

GraceNotes



A Monthly Publication of the Congregational Activities of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Newton, NC
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MAUNDY THURSDAY
Service of Holy Communion
March 28 at 7:00 PM

GOOD FRIDAY OBSERVANCE
March 29 at 7:00 PM

RESURRECTION SUNDAY

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE
March 31 at 7:30 AM – Union Church

EASTER BREAKFAST
March 31 at 8:30 AM – Fellowship Hall

EASTER WORSHIP SERVICE
March 31 at 10:30 AM – Main Sanctuary

HOLY WEEK/EASTER: THE LUTHERAN MANUAL ON THE LITURGY

During the fourth week in March, we are departing the Lenten season of confession, fasting and prayer to celebrate the greatest event in all of human history: The Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we experience the Divine Drama, let us carefully look at what the theology of the church says about what we are to do.

Maundy Thursday highlights the Stripping of the Altar when every vestment, altar piece, the processional cross, the candles, paraments on the lectern and pulpit are solemnly stripped away as the congregation reads Psalm 22 in unison. It is a solemn reminder of what Jesus went through on the night in which he was betrayed and what was to come during the night and early morning hours of Good Friday. There is the celebration of the Passover meal in the Holy Communion and we hear the words of Christ as he said them to his disciples on that night, "Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Take and drink this cup. This is my blood shed for you. Do this in remembrance of me." No further words are said. There is no benediction, no postlude. Thus, the community departs in silence and the service extends into Good Friday and the Easter Vigil. It is all one extended worship, from Thursday through Good Friday through the Easter Sunrise Vigil and culminates with the Easter Worship on Easter morning.

Good Friday brings us face to face with the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. There is no music other than the singing of a hymn. There is no Holy Communion. This is to be considered as the larger celebration of the mystery of salvation and a time for reflection and intercession, as well as the adoration of Christ, the sacrificial Lamb. The people of God gather on Good Friday to *celebrate* the Lord's sacrifice on the cross. The altar is left bare. The observance centers on readings from the scriptures and a short sermon. Any dressings should be in black with the cross draped in black as well. Pastors should not wear additional vestments such as stoles, capes, or chasubles, for Good Friday is essentially a day without a proper color.

The Easter Vigil (sometimes considered as the **Sunrise Worship**) is the watch through the night for signs of the rising dawn. The worship evokes themes of darkness and light, death and life, chaos and order, slavery and freedom. It is the solemn memorial of the central mystery of salvation – Christ's saving death and mighty rising. The light of Christ is brought into the sanctuary to signify that the Light of the World has defeated death and has risen from the dead. The end of this liturgy is not the end of the worship service. The Easter Vigil and the Easter Worship which follows are the same and the Easter Vigil continues with the Easter Worship. Worshippers may have an Easter breakfast or Bible study between the two worship services, but each is not a worship unto itself. They are intentionally connected and are seen as one worship service.

The Easter Worship and celebration is filled with the sweet aroma of Easter lilies and great anticipation of the Risen Christ. It is a worship that is filled with splendor and excitement. The singing of hymns should be full and exuberant. The sanctuary is adorned with white paraments and the pastor will wear all white stoles. The celebration of the Holy Communion is distributed with each worshiper remembering what a precious gift it is to hold in their hands and taste on their lips the love of Christ which the world cannot understand. Easter and the Resurrection have changed everything!

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR MARCH

- ❖ Lector Todd Childers
- ❖ Ushers Jack Wilfong and James Hall
- ❖ Communion Assistants Rick and Cindy Bivens
- ❖ Altar Preparation Herb and Libby Travis
- ❖ Offering Tabulators Todd Childers and Sheila Drum

*Please be mindful of your commitment to serve. If you are unable to fulfill that commitment, be reminded that it is **your** responsibility to find someone to serve in your place.*



FLOWER CHART FOR MARCH

- 3/03 LENT – No Flowers on Altar
- 3/10 LENT – No Flowers on Altar
- 3/17 LENT – No Flowers on Altar
- 3/24 Palm Sunday
- 3/31 Resurrection Sunday

If you wish to give the flowers for a given Sunday, please list your name on the chart in the narthex. *You are responsible for ordering the flowers from a florist of your choice; we do not have a standing order with any florist.* The liturgical color of the day is listed to assist you in selecting flowers appropriate for that Sunday. You should contact the Church Office so that the correct information is placed in the bulletin for that Sunday. Please notify the Church Office the Tuesday prior to your selected Sunday. You can call the Church Office between 8:00 AM and Noon on Monday - Thursday, leave a note on the desk, or send an email to let us know the occasion or memorial for this wonderful gift of beatification of the worship.

ATTENDANCE AND GIVING TO OUR LORD’S WORK FOR JANUARY/FEBRUARY

	1/28/24	2/4/24	2/11/24	2/14/24 Ash Wed.	2/18/24
Sunday School	9	8	11	N/A	6
Worship	37	42	44	27	40
General Fund Offerings	\$1,585.00	\$2,380.00	\$5,147.00	\$310.00	\$1,395.00

Needed Each Week = \$3,268.54

General Fund Offerings, January, 2024 = \$9,579.00
General Fund Expenses, January, 2024 = \$7,754.56
Difference = \$1,824.44 (offerings exceeded expenses)

THE GRACE PRAYER BREAKFAST will be held on **Saturday, March 9 at 9:00 AM** at Four Peas in a Pod Restaurant on Highway 70 in Conover. Great food and great fellowship! Please come and bring a friend!

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME begins on **Sunday, March 10th**! Be sure to set your clock forward one hour before going to bed the night before.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE LEADERSHIP MINISTRY BOARD is scheduled for **Monday, March 18th at 6:00 pm.**

THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING is on Tuesday, **March 19th**!

THE GRACE PRAYER LUNCHEON will be held on **Wednesday, March 20th at noon in the Fellowship Hall.** This is a time for any adults from Grace and the community to come together for food and fellowship! Please give Betty Wilfong a call at (828) 461-6604 and let her know if you plan to attend.

SPECIAL OFFERING ENVELOPES WILL BE USED THIS YEAR DURING EASTER LILY ORDER TIME! To make it less confusing for the counters and the Church Financial Secretary, we will be using a special offering envelope during Easter lily order time. The special offering envelopes will make it much easier to accurately record your giving. We will still use the lily order forms (as used in past years), so that we will know the details of your donations (to the Glory of God or in honor or memory of someone). You can simply fold the form and place it and your check or cash in the special offering envelope. Then complete the front of the form, and you're finished! (On the Sunday you place your lily order, you do not need to use your regular numbered envelope. However, it is greatly appreciated when you use them on the other Sundays of the year.) **The last day to order lilies is Sunday, March 17th!**

JOB OPENING – Grace is now accepting applications for the part-time secretary/administrative assistant position. For details, see a Board Member.

THE SAMARITAN'S PURSE CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOX MINISTRY is a yearlong event. We have empty boxes (located in the children's choir section) that are ready to be filled. When finished, please place them on an empty pew there.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL will be held on **Sunday, June 9 through Thursday, June 13** at Plateau United Methodist in Plateau. We will be partnering with Zion, Sardis and Plateau. The theme this year is “Campfire Light.” Please contact Stormy Shull for details if you are available to volunteer. Everyone is welcome! Come and join the fun!

EASTERN CATAWBA COOPERATIVE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY - 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

In reflection of the past year, ECCCM is proud to highlight a significant milestone – the expansion of services to encompass all of Catawba County. ECCCM expresses its heartfelt gratitude to all who have been a part of this journey, and they eagerly anticipate the continued growth of their service outreach in the years to come. Your ongoing support is crucial in meeting the heightened challenges faced by individuals and families in our community. Together, we can make a lasting impact in the lives of our neighbors. Thank you for standing with those facing a crisis in Catawba County. Thank you for making hope a reality.

59, 289	Face-to-face service-based interactions provided to Catawba County residents 9,957 individuals served; 4,353 households served
15,712	Volunteer hours logged, saving the ministry \$499,642 through the donations of their time, talents and effort
\$1.4 Million	Provided for crisis assistance (rent/mortgage, power, water, heating and/or cooling)
39,119	Total food pick-ups in 2023
439	Largest food pick-ups in 2023 in a single day
\$150,000	Ministry support was generated through the resale of items through the Thrifty Threads & Treasures Thrift Store
4,163	Clothing and household items given to clients through vouchers, equal to a total value of \$8,511.

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MINUTES
Of Leadership Ministry Board Special Meeting
Monday, January 29, 2024

Call to Order Called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Tim Eckard.

Prayer By Alan Shull

Roll Call Present: Tim Eckard, Jason Yoder, Todd Childers, Alan Shull, Rick Bivens, Sheila
 Drum, Jeff Scronce, Libby Travis
 Absent: None

Minutes November 13, 2023 and December 18, 2023 Minutes were approved.

New Business

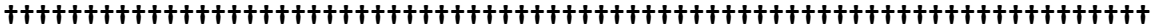
- A. Tim Eckard read a letter from Pam Tallent announcing her intention to retire on June 27, 2024. The Board will begin a search for her replacement immediately so that Pam will be able to train her replacement prior to her departure.
- B. Tim Eckard has made several attempts by phone to reach the NALC Call Process Coordinator (Pastor Shelly Schultz), but has been unsuccessful. Pam Tallent has sent an email to Pastor Schultz.
- C. The Call Process Manual was reviewed.
- D. Some members of the Call Committee have been identified and have agreed to serve. A few more are still needed. Once all members have agreed to serve, a formal motion and vote to appoint them by the Board will be taken.
- E. Tim Eckard will make an announcement advising the Congregation that the process has begun, it will be a lengthy process, and it will be done in God’s time, not ours.

Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made and seconded. MOTION CARRIED.

Next Meeting Monday, February 19, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

Devotions – Alan Shull; Offering Tabulators – Todd Childers and Alan Shull



**MINUTES
Of Leadership Ministry Board Regular Meeting
Monday, February 19, 2024**

Call to Order Called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Tim Eckard.

Devotions By Alan Shull

Roll Call Present: Tim Eckard, Jason Yoder, Todd Childers, Alan Shull, Libby Travis
Absent: Rick Bivens, Sheila Drum, Jeff Scronce

Minutes January 15, 2024 (Regular) and January 29, 2024 (Special) were approved.

New Business

- A. The search for a replacement for Pam Tallent is ongoing. The job posting will be shared with other local Lutheran churches and ECCCM.
- B. A Motion was made and seconded to cover the cost for Rick Bivens to attend the Carolinas Mission Region Convocation in May in Little Mountain, SC. Motion carried.

Old Business

- A. The Call Committee held an organizational meeting on Sunday, February 18th after worship.
 - 1. Stormy Shull will serve as Chairperson of the Call Committee.
 - 2. Herb Travis will serve as Secretary of the Committee.
 - 3. Jason Yoder has requested that the questions sent out by the Committee be placed in the bulletins for the next 2 Sundays. Tim Eckard will discuss with Pam Tallent.

Ministry Team Reports

- A. Praise and Worship – Tim Eckard
 - 1. We have Pastors scheduled for all events through the end of March including Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Son Rise, and Easter Sunday worship.
 - a. Pastor Brack East will lead worship on March 3rd and March 10th.
 - b. Pastor Gary Coble will lead worship on March 17th, 24th (Palm Sunday), 28th (Maundy Thursday), 29th (Good Friday), and both services on Easter Sunday.
- B. Youth Ministry/Christian Education – Alan Shull
 - 1. Stormy Shull is meeting with representatives of Zion Lutheran, Sardis Lutheran, Wesley Chapel Methodist and Plateau Community Church to discuss plans for Vacation Bible School for Summer, 2024.

