



Call Committee Report

Waiting, trusting, and hoping are intricately connected...to form a strong chain. Trusting is the central strand because it is the response that Jesus desires from us. Waiting for him to work, with our eyes on him, is evidence of our trust. Because we trust Jesus, we can wait expectantly. Let's keep our "antennae" out to pick up even the faintest glimmer of his presence. (Paraphrased from **Jesus Calling**, March 12.)

Waiting on Jesus means to direct our attention to him in hopeful anticipation of what he will do. We are to trust completely instead of trying to figure things out for ourselves. He promises many blessings to those who wait on him: renewed strength, resurgence of hope, awareness of his presence. Waiting on Jesus lets us glorify him by depending on him and being ready to do his will. *In his Presence is fullness of Joy.* (Paraphrased from **Jesus Calling**, March 26.)

As we continue *waiting on Jesus*, let us also trust that he is actively involved in our situation and our circumstances. Let us be open to the Holy Spirit in our congregational life as we await our new pastor, the one already selected by Jesus, and as we seek a new home in which to worship and minister, also already selected by Jesus.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church... Ephesians 3:20

- Submitted by Dianne Hermanson, Call Committee Chair

NCLC Women's Group and WNALC Newsletter

The women of New Covenant meet monthly at 1:00 PM on the fourth Wednesday of each month. It is a great time of fellowship, mission work, and deepening our faith journey. We invite all women to join in the fun! Yes, we have fun! If you would like to receive the Women of the NALC newsletter, you can go to the following website (<https://www.wnalc.org/newsletter/>) and then click on the button to receive an email that will contain the newsletter. The *WNALC* newsletter is published six times each year at the beginning of the even numbered months. It includes information about upcoming events and our Mission Bank partners, as well as interesting and uplifting articles. If you have any questions about this group, please speak with Angela Williams.

** Please see the God Moment story by Dianne Hermanson on the back of the calendar insert.



New Covenant News

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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 Pastor Bob's Desk...

What's new in your life today? We are in the beginning of the Easter season and celebrating the resurrection of our Lord. We know, as Christians, that this celebration ought to endure throughout our lifetimes. Jesus came and accomplished all that he declared to his followers from the beginning of his personal ministry on earth. It's a done deal – on His part. For you and me there remains an expectation that we live in that truth faithfully. What does that mean for us? Does it mean that we have to do something to earn what Jesus has already accomplished for us? Or, does it mean that we can just sit back and relax while a number of others carry the Gospel forward into the lives of others?

In **2 Corinthians 5:17**, it reads that ***"if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation, the old has passed away; everything has become new!"*** It goes on from there to point out that this is something God was doing for us through Christ. So, as we celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are definitely celebrating something we don't have to do. Christ died for us and was resurrected to accomplish, for us, a new and reconciled relationship with our Lord. Jesus was the perfect Lamb – given for the atonement of our sins. There's nothing more that you and I can achieve to gain that assurance – beyond our enduring expressions of faith in Jesus Christ. But, how is our faith expressed in our lives? Is it as simple as walking into church for 1 hour or less on most, if not all, Sunday mornings? Is our expression of faith simply something we place in the offering plate?

The Apostle Paul indicates that there is some level of expectation for us as "new creations" in Christ. In **2 Corinthians 5:18**, it states that we have been given a ***"ministry of reconciliation"***. What does that mean? Deep down inside we know what this passage is saying to us – and deep down inside, we know the headaches entailed in carrying forward with such a task. As we contemplate the spirit and demands of a "ministry of reconciliation" – we need to take the time to revisit the events of Holy Week.



As much as I love to see the turnout for Easter Sunday worship services – it never ceases to amaze me how predictably – just a few of us take seriously the need to be in church for Ash Wednesday, or Lent, or Maundy Thursday, or Good Friday worship services. Those are the moments where we get down to the meat of our needs for God’s mercy and grace – the enduring sin in our lives. I think the truth is – most of us don’t really want to sit down and look at the depth of our failures or the broken relationships in our lives – especially as they relate to our personal sin. It’s hard work. It may mean getting down to some of those forgiveness issues we would rather avoid – if not deny.

Those are some of the old things that have passed away and been replaced with forgiveness in God’s work of reconciliation through Jesus Christ. Through Christ, we have become new and reconciled to our Father in heaven. The “ministry of reconciliation” hands a similar baton to us – we need to see others in a new way. We need to see others as forgivable and lovable and redeemable. It doesn’t mean that they will respond any differently toward us – but it means that the door has been opened up to them for a new and reconciled relationship with us – in the same way that our Lord has opened the door, through Jesus Christ, for their reconciliation with God.

Again, when you think about the difficulties inherent with this ministry that has been passed onto us – think about Jesus’ ordeal. Remember that many around him expressed hateful rejection toward his invitations – and continued to - beyond all that Jesus did and after his ascension. Many had other preferred personal agendas that interfered or conflicted with what Jesus was offering to them. Jesus warned his followers that they too would endure rejection and persecutions because of their association with Him.

As Christians we should fully realize the profound depth of God’s healing, forgiveness, mercy, and love for us. As Christians, we should be promoting that same spirit of healing, forgiving, mercy, and love toward others – in the name of our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Our stubborn sin-filled issues that keep us from carrying forward with God’s ministry of reconciliation – are part of those “old” things that God has removed from between us and Him. The newness in you – are those expressions of God’s mercy and love and forgiveness and healing – that you now carry into the lives of those around you.

In **Lamentations 3:22-23**, it states that **“the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never comes to an end; they are new every morning”**. Through the new creations which we have become in Christ, that steadfast love and mercy for others ought to be renewed and celebrated in us every morning. As we celebrate all that Jesus has accomplished for us on Easter Sunday, let us go forward realizing and celebrating our newness in Him every morning – and strive to carry that newness into the relationships we experience each day. I wish you a blessed and fruitful Easter season.

In Christ’s Service,
Pastor Bob Alle

Members in Need of Prayer

Rose Marie and Joe Starr, Sr. and Joe Starr, Jr., Donna Short, Beth Walborn,
John Parker, Ed Williams

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

Church Council Meeting

New Covenant’s Church Council will meet on Wednesday, April 10th at 6 PM this month. If you have an item that you want the Church Council to discuss or consider, please contact Eric Stuenkel (westuenkel@bellsouth.net) or Angela Williams (3521awilliams@charter.net).

Called Congregation Meeting & Information Session

God has been at work and so have several of our New Covenant disciples in trying to obtain a “permanent location” for New Covenant. There will be an Information Session about all the progress on the purchase of the former Family Dollar store in Glen Alpine on April 7th at 9 AM. Please come to be more informed and to ask questions. There will be a Called Congregation Meeting on Sunday, April 14th at 9 AM to give a formal vote on purchasing the former Family Dollar building. Please make every effort to attend these important meetings. If you have any questions about these meetings, please contact Eric Stuenkel.

New Covenant’s 5th Anniversary

New Covenant Lutheran Church will be celebrating its 5th Anniversary on April 21st! Pastor Gil Gilbert will be with us to commemorate this event; he preached our first sermon on April 21, 2019. We will have a reception after the service. Please make plans to join us on this important day in the history of New Covenant.

Bible Study & Prayer Time

Come and join the Bible study on Thursday mornings at 10:30 AM at the church. Scripture for the upcoming Sunday will be studied each week. The sessions will be led by lay leaders Angela Williams and Kamara Reade. If you are interested in helping to lead the sessions, please contact Kamara Reade (at 828-430-0760 or kay.29@netzero.net). Prayer time occurs immediately after the Bible study.



Food Collection

Starting this month, we will begin collecting non-perishable food items for local food pantries on the first Sunday of each month. Please bring donated food items on April 7th this month. If you forget to bring it on the first Sunday, go ahead and bring it when you remember. Thank you for your generosity.

