

### **Members in Need of Prayer**

Rose Marie and Joe Starr, Sr. and Joe Starr, Jr., Donna Short,  
Beth Walborn, Shirley Beach, John Parker,  
Mary Dawn Stuenkel, Kamara Reade, Pastor Marty Ramey

**Prayer Concerns:** If you have an urgent prayer concern, please contact Kamara Reade at 828-430-0760 or [kay.29@netzero.net](mailto:kay.29@netzero.net). She will send it out to New Covenant members.

### **News About Commissions**

The Church and Community Life Commission has met several times over the last six weeks to plan church and outreach events/activities, as you can tell in this newsletter. The other two commissions, the Spiritual Development Commission and Parish Management Commission, will meet soon. If you indicated on the Caring and Sharing form (green sheet) that you were willing to serve on one of these commissions, you will be contacted soon to attend a meeting. Thank you for your willingness to serve and help to increase the kingdom of God. If you would still like to volunteer to serve on a commission or wish to fill out a green sheet, please see Eric Stuenkel or Angela Williams.

### **Wedding Shower on May 21**



Debbie and Quez Little's son, Greg, will be getting married in June to Jaimie Vancil. We want to congratulate them on their upcoming marriage and help them get started with their new life together by giving them a wedding shower. The wedding shower will be held immediately after church and will include lunch. If you wish to give them a gift, they are asking for gift cards to any of the following establishments: Lowe's Hardware, Target, Trader Joes, Ingles, or East Fork Pottery (found online at <https://www.eastfork.com/> or visit the Asheville store). They would also like any black handled Wusthof kitchen knives and any larger sized silver serving spoons. If you wish to help provide food for the shower, please speak to Beverly Watts.

### **Carolinas Mission Region Convocation**

The Carolinas Mission Region Convocation will be held at Miller's Lutheran in Hickory on May 5<sup>th</sup> (evening) and 6<sup>th</sup> (all day). It is to be live-streamed and all congregations are invited to tune in and see the event. Look for the live-stream on the Carolinas Mission Region Facebook page first. If you do not find it, look at Miller's Facebook page. If you have trouble finding it or connecting to it, please contact Pastor Todd Cook at 828.781.9133. Several members of the New Covenant Church Council will be attending this event.

### **Building Update**

David Lange has sent out letters to several local property owners to ask if they are willing to sell their land to New Covenant. He has not gotten any responses back at this time. We are also getting a new realtor to help in the search for a new location. If you know of a good location that is available, please contact David Lange ([tkyripill@att.net](mailto:tkyripill@att.net)) and he will check it out. Please keep watching and praying for a new, permanent location for New Covenant.



# New Covenant News

**Volume 5, Number 1**

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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

### **From the Pastor:**

*(Jesus said:)...if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.*  
Matthew 5:23-24

### **THE EXCHANGE OF PEACE**



On Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. The season of celebration continues for 50 days, through what is known in Judaism as the Feast of Weeks, a harvest festival decreed by God.



During these seven weeks, we remember what God has done for us in the resurrection, Jesus bearing our sins to the cross that we might know forgiveness. The resurrection is about reconciliation, our reconciliation to God through Christ, and also about our reconciliation with each other, as we learn to forgive just as we have been forgiven.

This is what we practice in our liturgy in what is known as the exchange or sharing of the peace. During the past years of pandemic, the practice of sharing the peace fell out of use in many churches but is now part of worship again at New Covenant. There may be those who prefer to continue social distancing, and physical contact—shaking hands or hugging—should never be imposed on anyone who is not comfortable with interpersonal contact; they may simply smile at their neighbors in the pew and speak the words “the peace of the Lord be with you.”

In the *Didache*, a very early Christian writing from New Testament times, the Christian community “come(s) together on the Lord’s day, having first confessed your sins so that your sacrifice may be pure. Anyone who has a quarrel with his fellow should not gather with you until he has been reconciled, lest your sacrifice be profaned.” Thus, the pattern which Christ speaks of in the above passage from the Sermon on the Mount is built into Christian worship from the beginning. It is a word of reconciliation spoken on behalf of our Lord to bring us into harmony with each other.

It is the word of peace spoken by Christ to the disciples as they gathered together in the locked room following his crucifixion and burial. He came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." (John 20:19) He spoke to the fears, the anxiety, the uncertainty that the disciples were feeling on that Sunday, following the anguish of watching him die on Friday and finding the tomb empty three days later. For that reason, we share the peace in our worship. The word of peace from the Lord calms our fears and reconciles us to one another.

*The exchange of peace is a ministry, an announcement of grace we make to each other, a summary of the gift given to us in the liturgy of the Word. This ministry we do to each other is far greater than a sociable handshake or a ritual of friendship or a moment of informality. Because of the presence of Jesus Christ, we give to each other what we are saying: Christ's own peace. Then, having been gathered by the Spirit around the Risen One present in the word, we turn to celebrate his meal.*

Brugh, Lorraine S. and Gordon W. Lathrop, *Using Evangelical Lutheran Worship: The Sunday Assembly*, Minneapolis:Augsburg Fortress, 2008, p. 173

Sharing the peace of the Lord with each other forms a bridge between the reading of scripture and the celebration of Holy Communion, moving us from the word of forgiveness to the meal of forgiveness. When shared in the right spirit, the peace of the Lord truly allows us to approach the altar reconciled to each other and to God himself.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Marty

### **Bible Study**

Pastor Ramey is leading Bible study on the book of Revelation on Thursdays at 10:30 AM at the church. Come, bring your Bible, and invite a friend!

### **Church Council Meeting**

New Covenant's Church Council meets the second Wednesday of each month at 6 PM. All are welcome to attend. The next meeting is May 10 (this may change but will be announced in church). If you have an item that you want the Church Council to discuss or consider, please contact Eric Stuenkel at [westuenkel@bellsouth.net](mailto:westuenkel@bellsouth.net) or Angela Williams at [3521awilliams@charter.net](mailto:3521awilliams@charter.net)

### **Upcoming Events from the Church and Community Life Commission**

#### **Mother's Day Reception**

On May 14th, immediately following our church service we will Celebrate all Mothers with a reception of cookies, salties and Lemonade or water. We hope everyone will stay and take time to enjoy refreshments and share good times as we Celebrate all the ladies at New Covenant Lutheran and our visitors. We encourage you to bring friends or family members with you!



### **Burke Pregnancy Center Project**

Starting on Mother's Day, May 14, New Covenant will be collecting money, diapers, wipes, etc. for the Burke County Pregnancy Center. Money, including coins and bills, can be put into "baby bottles" provided by the Pregnancy Center. The bottles will be set out by the church bulletins. You may fill up more than one bottle if you would like. See Angela Williams about the bottles. You may place diapers, wipes, etc. in the boxes under/near the mailboxes at the end of the hall. The collection will end on Father's Day, June 18.



### **Craft And Conversation**

Come and join us in learning basic knitting. One basic stitch can lead to a wonderful past time enabling you to make dish cloths, scarves, afghans, prayer shawls, etc.

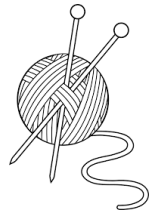
**Date:** Wednesday, May 10<sup>th</sup> **Time:** 10:00 a.m.

**Place:** New Covenant Lutheran Church

**What to Bring:** Supplies will be provided. If you already have knitting needles, please bring them.

**Questions??:** Please call Pam Henderson at #828-403-1108

Come and bring a friend! We look forward to seeing you there!



### **NALC Disaster Relief – Outreach Effort**

New Covenant is collecting 100 each of bleach (1/2 gallon or smaller) and paper towels for the Mission Event on May 20<sup>th</sup>. You are invited to help assemble flood buckets on May 20<sup>th</sup> at Advent Lutheran in Kings Mountain. Items are due at New Covenant by May 18<sup>th</sup>. Please place these items in the 2 large boxes in the front fellowship area. Thank You in advance for Giving from your heart to help the NALC Disaster Relief Efforts.

### **Lending Library to Begin**

New Covenant is going to start a "Lending Library" and we need your help. Do you have books you have read that you loved and would like to share these with others? New Covenant is gathering books this month to use as part of our new "Lending Library". When the books are gathered we will organize them and offer them on a designated bookshelf for members to borrow, read, and return for others to enjoy. These also could be shared by reading to those who are home bound during a visit, if desired. We want to thank you in advance for all donations.

### **Prayer Lap Quilts and Prayer Shawls Needed**

Though out the year we would like to receive Knitted Prayer Shawls and Prayer Lap Quilts to be Blessed and given to others who are facing a illness, loss and need the love of the members at New Covenant. Large Ziploc bags and special tags from New Covenant will be provided as these are blessed to share with others. We look forward to sharing our love and support to others we know with this outreach ministry.