hellene) at Christmas time -- and other times! -- is abundant. Thank you.

And as we feel good about our congregation and thankful to God that we are able and willing to be helpful to those in need, let us at the same time remember, "we have done simply that which we are supposed to do" (Luke 17:10). God has blessed us to be a blessing to others. Thank you for realizing that.

Thank you, also, and thank you and thank you for your kindness to me, my family, for your kindness to each other, and to people beyond our own community.

As we continue through the Christmas-Epiphany season, "the peace of the Lord be with you...."

The Pastor

Epiphany

Epiphany is a celebration of God manifesting as the baby Jesus and revealing Himself to the world. This day also marks the day the Magi (also known as the three kings or the three wise men, though their number is never actually revealed in the Bible) followed a star to Bethlehem to visit baby Jesus. Some experts believe the Magi were astronomers (some cite them as astrologers) who paid close attention to the stars and planets above. The star is called The Star of Bethlehem. It has been visible several times since Jesus' birth, though it is rare: It was most recently visible in December 2020 and will likely not be seen again until 2080. We celebrate Epiphany on January 5, 2025.

Outreach – Adopted Family



The congregation was so very generous! Donations included some earrings, a scarf, devotional materials and a small gift card for Mom, several pairs of pajamas and packages of warm socks for the son, and blankets, toys, socks, lotions, and dolls for the twin baby girls. As a congregation, we also were able to take the



Pregnancy Care Center a check for \$2,550 for the

family. The Social Worker was in tears as she said how much this would mean for the family! Thanks be to God for a kind and generous church family!!!!

Thanks from BUCM

Thank you for your support! We cannot express enough gratitude to loyal donors and supporters like you. Your generous gifts give our programs stability, particularly during this hectic time. Currently, we are busy helping folks still recover from Helene, managing the renovations at our new building, and trying to raise the final \$2.5 million of our capital campaign.

Please continue to pray, volunteer, and donate. We need all the help we can get!

Thank you! Sheila Young

Another thought from Pastor:

One of the great scholars of the early Church in the 20th century was Gregory Dix, a Benedictine monk of the British Episcopal (Anglican) Church (often known as *Dom* Gregory Dix, as "Dom" is a designation for a monk). Dix has been a major influence on students of the theology and practice of worship for several generations, and in the following passage he leaves us a churchly situation to ponder....

From Dom Gregory Dix, in *The Shape of the Liturgy* (1945), page 743-44.

At the heart of it all [i.e., Christian worship, which is the heart of Christian faith] is the Eucharistic action, a thing of an absolute simplicity – the taking, blessing, breaking and giving of bread and the taking, blessing and giving of a cup of wine and water, as these were first done with new meaning by a young Jew before and after supper with His friends on the night before he died... He had told his friends to do this henceforward with the new meaning ‘for the remembrance of him,’ and they have done it always since.

Was ever another command so obeyed? For century after century, spreading slowly to every continent and country and among every race on earth, this action has been done, in every conceivable human circumstance, for every conceivable human need from infancy and before it, to extreme old age and after it, from the pinnacles of earthly greatness, to the refuge of fugitives in the caves and dens of the earth. Men have found no better thing than this to do for kings at their crowning, and for criminals going to the scaffold; for armies in triumph, or for a bride and bridegroom in a little country church; for the proclamation of a dogma, or for a good crop of wheat; for the wisdom for the Parliament of a mighty nation, or for a sick old woman afraid to die; for a schoolboy sitting for an examination, or for Columbus setting out to discover America; for the famine of whole provinces, or for the soul of a dead lover; in thankfulness because my father did not die of pneumonia; for a village headman much tempted to return to fetich because the yams had failed; because the Turk was at the gates of Vienna; for the settlement of a strike; for a son for a barren woman; for Captain so-and-so, wounded and prisoner of war; while the lions roared in the nearby amphitheater; on the beach at Dunkirk; while the hiss of scythes in the thick June grass came faintly through the widows of the church; tremulously, by and old monk on the fiftieth anniversary of his vows; furtively, by an exiled bishop who had hewn timber all day in a prison camp near Murmansk; gorgeously, for the canonization of S. Joan of Arc – one could fill many pages with the reasons why people have done this, and not tell a hundredth part of them. And best of all, week by week and month by month, on a hundred thousand successive Sundays, faithfully, unfailingly, across all the parishes of Christendom, the pastors have done this just to make the *plebs sancta Dei* – the common people of God -- holy.