

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, Rick Watts, Clay Stephenson, 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.

Upcoming Events from the Church and Community Life Commission

Christmas in JULY-Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Ministry- Extended!



The Operation Christmas Child Shoebox collection has been extended through August. Boxes are due on August 30. Please see the July newsletter for more information. Empty boxes are still available from the church. Please give \$10 per shoebox by writing a check payable to New Covenant Lutheran and mark it for the SHOEBOX MINISTRY in the memo line.

For more information about Operation Christmas Child or to find more gift suggestions, go to <http://www.samaritanspurse.org/occ>

Burke United Christian Ministries Food and Paper Product Drive

It's that time again; time to bring in canned or non-perishable foods and paper products for BUCM! Jesus told us to take care of those in need and this is your chance to help. Food suggestions include canned vegetables, canned soups, canned meat, and boxes of rice or potatoes. We are also collecting paper products like paper towels, toilet paper, plates, cups, utensils, etc. Let's fill up the collection boxes!! Collection ends on August 31st.



Adult Outing at Winery & Brewery

All adult members are invited to join in fellowship at Silver Fork Winery & Brewery on Friday, August 11 from 6 – 9 PM. The address is 5000 Patton Road, Morganton, NC, 28655. Foods and beverages are available for purchase. Cold tap water is free. Come to enjoy the views, relax, and visit with others as you overlook the vineyard. In case of rain, this will be rescheduled to Friday, August 18 (same times).



"If God wanted me to eat carrots, He wouldn't hide them underground!"



New Covenant News

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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 to the Pharisees and the Sadducees:) When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.

Matthew 16:1-3

THE DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

We are in what is sometimes known as the Dog Days of Summer, 40 days which are considered to be the hottest summer days, often accompanied by high humidity in North America. According to the *Old Farmer's Almanac*, the Dog Days are the 40 days beginning July 3rd and ending August 11th. The Dog Days coincide with the rising at sunrise of the Dog Star, Sirius.

Sirius, the Dog Star, is part of the constellation Canis Majoris—the "Greater Dog"—which is where Sirius gets its canine nickname, as well as its official name, Alpha Canis Majoris. Not including our own Sun, Sirius is the brightest star in the sky. In ancient Greece, Egypt, and Rome, it was believed that the dawn rising of Sirius in mid-to-late summer contributed to the extreme weather of the season. In other words, the "combined heat" of super-bright Sirius and our Sun was thought to be the cause of summer's sweltering temperatures. The name "Sirius" even stems from the Ancient Greek seírios, meaning "scorching."

From The Old Farmer's Almanac, 1817: "Dog Days are approaching; you must, therefore, make both hay and haste while the Sun shines, for when old



9th Century astronomical illustration of constellation Sirius

Sirius takes command of the weather, he is such an unsteady, crazy dog, there is no dependence upon him.”

Adapted from Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dog_days

We humans always have been fascinated with weather and the stars in the sky, as Jesus said in the passage above from the gospel account of Matthew. Whether Sirius is responsible for the Dog Days extreme weather is more myth than scientific fact. However, we have another heavenly body that may not be responsible for weather but does provide us with the light of salvation. In the 22nd chapter of Revelation, Jesus declares to John, “I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.” (Revelation 22:6) This is the basis of our Epiphany hymn *Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning*. And in John 8:12, Jesus says to the crowd, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

We depend on the sun during the day for light and heat, and for the moon and stars for light during the night. For us, there is a greater light that shines in our lives, the light of our Lord, Jesus the Christ. He is, as we hear in the gospel account of John, “the light (that) shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1:5) We would do well to remember that in the present darkness of our world. Even amid the turmoil of violence, terrorism, and persecution that surrounds us, we have our hope in the light that shines into the darkness and sustains us in our trials.

Stay cool in these “dog days”! As summer draws to a close, may we find respite and relaxation in our vacation travels and safe passage home, traveling always in the light of the Son.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Marty

Prayer and Bible Study

Pastor Marty will lead prayers for the spiritual growth, future direction, and current needs of NCLC at 10:00 AM every Friday and on Tuesdays at 6 PM. Join us for this time of spiritual renewal as we seek God's guidance in our personal and congregational commitment to following the Great Commission. Weekly Bible study follows the prayers on Fridays at approximately 10:30 AM at the church. Bring your Bible and 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 August 9. If you have an item that you want the Church Council to discuss or consider, please contact Eric Stuenkel at westuenkel@bellsouth.net or Angela Williams at 3521awilliams@charter.net

NALC Fresh Eyes for Mission Summit

The New Covenant Church Council, along with Pastor Ramey, recently voted to complete the “Fresh Eyes for Mission Summit” during the weekend of August 25-27, 2023 in order to gain direction and Christian insight from the NALC Bishop's office about New Covenant's future, how we can fulfill the Great Commission in Burke County and what the next steps might be. Pastor David Wendel, Assistant to the Bishop for Ministry, will personally come to New Covenant to help us learn more about ourselves, where we should be located, and what missions we should pursue in order to fulfil the Great Commission.

On Friday, August 25th, from 10 AM – 12 PM, Pastor Wendel and a group from New Covenant (members from the Parish Management Commission and Pastor Marty) will tour our current church location, review the history of New Covenant and the congregation, and take a driving tour of neighborhoods, communities, etc., looking with “Fresh Eyes” at context and community. Later that evening, the Church Council, Pastor Marty, and anyone else who would like to attend will meet with Pastor Wendel and review the pre-work that was completed prior to the visit.

On Saturday, August 26th, from 8:30 AM to no later than 3 PM, Pastor Wendel will meet with the entire congregation (ALL MEMBERS SHOULD ATTEND) for a Missional Capacity Assessment and lots of discussion. Pastor Wendel will help us determine “Who God is calling us to be and what God is calling us to do now and into the future.” We will also determine what action steps are needed to move us into God's intended future for our congregation. Coffee, refreshments, and lunch will be provided. **Please make plans to attend this important workshop!

The Summit will end with Pastor Wendel preaching the sermon and sharing brief thoughts with the congregation about the Summit on Sunday during our worship service.

Baby Shower for Ben & Michelle Raymond on August 20th

Ben and Michelle Raymond, along with big brother Adam, are expecting a baby girl this October. The shower will be held after the church service on August 20th. Lunch will be served as we join the Raymond Family to welcome their newest baby. They plan to name their new bundle of joy Artemis Jane (they will her AJ)! They are registered on Amazon.com. (Search for baby registry with name Raymond; city – Nebo; state- NC; due date – October 2023). We rejoice at the anticipation of AJ's birth!

