

# First News

FIRST NEWS  
 JANUARY 2024  
 VOLUME 30  
 ISSUE 1

**MISSION STATEMENT:** To connect ourselves and others to Christ through acts of faith and love.

**VISION STATEMENT:** First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lexington shall be a Christ-centered community participating in Spirit-led worship, challenging learning and loving outreach; willing to be transformed by the Gospel and eagerly using our gifts to transform the world around us.

## Pastor's Message

The Rev. Matthew L. Miller



We are now past Christmas and into a season when the days are short and the nights are long. It is funny we should think of the season of Epiphany as the season of light—but it is! Something is going on outside that is hardly noticeable. Yes, the light is short but the longest night (which we call the Winter Solstice) is behind us. Every day the light in the world is growing. This increasing light becomes the backdrop for our celebration of Jesus' love growing in our dark world.

In Lutheran theology, Epiphany holds special significance as it commemorates the manifestation of Jesus Christ to the world outside of Israel, symbolized by the visit of the Magi to the infant Jesus. The understanding of Epiphany emphasizes the universal nature of Christ's salvation extending beyond the boundaries of any particular culture or ethnicity. We

view the Magi's recognition of Jesus as the King of kings and Lord of lords as a profound revelation that God's grace is for **all** people, regardless of their background or social status. Thus, Epiphany becomes a celebration of the **inclusive nature of God's love and the fulfillment of the promise of salvation for all.**

Furthermore, in Lutheran liturgical practices, Epiphany marks the end of the Christmas season and the beginning of the Season of Epiphany, which lasts until the beginning of Lent. During this time, We focus on the various manifestations of Jesus' divinity and mission, highlighting key events such as the Baptism of Jesus and his early miracles. Not only are we called to see the light of Christ but we are called to be the light of Christ in our community.

God's Peace,  
 Pastor Matt



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## We Pray for Each Other



### CHURCH FAMILY:

Christopher Bartholomew  
Jean Conrad Darstein  
Craven Ford  
Phil and Vickie Foster  
Norma Heath  
Matt Hogrefe  
Dan Huber  
Dalane Kitzman  
Katie Lemly  
Lewis McMillan  
Tracy Miller  
Frank Mills  
Ronnie Moretz  
Willie Ruth Pless  
Barbara Carlson Romaine  
Joe Romaine  
Gracie Shepherd  
Jody Shepherd  
Dan Smith  
Debbie and Terry Triplett  
Laura Turlington

### LOVED ONES, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS:

Tonya Adams (*Friend of David Smith*)  
Richard and Toni Berish (*Brother and sister-in-law of the Wertman family*)  
Brad, Melody, and Erick Bizzell (*Son and family of Susan Bizzell*)  
Mary Brink (*Niece of Pauletta Conrad*)  
Anne Burkhart (*friend of Pam Mabry*)  
Mike Byrd (*Friend of Bob Sink*)  
Eula Carroll (*Joe Carroll's mother*)  
Paul and Dawn Cohen (*friends of the Wertmans*)  
Butch Conrad (*Larry Conrad's brother*)  
Paul and Carolina Conrad (*Larry Conrad's aunt and uncle*)  
Don and Jackie Craft (*parents of Rebecca Moretz*)  
Amy and Wes Cups  
Robert Dasch (*Father of Keith Dasch*)  
Tracy Davis (*Friend of Lee and Lori Conrad*)  
Connie Dillard (*friend of the Wertman family*)  
Marina Dunaway & family (*friends of Karen Riggs*)  
Juan Escobedo (*cousin of Amanda Hathcock*)  
Danny Fine (*Lynn Smith's brother*)  
John Fisher (*Bleasha Carroll's uncle*)  
Abby Fobes (*friend of Bing Grubb*)  
Ray Franks (*Friend of Pr. Matt*)  
Marc Frye (*friend of Craig and Robin Deal*)  
The Greer Family (*Friends of Karen Riggs*)  
Katie Grubb (*niece of Ronnie and Rebecca Moretz*)  
Whitney Hahn-Fisher (*daughter of Galen and Sandy Hahn*)  
Mike and Sharon Heffner (*friends of John and Sabrina Conrad*)  
Kenny Hirsch (*friend of Rick Grubb*)

Capt. Matthew Honeycutt (*friend of the Carroll and Scott Family*)  
Scott Hummel (*friend of the Turlingtons*)  
Betty Jordan (*friend of the Carlsons*)  
Larry Kerns (*Tim Welther's husband*)  
Bob and Karen Kernstine (*friends of Sabrina Conrad*)  
Shari Kinney (*friend of Danny and Carol Leonard*)  
Holly Krueger (*Connie and Lewis McMillan's daughter*)  
Larry Leonard (*John Leonard's brother*)  
Larry and Donna (*friends of John and Sabrina Conrad*)  
Sarah Montross (*friend of the Turlingtons*)  
Mandy Marshall (*Debbie Triplett's daughter*)  
Mary Jane Marshall (*friend of Pr. Matt and Tracy Miller*)  
Jefferson McLamb (*friend of the Englands*)  
Donna Miller (*friend of Kelsey Lambert*)  
Matthew and Faith Moretz (*nephew and wife of Ronnie and Rebecca Moretz*)  
Dermont Morris (*friend of Ken Clodfelter*)  
Todd Morris (*father of Michael Gauldin*)  
Claire Murphy (*Rebecca Moretz's cousin*)  
Becky Osborne (*friend of Karen Riggs*)  
Linda Owings (*friend of John and Sabrina Conrad*)  
Hap Palmer (*Pauletta Conrad's brother-in-law*)  
Brenda Safrit (*Beth Huber's cousin*)  
Kim Schlueter (*Trisha Reichard's mother*)  
Robin Schuster  
Steve Shipton (*friend of Allen and Pam Mabry*)  
Scott Sink (*friend of Dalane Kitzman*)  
Peggy Sipe (*mother of Pr. Ray Sipe*)  
Mark Sives (*Bleasha Carroll's cousin*)  
Aubrey Smith (*Dan Smith's dad*)  
David Smith (*Nephew of Bob Sink*)  
Marilee Strasser (*friend of Bill and Patsie Baker*)  
Denny Swimley (*brother-in-law of Scott and Deborah Wertman*)  
Jackie Taylor (*Lorraine Carlson's sister*)  
Juliet Teachey (*great-granddaughter of Jon and Celie Lough*)  
Stephen Thompson (*Danny Thompson's father*)  
Charlie Ward (*friend of Kim Odum*)  
Mary Louise Wilkerson (*Friend of FLC*)  
Devone Wohl (*Dalane Kitzman's sister*)  
Ken Woisin (*Lorraine Carlson's brother*)

### The families of those who have passed to life eternal:

Joe Carroll (*Joe Carroll's father*)  
Esther Cotton (*friend of Bleasha Carroll*)  
Eric Montross (*friend of the Turlingtons*)

### Expectant Parents:

Alex and Elaina Garner  
Kathleen Lockwood and Munashe Magarira

## January Ministry Schedule

	January 7 Baptism of Our Lord	January 14 Second Sunday After Epiphany	January 21 Third Sunday After Epiphany	January 28 Fourth Sunday After Epiphany
<b>Assisting Minister</b>	Bing Grubb	Celie Lough	Bing Grubb	Celie Lough
<b>Crucifer</b>	Darrell Parks	Darrell Parks	Darrell Parks	Darrell Parks
<b>Acolyte</b>	Sydney England	Sydney England	Sydney England	Sydney England
<b>Lector</b>	Connie McMillan	Connie McMillan	Connie McMillan	Connie McMillan
<b>Ushers</b>	Amy and Denny Whalen	Amy and Denny Whalen	Amy and Denny Whalen	Amy and Denny Whalen
<b>Communion Steward</b>	Lori Conrad Jim Lovelace	Lori Conrad Jim Lovelace	Lori Conrad Jim Lovelace	Lori Conrad Jim Lovelace
<b>Communion Preparation</b>	Don and Debi Henderson	Don and Debi Henderson	Don and Debi Henderson	Don and Debi Henderson
<b>Sound System</b>	Lee Conrad	John Conrad	John Leonard	Lee Conrad

## With Gratitude



*Dear Friends,*

*The Staff of First Evangelical Lutheran Church wishes to express sincere appreciation for the gracious gift you have provided to each of for Christmas. Your generosity is immense and we are grateful to have the opportunity of serving God at FLC.*

*Much love,  
Pr. Matt, Kelly and Bing*

## Lutheran Men in Mission Oyster Roast



### LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION OYSTER ROAST

January 15, 2024  
6:00 PM  
Picnic Shelter

## Worship and Fellowship Opportunities



**January 8 — 7:00 PM**

**The Property Team will meet in the 1st floor meeting room.**  
If you would like to know more or be a part of the Property Team,  
please see John Conrad.



**Agape Circle will not meet in January.**

*Some members of the circle will assist with the  
WELCA Conference Leaders Gathering on January 20, 2024.*



**January 9 — 11:30 AM**

**Mary Circle will meet in the first room on the left in the Family Life Center.**  
All women are invited to this time of fellowship and study.  
Please see Pat Mills for more information.



**January 2 and 16 — 7:00 PM**

**Beer & Bible at Goose & The Monkey**  
All ages are welcome to this time of Bible study and fellowship.  
Please see Pastor Matt for more information.



**January 14 — 8:30 AM**

**The First Evangelical Lutheran Church Council will meet in the council meeting room.**  
*As a reminder, any member of the congregation may bring an idea or concern before council at any time. You may choose to share this idea through a team liaison, if you are on a team. You may also contact any council member directly to be added to the agenda.*  
Council members can be found on page 8 of this newsletter. Contact the church office if you need a directory or an individuals contact information.  
*All incoming and outgoing council members are encouraged to come together for this meeting.*



**January 11 and 25, at 7:00 PM**

**Prayer Shawls will meet in the first room on the left in the Family Life Center.**  
All folks interested in the ministry of creating prayer shawls are invited to attend.  
We welcome novice and experienced crochet and knitters.



**January 11 — 11:00 AM**

**The Worship Team will meet in the first room on the left  
in the Family Life Center.**

## Worship & Fellowship Opportunities



### Pericope Study

**Each Tuesday at 9:30 AM**

Pericope will meet at Southern Lunch (26 S Railroad St, Lexington, NC 27292).

Pericope is a Bible study focusing on the week's texts.

All are welcome to join us in this time of breakfast, study, and fellowship.



**Each Wednesday at 10:00 AM**

**Facebook Live Devotions with Pastor Miller**

Please use the link below to join the devotions each week.

Join us here: <https://www.facebook.com/FLCLEX/>



Adult Sunday School Class will meet *each* Sunday at 9:30 A.M.

Denny Whalen will lead this class using the Augsburg Fortress Curriculum



Monthly Sunday School opportunities exist for our elementary aged saints. Amy Whalen and Melissa Morris will lead this class. Please join us at 9:15 AM for breakfast with Sunday school to follow at 9:30AM. Sunday School for elementary aged students will meet in the Family Life Center the following Sundays:

January 7, February 4, March 3, April 7, and May 5



Confirmation will be led by Pastor Matt and meet in the Youth Room the following dates.


January 7, February 4, March 3, April 7, & May 5

Please see Pastor Matt for more information.




Handbells rehearse on Wednesdays in December at 6:30 PM in the Nave.  
Chancel Choir rehearses on Wednesdays in December at 7:30 PM in the choir rehearsal room,.


## Outreach Opportunities

	<p><b>January– Canned meats (chicken, tuna, etc.)</b></p> <p>February — dry pasta and/or pasta sauce                  March — canned pasta (i.e. ravioli, etc.)                  April — dry beans                  May — instant mashed potatoes                  June — Grits (individually packaged)                  July — Hamburger Helper or store brand version                  August — canned tuna                  September — cans of mixed vegetables                  October — oatmeal (individual servings)                  November — soups                  December — macaroni &amp; cheese</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Donations will be collected on the shelving outside of the chapel.</p>
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## Good Shepherd Clothing Closet

	<p><b>January 20 from 9:00 AM – 12:00 Noon</b></p> <p>The Good Shepherd Clothing Closet is open the 3rd Saturday of each month from 9:00 AM-12:00 PM. Volunteers are needed to transport items from the church over to the closet as well as volunteer while the clothing closet is open. If you'd be interested in supporting this ministry, please see Teena Walker for more information</p>
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## Cracker Ministry

	<p>We continue to collect all brands of saltine crackers for our cracker ministry. Please leave your donation on the rack outside the chapel. Crackers are regularly donated to Davidson County Crisis Ministry .</p>
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## Pop Tab Collection & Pennies Collection

	<p>The Women of the ELCA continue to collect pop tabs and pennies. These tabs are donated to the Ronald McDonald House in Winston– Salem while the pennies go to a district wide project. Please donate your tabs and pennies in the marked containers in the narthex.</p>
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## Genesis House Schedule

January 28	Outreach Team
February 25	Choirs
March 24	WELCA Circles
April 28	Council
May 26	Learning Team
June 23	Endowment
July 28	Pericope
August 25	<i>Volunteers Needed</i>
September 22	Worship and Music Team
October 27	<i>Volunteers Needed</i>
November 24	Inreach Team
December 22	<i>Volunteers Needed</i>



Prior to your Sunday, please call Davidson County First Hope Ministries [\(336\) 248-6684](tel:3362486684) to get the number of individuals you will be serving on your assigned Sunday. Then, please deliver drinks, paper products, a meal and a dessert on your given day by no later than 5:30 PM.

FLC serves the family shelter every fourth Sunday of the month.

Please direct your questions to Teena Walker.

## Noisy Offering Schedule

January 7	Storehouse for Jesus
February 4	Lutheran Services of the Carolinas
March 3	Meals on Wheels
April 7	Domestic Violence Shelter
May 5	Humane Society
June 2	Fairgrove Family Resource
July 7	Novusway
August 4	West Davidson Food Pantry
September 1	Pastor's Pantry
October 6	The Life Center
November 3	Thanksgiving Meal Project
December 1	Angel Tree Project



*The Noisy Offering*

The listed Sundays, our littlest saints are encouraged to stay following the children's sermon to choose a small bucket. The children of the church will then collect change, checks, and paper money for donation to a charity each month. Our children will bless the funds collected to the glory of God before returning to their seats.

## First Evangelical Lutheran Church Council Members

President	Teena Walker
Vice President	Lee Conrad
Treasurer	Connie McMillian
Secretary	Marcia Hoffmann
Council Members	Melanie Bumgardner, Larry Conrad, Rick Grubb, Rebecca Moretz, Darrell Parks

## Congregational Council Minutes — November 12, 2023

**Attendees:** Tawn Bizzell (President), Pr. Matt Miller, Larry Conrad, Marcia Hoffmann, Connie McMillan, Teena Walker,

**Absent:** Melanie Bumgardner, Rick Grubb, Amanda Hathcock, Rebecca Moretz, Darrell Parks, Greg Turlington,

**Meeting Opened** 8:36 AM

**Devotions:** Teena offered devotions which focused on the most important things given to us are God's love and grace. She closed with a prayer.

**Approval of Minutes:** October minutes, Connie made a motion to accept, and Larry seconded, vote carried.

### Reports

**Financial** (Greg, absent)

#### Pastor's Report

- Contacted Carol Leonard of Mutual Ministry regarding Amanda's resignation. We will re-think the job description which had started as half-time youth director and grew into Director of Congregational Life and Communications. Teena noted that the position shouldn't be a dumping ground for unassigned tasks. Connie suggested that once the position is defined and filled the congregation needs to be informed as to what the duties and responsibilities are for the new hire. The Synod suggested that we consider teachers who are looking to leave that profession, which is how we found Amanda. Pastor Matt believes we are "good" through Christmas. The big thing is to get through Lent & Easter. He hopes to have someone in place by the fall.
- Attendance continues to be up one week and down the next.
- Overall, the health of our church is good.
- After a recent GLAMA meeting, Pastor Matt feels good about ministry at First Lutheran. Volunteerism continues to be hard. We may need to re-think Clothes Closet and join with other churches to be able to continue to offer this ministry.
- Marcia noted that she liked the return of the weekly attendance and financial details in the Sunday bulletin. Others agreed.

### New Business:

- We will welcome newly elected Council members, Lee Conrad, Rick Grubb, and Darrell Parks at our next Council meeting on December 10. Light refreshments will be provided. We will elect new officers at that meeting. Tawn is ending her term on Council.
- Larry moved that a 7<sup>th</sup> requirement be added to our policy on contracts: All contractors are to advise council of the price, installation date, and completion date and get it approved by Council president prior to beginning work. Tawn seconded the motion and the vote carried.



## Congregational Council Minutes — November 2023

### Team Reports:

#### Endowment (Marcia)

- No report

#### Inreach (Melanie, absent)

#### Outreach (Teena)

- \$300 was given to the family from Venezuela to help them with legal fees for getting visas.
- \$1,000 was donated to Lutheran Disaster Relief for Maui after the wildfires there.
- This year we will host a Senior Citizens Angel Tree instead of one for children as there are many other agencies that fund children's projects at Christmas.
- Treats will be delivered to schools where church members teach.
- We may partner with First Reformed for the Clothes Closet.

#### Property (Pastor Matt)

- Nothing big pending
- The ice machine was cleaned and sanitized and needs a repair of \$400-\$500 to be done by Eastern Equipment Services, which has provided service here in the past.
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#### Harris Fun (Larry)

- No meeting

#### Youth (Rebecca, absent)

- Pastor Matt reported that seven youth attended Lutheridge this weekend.
- Play practice continues.

#### Learning (Darrell, absent)

- No report

#### Worship (Connie)

- Two services on Christmas Eve which falls on a Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. special music followed by worship at 5:30 p.m.
- Pastor Matt and Kelly put the tree up.

**Closing Prayer:** Matt

**Meeting Closed** 9:36 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Hoffmann, Secretary

## Thoughts while performing sidewalk CPR on an octogenarian in Auckland

—Dr. Dalane Kitzman

On a hot sunny day in Auckland, New Zealand, I am standing in a long line of tourists waiting for an extremely delayed double-decker tour bus. Someone shouts, “Is there a doctor?!” But I’m already on my way, gently nudging the flabbergasted tour guide away from the limp, crumpled body of an older man lying unconscious on the sidewalk. The man’s skin is clammy; his eyes are rolled back. No pulse, no breathing.

Instinctively, I kneel next to the man’s body and start CPR. The man’s wife is kneeling next to his body, directly across from me. She is terrified and her eyes are pleading with me. As I perform chest compressions, I silently pray, “Dear Lord, don’t let her husband die. Not now. Not here. Not this way.”

I look around for help. A kind-appearing woman suddenly appears, kneels at the man’s head, and quietly and confidently performs a jaw thrust to open fully the man’s airway. We exchange knowing glances, as if we are a well-practiced team. I feel grateful for her partnership. After what was likely only a minute or two, but seemed much longer, the man gasps and starts to breathe. A thready pulse returns. Slowly, the man regains dull consciousness. In time and with some effort, he can respond by telling me his name and moving his extremities. I am immensely relieved.

As I returned to the line, the other tourists greeted me with exclamations of sincere congratulations and admiration. However, the slight glint of pride inside me was quickly stifled by humility. I have had enough experience with life and death to know that I was but a cog in this dramatic event that could have easily gone in a different, tragic direction. I shuddered at the thought that the wonderful older woman’s last memory of her long life with her beloved husband could have been watching strangers perform CPR on her husband’s pale, limp body on that Auckland sidewalk as she became a widow.

As we toured the city, I contemplated this most unusual first day of a 40th wedding anniversary vacation trip. I am a 63 year-old medical school professor, was sleep-deprived from over 24 hours of flights from the United States, and it had been over 30 years since I had personally performed CPR. I was elated at the outcome and treasured the strong, tear-filled hug from the man’s wife after he was loaded into the ambulance.

However, we doctors and other care providers know this delicate, unpredictable balance all too well. A “code” we had thought we had turned around, takes a sudden, awful dive. A diagnosis in the clinic in which we were confident all along turns out to be completely wrong, along with the treatment we had administered. Those of us who are introspective and sufficiently honest with ourselves may, like me, keep buried deep inside a mental “list” of those cases where we think we could have, should have, done better. Except they are

not cases. They were living fellow human beings. Would they have been better off had they never seen us?

Sometimes late at night my “list” unexpectedly surfaces into my consciousness and haunts me. Foremost on my deeply suppressed “list” is a 16 year-old girl I cared for nearly four decades ago. I was a U.S. medical student on an elective rotation in a remote, isolated hospital in Zambia. Fresh off a rheumatology rotation in the United States with a renowned lupus expert, I was convinced the girl had lupus. Her chief complaint was a swollen, painful right knee. My diagnosis was supported by a slight malar rash, migratory polyarthralgias, unilateral pleural effusion, an elevated sedimentation rate without leukocytosis, and clear knee and pleural taps.

However, tuberculosis, the great masquerader, was endemic. Her skin test was read by all observers as “probably negative.” The report from the pleural biopsy would take 3 weeks to receive. Following a conference with the three senior doctors, the consensus was to dispense a short course of prednisone to treat her painful, disabling knee arthritis, along with stern instructions to her and her parents to return for the biopsy result in 3 weeks. However, the prednisone relieved her symptoms so well that she and her parents decided not to return. The biopsy showed tuberculosis (TB). By the time she was located, she had died of disseminated TB, likely activated by the prednisone I had given her. I am filled with terror. What will I say to that beautiful girl when I meet her in heaven?

While in Zambia, I successfully treated hundreds of other patients, including some who had been on the verge of death. During my career in the United States, I have received cards, letters, and gifts from many grateful patients, attesting to the impact of my work. Still I wonder, how many of these successes are needed to balance the few painful failures?

The responsibility for serving others in life and death situations is profound and can be troubling. However, on this 1 day, for me, I am grateful for the octogenarian in Auckland and the unusual opportunity he gave me, through God’s grace, to help others and add one more success to the balance.

### EPILOGUE

Anthony, whom I cared for on the Auckland sidewalk, was released after a brief hospitalization. He was able to board their cruise ship with Angela, his wife of 56 years. Afterward, they returned home safely and were able to share in the joyous birth of their second great grandchild 3 weeks later.

**How to cite this article:** Kitzman DW. Thoughts while performing sidewalk CPR on an octogenarian in Auckland. *J Am Geriatr Soc.* 2023; 1-2. doi:10.1111/jgs.18574

**Agape Circle News****Lynn Smith****Agapes Minutes – 11/6/2023**

- 12 ladies were present.
- Offering: \$18.00
- Hostesses were Amy and Lynn

**Sabrina called the meeting to order.**

**Old Business:**

- January 20<sup>th</sup> will be NCWELCA Committee Day and they will be meeting at our church. Debra K. will give us more information later.
- December 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 will be our Christmas Dinner at Bleasha's home.

**New Business:**

- The congregation will be collecting items for the blessing bags and we will put the bags together.
- The Program was presented by Amy and Lynn: Incorporating Thanksgiving into our Lives. Amy read excerpts from the following Psalms: 28, 30, 92, 95, 100, 103, 107 and 136. A simple Gratitude Practice is that each morning, take a moment to reflect on three things that you are thankful for; express your appreciation to someone in your life each day; set aside time in your day for prayer or mediation, focusing on gratitude. We should pray and be steadfast in prayer and do not forget to thank God for the answers we receive in prayer. Sometimes the answers we receive may not be what we were asking for, but we should be thankful for God's response.
- We did a craft of painting one word for what we are thankful for on rocks and then we placed the rocks in the columbarium.
- We enjoyed refreshments and then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Smith

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**Agapes Minutes – 12/14/2023**

- 14 ladies were present.
- Hostess was Bleasha. We meet at her home and she provided a delicious meal.

**Sabrina called the meeting to order.**

- Bleasha provided the program by reading to us the Book, The Night Before Christmas in the South. She also read us The Christmas Story in the tradition of Clement Clark Moore (1779-1863). She also read us a Christmas Prayer. Afterwards, we played Dirty Santa and exchanged gifts with each other. We took our Christmas picture and then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Smith

**Red Cross Blood Drive**



**Wednesday, January 10, 2024**

**2:00PM — 6:30PM**

**Youth Room — First Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**Volunteers are needed to give blood.**

**[Schedule Your Blood Donation With The Red Cross \(redcrossblood.org\)](http://redcrossblood.org)**

*If you'd like to help in other ways (snacks, check-in) please contact Carol Leonard.*



## Joys and Cares

### CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY IS EXTENDED TO:

Samantha Carlson (wife of Stephen Carlson – son of Tommy and Nancy Carlson, grandson of Tom and Lorraine Carlson) upon the passing of her brother. Cory Thomas Ham, age 29, of Winston-Salem, passed away suddenly on December 1. *Mr. Ham loved his son most of all; enjoyed listening to music and was a people person. He enjoyed walking any and everywhere he went. A funeral service was conducted December 9 at Cox-Needham Funeral Home in Pilot Mountain. Samantha writes that Cory was my little brother and my last sibling. Cory always brightened the room when he walked in. He was kind, loving, funny, real, and loved by so many. Unfortunately, he struggled for many years and fought with the demons in his head. He is now finally at peace and no longer in pain.*

Laura Remissong (daughter Frank and Pat Mills) upon the passing of her mother-in-law. Carol Metzler Remissong of Oswego, Illinois - just turned 95 - passed to life eternal on December 16. She was a summa cum laude graduate of Aurora College and taught reading and language arts for a number of years in the East Aurora schools, District 131. *Carol was an active member of Our Savior Lutheran Church since 1948. She cherished her church home where she served her Lord in many capacities over the years, the latest of which were with the Tuesday work group and as a church librarian. Carol took great pride in her Lutheran heritage, and liked to say that because of her family's history, she had been a Lutheran since the Reformation. She enjoyed genealogy and was a member of the Fox Valley genealogical society. Raised as an only child, Carol quickly learned the magic of books and the printed word, which she enjoyed throughout her life. She was a firm believer in lifelong learning. She served on the Board of Directors of the Aurora Public Library for nineteen years as well as the DuPage Library System board for seven years. Carol and Bill liked to travel and took numerous trips within the United States, Europe and the Middle East. She is a life member of the Gates School PTA and served many years as a Den Mother in Cub Scout pack #318. She lived her life following Christ's command to love one another. A remembrance service was held at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Aurora, IL on December 21.*

Family and friends upon the passing of Eric Montross; he was a friend of Greg and Laura Turlington. The family of Eric Montross (Laura, Sarah, Andrew and Megan) announced that he died December 17, surrounded by loved ones at his home in Chapel Hill. Montross was diagnosed with cancer in March, and was just 52 years old. Montross played for head coach Dean Smith and the Tar Heels from 1990-94, including his freshman and sophomore seasons as a teammate of current Carolina head coach Hubert Davis. He was the starting center in 1993 when the Tar Heels won the NCAA championship. He was named first-team All-ACC in 1993, was a member of the John Wooden All-America team as a senior and earned NCAA East Region and Final Four all-tournament honors in leading Carolina to the 1993 national championship. A first-round draft pick by the Boston Celtics, Eric played nine seasons in the NBA. He was the analyst on the Tar Heel Sports Network for 18 seasons until he stepped away from the microphone this season. He also was senior major gifts director at the Rams Club. A private burial service was held on December 23.

Bleasha Carroll upon the passing of her friend. Mary Esther Smith Cotton, 76, of Mount Gilead, passed to life eternal on December 19 at her home surrounded by her family; she had been battling cancer for several years. A private family celebration will be held at a family home on High Rock Lake in the spring. She retired as a teller and branch officer for Fidelity Bank in Mount Gilead for 33 years. *She was Miss Montgomery County in 1963. Esther was a faithful member of First Baptist Church, Mount Gilead where she served as the Secretary/Treasurer of the WMU and many other committees. She was an avid Duke basketball fan!*

Debbie Suggs (cousin of Suzy Crook) and family upon the passing of her husband. Douglas Lemar "Doug" Suggs, 68, of Salisbury, passed away unexpectedly on December 21. He was the father of Suzy's second cousin, Stacy Frick; Debbie was the first cousin of Suzy's mother. Doug attended Piedmont Aerospace Institute and became an airplane mechanic before starting a career with Duke Energy, where he would retire after 40 years. *Doug was of the Baptist faith and loved model trains and radio-controlled airplanes. He enjoyed woodworking and especially cutting pictures out of wood on his scroll saw. Doug was a former volunteer at the North Carolina Transportation Museum and enjoyed helping his wife, Debbie, with her catering business. A service was held at Calvary Baptist Tabernacle in Salisbury on December 27.*

### OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS:

Billie Sue Hollar has will receive an injection or perhaps a "cement" procedure at Forsyth Hospital on December 27 for a compression fracture in her spine.

## Joys and Cares

Dan Smith has had a rough year with numerous eye surgeries and procedures. His last procedure has finally helped with his sight; he can see faces now, and his vision is clearer. We pray for continued hope.

Ronnie Moretz was hospitalized for several nights the end of November. Doctors had thought he might have had more bleeding on his brain, but found that it might have come from a previous bleed with no significant change. He continues adjusting to his cancer medication at home.

Larry Conrad has been ill again with pneumonia and is recovering; however, he is still having issues and is awaiting CAT scan results from December 22.

Patti Richardson had pneumonia and passed out at home in early December; she spent the night in the hospital, recovered at home, and is already back doing her ministry at First Lutheran!

Bob Redwine was hospitalized in High Point with severe diverticulitis and a perforated bowel; he had laparoscopic surgery on December 19.

North Carolina Synod Bishop Tim Smith began his sabbatical on December 3 and will continue through February 29. *We wish him safety for his travels and the blessings of rest, relaxation, and time with family.* Pastor Phil Tonnesen, Acting Bishop, will serve in that role from December 3 through January 15. *We pray for strength and wisdom for this time.*

### THANKS!

Prayer Shawl Ministry – Thanks to those who lead and participate in the Prayer Shawl Ministry. Completed prayer shawls are in the closet in the “Prayer Shawl Room”. Please feel free to pick up any that are needed, bless them and send them out. (Please notify Kelly so that he can note in our records.)

Grounds Maintenance – Thanks to all those who work diligently to keep our grounds looking good. Carol Leonard has recently been spotted several times on her hands and knees, weeding and cleaning out beds!

Thanksgiving Meals – We are delighted to report that we provided Thanksgiving Meals to 432 families this year. *“Praise the Lord!”*

**Reception** – A reception was held in the Narthex following worship on November 26 to honor Amanda Hathcock and her time with us as Director of Congregational Life.

**Worship Leadership** – Pastor Matt took a vacation Sunday on November 26 to travel to Brooklyn to celebrate Thanksgiving with his family. Thanks to Darrell Parks for leading our worship service.

Dalane Kitzman preached our sermon, “Our King’s Magnificent Obsession.” We were celebrating Christ the King Sunday and Dalane spoke about our Lord’s “kingship” – his throne is the cross; his crown is a crown of thorns, a crown of pain (*“what real king would choose this?”*); his kingdom is everything, but he gave it up to enter our world as a little baby; our king dies for us and then rises again; his coat of arms is the victorious lamb; his scepter is the shepherd’s staff that he uses to carry his lambs home - *that lamb is YOU. The King of the world runs to greet you and bring you home, all to save us! Christ the King is obsessed with us – a magnificent obsession – and is still obsessed. Your name is carved on the palm of his hand, and he promised to always be “in the trenches” with us. He is with you now and always, to eternity.*

**Blessing Bags** – Thanks to all who contributed items for the blessing bag project organized by the Agape Circle. Sabrina Conrad announced that they were able to put together 34 bags! They are on a table outside the nursery; folks are encouraged to take them to keep in their cars, to distribute to others who may be in need of basic things (toiletries, snacks, hand warmers, etc.).

### Children’s Time “giveaways”

On the First Sunday in Advent on December 3, Pastor Matt gave each of the children a candy Advent Calendar to help them mark time while waiting for Christmas.

## Joys and Cares

On December 10, Pastor Matt spoke to the Middle School Youth about John the Baptist. Thanks to Tim Williams for getting a supply of dried grasshoppers (part of John's "diet") for the congregation to try!

**Advent Candle Lighting** – each Sunday during Advent, a family came up during worship to read a prayer and light a candle on our Advent Wreath. Thanks to those who participated in this:

Advent I, December 3 – Eric and Tera Higgins; son, Aaron

Advent II, December 10 – Jay and Christine England

Advent III, December 17 – Ray and Ruth Ann Sipe

Advent IV, December 24 – Matt and Tracy Miller; sons, Ian and Mattias; friend, Ziang Zhou

**Christmas Dinner and Play** – On December 3, we enjoyed our annual Christmas dinner and play! A special thank you to our Lutheran Men in Mission and Inreach Team for a turkey dinner with all the fixings! Our wonderful children's play, "Hotel Noel," was led by Rebecca Moretz and we are so thankful for her gifts! Thanks, too, to all those involved: children and adults in the "cast;" those helping with prompting, creating and painting the set; and Kelly Newsome, music accompaniment on piano.



**Christmas Party** – Thanks to Bill and Patsie Baker for hosting a congregation Christmas party at their home on December 9! A good time was had by all!

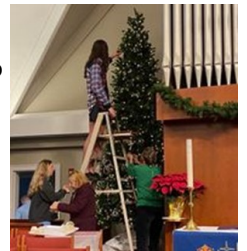
## Joys and Cares

**Poinsettias** – Thanks to all who purchased a poinsettia to put in the sanctuary during Advent in honor or in memory of loved ones. The Poinsettia Fundraiser” was sponsored by FLC Youth to benefit the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans.



**Council Installation** – During worship service on December 10, words of appreciation were expressed to Tawn Bizzell, who has faithfully served as President of our Congregation Council for three years. Council Members serving in 2024 were installed. New Officers will be: Teena Walker, President; Lee Conrad, Vice President; Connie McMillan, Treasurer; and Marcia Hoffmann, Secretary.

**Advent Trimming** – Thanks to all who remained after worship on December 10 to help decorate the Nave for Advent/Christmas.



**Angel Tree** – Thanks to all who took an angel from our Angel Tree in the Narthex. This year we adopted families from The Life Center to help those less fortunate.

**Agape Circle** - A big thank you to Bleasha Carroll for again hosting this circle's Christmas party on December 11. *It was a great night of fun and fellowship. We also played Secret Santa, Bleasha led us in a fun game, and a story and devotions were read. It was a great night of fun and fellowship. We have a great group of ladies.*



**Caroling** – Thanks to all who joined us on a rainy Sunday afternoon, December 17, to bring the “light of Jesus” to some special folks. As we sang so many favorite Christmas carols, I’m not sure who had more fun – the singers, or the recipients!





## Joys and Cares

**Candy** – Thanks to Debra Kitzman for filling many bags of peppermint puffs candy to share with her church family! They were given out before and after services on December 24.

**Love Offering** – Prior to morning worship on December 24, outgoing Congregation Council President Tawn Bizzell recognized FLC staff with words of appreciation for their ministries to their FLC congregational family. She presented them each with a love offering (from FLC family): Matthew Miller, Pastor; Amanda Hathcock, Director of Congregational Life; Kelly Newsome, Music Director, Organist, and Parish Associate; and Bing Grubb, Sexton.

### Special Music

- Prelude – November 26 – piano duet, Jim Lovelace and Kelly Newsome – “Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee” (arrangement “pulled together” by Jim and Kelly!)
- December 10 – while Kelly Newsome took a vacation Sunday, we welcomed Darrell Parks to serve again as our guest organist. Organ offertory – “Pifa” Pastoral Symphony from Messiah (George Frederick Handel)
- December 24 – our morning worship Hymn of the Day was “The Magnificat”; thanks to Kaleigh Odum (daughter of Berry and Kim Odum, granddaughter of Ron and Sylvia Sink) for introducing the hymn with the beautiful “An angel went from God to a town called Nazareth...”

Christmas Eve worship, December 24:

Prelude

- FLC Handbells – “Silent Night” (arr. Cathy Moglebust), “Were You There on That Christmas Night” (arr. Martha Lynn Thompson), and “Go, Tell It on the Mountain” (arr. Susan E. Geschke)
- Kelly Newsome – piano, “The First Noel” (arr. Bill Wolaver); and organ, “Angels We Have Heard on High” (arr. Michael Burkhardt)
- Darrell Parks, Tenor; Kelly Newsome, Piano – “Comfort Ye / Every Valley” (George Frederic Handel)
- Celie Lough, Soprano; Kelly Newsome, Piano – “O Holy Night” (Adolphe Adam)

Worship Service – FLC Chancel Choir; Kelly Newsome, Piano: Offertory Anthem – “Silent, Starry Night” (Anna Laura Page); Communion Music – “Were You There on that Christmas Night” (Natalie Sleeth)

### CONGRATULATIONS

**Pregnancy** – Congratulations to Kathleen Lockwood (daughter of Bob and Eve Lockwood) and husband, Munashe Magarira; they are expecting a baby boy in early June! This will be their first child.

**Educator Award** – Congratulations to Jordan Lupton! It was announced on December 4 that she recently received the “2023 Educator of Excellence Award” at the 72<sup>nd</sup> Conference of Exceptional Children at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro. Jordan is a Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) at Midway Elementary. Her tribute stated: *Jordan is a true leader in the field. Her professionalism with both parents and colleagues is extraordinary and her love for the profession is evident when you see her working with the children. She has served in various leadership roles including spearheading multiple Professional Growth Plans with her fellow SLPs and developing a district-wide dynamic assessment resource utilized by all. Additionally, she has mentored (both formally and informally) new staff in her building and previously served at the estate level as the North Carolina Speech, Hearing, and Language Association’s president. Well done, Jordan!*

## Joys and Cares

### OTHER NEWS AND TIDBITS

**New Job** – We reported in a previous newsletter that Frank Bell and Laura Lu Hedrick are closing their law practice at the end of the year. But wait – what happens to their faithful employee, Lynn Smith? Lynn worked for Frank from 4/22/1985 to 12/5/2023. She started working part-time in August for April Crowson; she began working full-time mid-December. Lynn will be working in April's new Estate Planning Administration Division. April will also be opening a Real Estate Division (Lynn's specialty!) next year, but no dates yet on when that will be in place. *They are wonderful to work with and I am so happy to have a great place to go to.*



**Coach** – Pete Kilcullen served for nine years as head coach for the Wheatmore High School girls' Warriors' varsity basketball team. He took a year's leave of absence; but when the position became available again, his family more or less said for him to "go for it" and he is back in that same position.

**New Home** – Kevin and Amanda Hathcock, and Beth Huber, have both sold their houses; and have purchased a big new home together! Beth has her own "apartment" on one floor, and Amanda and Kevin and the boys will roam in their own space! Happy for you all! Their new address is published in the recent church directory.

Don't forget to share your "joys and cares" with us! Please call Celie Lough at 336-239-2522, so that we may "double your joys and halve your cares!" In order to meet printing deadlines, please have all items submitted by the 18th of each month. Thanks! Please note: articles may also be submitted via e-mail to [loughjc@lexcominc.net](mailto:loughjc@lexcominc.net).



# January Calendar

January 2024						
◀ December						February ▶
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> <i>Church Offices Closed</i>	<b>2</b> Pericope 9:30 AM Area Lutheran Pastor Pericope 12:00 Noon Beer and Bible 6:00 PM	<b>3</b> Yoga 9:00 AM Facebook Devotions 10:00 AM <i>No Handbell Rehearsal</i> <i>No Choir Rehearsal</i>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Yoga 9:00 AM	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> Breakfast 9:15 AM Sunday School and Confirmation 9:30 AM Worship 10:30 AM	<b>8</b> Yoga 9:00 AM Property Team 7:00 PM	<b>9</b> Pericope 9:30 AM Mary Circle 11:30 AM Area Lutheran Pastor Pericope 12:00 Noon	<b>10</b> Yoga 9:00 AM Facebook Devotions 10:00 AM Blood Drive 2:00 PM-6:30 PM Handbells 6:30 PM Chancel Choir 7:30 PM	<b>11</b> Worship Team 11:00 AM Outreach Team 12:00 Noon Prayer Shawls 7:00 PM	<b>12</b> Yoga 9:00 AM	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> Worship 10:30 AM	<b>15</b> <i>Church Offices Closed</i> Yoga 9:00 AM Lutheran Men Oyster Roast 6:00 PM	<b>16</b> Pericope 9:30 AM Area Lutheran Pastor Pericope 12:00 Noon Beer and Bible 6:00 PM	<b>17</b> Yoga 9:00 AM Facebook Devotions 10:00 AM Handbells 6:30 PM Chancel Choir 7:30 PM	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Yoga 9:00 AM	<b>20</b> WELCA Conference Officers Gathering 8:30 AM – 2:00 PM Clothing Closet Open 9:00 AM -- Noon
<b>21</b> Worship 10:30 AM	<b>22</b> Yoga 9:00 AM Inreach Team 4:00 PM	<b>23</b> Pericope 9:30 AM Area Lutheran Pastor Pericope 12:00 Noon	<b>24</b> Yoga 9:00 AM Facebook Devotions 10:00 AM Handbells 6:30 PM Chancel Choir 7:30 PM	<b>25</b> Smart Start 5:00 - 8:45 PM Prayer Shawls 7:00 PM	<b>26</b> Yoga 9:00 AM	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> Worship 10:30 AM	<b>29</b> Yoga 9:00 AM	<b>30</b> Pericope 9:30 AM Area Lutheran Pastor Pericope 12:00 Noon VITA Tax Program 1:00 PM – 7:00 PM Beer and Bible 6:00 PM	<b>31</b> Yoga 9:00 AM Facebook Devotions 10:00 AM Handbells 6:30 PM Chancel Choir 7:30 PM			



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Return Service Requested

**We're on the Web:**  
**[WWW.FLCLEX.ORG](http://WWW.FLCLEX.ORG)**

#### Church Staff & Volunteers

**The Rev. Matthew L. Miller** ~ Pastor  
**Tawn Bizzell** ~ Council President  
**Kelly Newsome** ~ Organist / Parish Associate  
**Jim Lovelace** ~ Pianist  
**Kelly Newsome** ~ Music Ministries  
**Bing Grubb** ~ Sexton