

Call Committee Report

Your Call Committee has been working to complete our Congregational Profile, the document that will be posted on the NALC website for pastors who are seeking a call. The Profile will contain statistical information about New Covenant, such as number of members and age brackets, and financial information, such as annual budget, benevolence, debt and savings.

Also included in the Profile is information about our short history, the community of Morganton and Burke County, how we view our mission and ministry, what our worship style is (LBW/WOV), significant events for NCLC, and most significantly, what we are looking for in a pastor.

Pastors from around the world will have the opportunity to view that Profile and decide if he or she might be interested in learning more about NCLC and our ministry. If so, the Call Committee will be notified and will then contact the pastor to arrange for a time the pastoral candidate and the Call Committee to share additional information and ask questions of each other. If interest continues with both the pastor and NCLC, a face-to-face meeting will be scheduled. Once the Call Committee agrees on a candidate, the Council will be advised and arrangements will be made to meet the pastor and the pastor's family. Additional meetings will be held with the candidate, the Call Committee and the Council. The pastor will lead a worship service with the congregation and have a time for discussion after worship.

If the Call Committee and the Council agree on the candidate, a Congregational Meeting will be held to vote on extending a call. And that's the process in a nutshell. We are meeting regularly to complete the Congregational Profile for the Council's review in January. Our goal is to submit that Profile for the next vacancy posting by the NALC.

Keep praying for us, for the pastor who is seeking a congregation, and for the Holy Spirit to continue to guide and direct us. It has been clear to us that the Holy Spirit is leading this process. We are trying to keep up!


"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

Submitted by Dianne Hermanson, Call Committee Chair

Bible Study

Weekly Bible Study has returned! 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).

Eyeglasses Collection for the Lion's Club

 Do you have old eyeglasses lying around the house that are no longer used? You can bring them to church this month so that they may be donated to the Lion's Club. The Lion's Club finds someone in need of eyeglasses who cannot afford them and give them donated eyeglasses. Donate today!

Sharing Shepherds 2023

(Please see the article about the Sharing Shepherds 2023 event 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

Resolutions to Grow Our Faith in the New Year:

Every year, believers should consider ways they can deepen their faith and live faithful lives. These are the kind of resolutions every Christian can make as they look ahead to a new year. Christians can prayerfully discern resolutions that are in line with Scripture to enhance their faith. Ultimately, whatever followers of Jesus do, we want to do to the glory of God. Making resolutions can help Christians stay accountable to prioritizing God first and foremost.



- 1. Spend more time with God:** We are instructed to model our lives after the life of Jesus. He set the perfect example for believers, and one of the things we read about Jesus doing often was setting aside time to pray and commune with the Father. As you look to set goals in the new year, consider spending more time with God. Ask God to show you how you can make more time for Him. This time with God will give you rest, peace, hope, and wisdom. (Matthew 14:23)
- 2. Connect to a church** (thank you for being a disciple at New Covenant): The New Testament teaches a lot about the importance of the church body and that followers of Jesus should be part of a community of believers. We need fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to hold us accountable, walk through life with us, and help us grow in our faith. God knows we will face all sorts of hardships in life — having a church family to encourage and support you is vital. There is great purpose in the body of Christ, and each of us should make it a point to connect to a church in the new year, or get more involved in the one you are already attending. (Hebrews 10:24-25)
- 3. Serve regularly:** God has equipped every believer with gifts to use, and it is our responsibility to use these God-given gifts. Our gifts build up the church and advance His kingdom. Jesus extended great compassion to those who were in need and came not to be served, but to serve others. In the new year, we can seek ways to serve regularly to help others, use our gifts, and make a needed impact in the world for God's glory. (1 Peter 4:10)

4. **Read the Bible:** The Bible is a beautiful gift to humanity that reveals who God is, helps us understand our nature and His great love us, and how we can devote our hearts to God and live righteously for Him. Every day, believers should be in the Word of God. It encourages, teaches, corrects, and trains. Many struggle to find the time to read the Bible and study it. In the new year, pray that reading the Bible be a new spiritual habit you incorporate into your daily life. You will see your faith impacted in powerful ways as you study and learn God's word. (Romans 15:4)
5. **Share the Gospel:** Jesus left His followers with a key mission — to make disciples in all nations by sharing the Gospel and baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each of us can spend time reflecting on how often we share the Gospel. Perhaps God has placed certain people in your life for the purpose of sharing your faith with them — both in words and righteous actions that represent Jesus' love. In the new year, pray for opportunities to share your faith as you aim to live out the great commission by helping people come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. (Matthew 28:19)
6. **Focus on Spiritual Growth:** God desires that we grow in our faith, not just stay spiritually immature. We grow spiritually through discipleship by being humble, resisting temptations and sinfulness, and doing the good that God has called us to do. Pray that God will reveal ways that you can become more mature in your faith. By devoting your heart to God, reading the Bible, being with other believers, and spending intentional time with God, you can grow spiritually mature in your faith this year. (Hebrews 6:1)
7. **Give generously:** God loves when we give to others! God has called His children to be cheerful givers who obediently give of their finances to further His kingdom. In the new year, you can pray about ways that you can give generously, just as God has given generously. We respond with gratefulness to all that God has provided by giving back to God as faithful givers. (1 Corinthians 9:11)

Prayer for the New Year: Heavenly Father, You are good and gracious to have blessed me with another year of life. You have remained faithful and compassionate toward me this past year. Though it was not always easy, and I faced difficult circumstances, I trust that you have been near to me through it all. Lord, as I look to the new year, my heart's desire is to be pleasing in your sight. Whatever I do and whatever I set my mind on, I want to bring honor and glory to you. Help me, Lord, to put you first this year. I ask for your blessing upon me in the new year and that you would guide my steps. I ask for your protection, your wisdom, and that I would have opportunities to be a light in the world. I pray this all in Jesus' name, Amen!

**Author: Pamela Palmer (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/7-resolutions-to-grow-your-faith-in-the-new-year.html>)

Members in Need of Prayer

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

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.

Annual Congregational Meeting Results

The Annual Congregational Meeting was held on Sunday, December 17th. The 2024 budget was presented and approved. Eric Stuenkel and Beverly Watts were re-elected to the Church Council for another three-year term. During the January Church Council meeting, Eric Stuenkel was elected as president; Angela Williams as vice-president; and Beverly Watts as secretary. They will be installed during worship on Sunday, January 14.

NALC Convocation in Oklahoma City – August 8 – 11, 2023

The NALC Convocation in Oklahoma City was held August 8-11, 2023 and was attended by Rev. Marty Ramey and Pam Henderson representing New Covenant Lutheran Church in Morganton, NC. It was such an honor to have been given a scholarship by the Women of the NALC to attend this conference. We encountered amazing countryside as we journeyed two days by car to reach Oklahoma City Monday night, Aug. 7th.

- The Women's annual meeting of the NALC was held on Tuesday, August 8th and was the most meaningful for me of the entire convocation. We had the normal agenda to approve minutes, treasurer's report, and election of new council members. In representing New Covenant at all the nominee elections, I studied their bios and voted according to what I felt met the needs of the entire NAL Church membership.
- The testimony by Rachel Raborn Norris of Bryan, Texas, moved most of us to tears. She is a potter, "Joy Pottery", and sat at a small pottery wheel molding clay as she shared God's grace, mercy and redeeming love demonstrated through Jesus Christ. She used the pottery making process to illustrate these biblical truths.
- Wednesday, Aug. 9-11 was the Mission Convocation Meeting. We began each day with a Bible study by Dr. David Luy. Joint and separate agendas were held with various speaker topics to attend. I attended two breakout sessions: One on the devastation of sexual slavery of young children; and the session for Strengthening and Growing congregations by Rev. Dr. David Wendel and Rev. Brad Hales.
- At the general meeting, the minutes and treasure's report were approved after discussion. Then began the voting for the election of new nominees. Again, I studied applicant bios, voting for the most suitable representation for the entire NALC membership.
- The Joyful announcement was made for the 61 student pastors, with 12 newly ordained. Also, the addition of 43 pastors joining the NALC.
- The Convocation adjourned at 5 PM on Friday.

Rev. Marty and Pam began their return journey on Saturday morning but took in some attractions first. In Oklahoma City we visited the site where Timothy McVeigh bombed the Federal Building. What a moving experience! In Tulsa, Oklahoma we visited "the center of the world" and an antique sewing machine facility. Onward to photograph one of the many casinos only to have the car horn blast until we could get it cut off! Then in Nashville, TN we stopped by Loretta Lynn's ranch. Thanks be to God for his travelling mercies in bringing us home to NC safely. Thank you, New Covenant, for this learning and encouraging experience. – Submitted by Pam Henderson