



Chapel News

A Publication of Lutheran Chapel Church

702 N. New Hope Road

Gastonia, NC 28054

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DECEMBER 2023

From the Pastor...

Consider the Twelve Days of Christmas. The times our culture still recognize, of course, are Christmas Eve on December 24 and Christmas day on December 25. Indeed, our culture has managed to make a lot of money on these days. The simple act of gift giving, gifts to children, gifts for one another and for those in need done by saints of old like the historical St. Nicolaus have become something else sadly. Nevertheless, the other days explore biblical stories and connect the way of the Cross and the humble manger.

- * *December 26* the Lutheran churches commemorate St. Stephen, the first martyr for the Lord Jesus (Acts 6:8 – 7:2). Just in case you haven't noticed, the love of God is opposed by many then and now.
- * *December 27* the Lutheran churches commemorate St. John, apostle and evangelist, who points to the Word made flesh as his transcendent Christmas story (John 1 and 21:20-25).
- * *December 28* the Lutheran churches commemorate the Holy Innocents, martyrs who died in and around Bethlehem due to the evil government of King Herod (Matthew 2:13 – 18). This genocide points back to the death of the Hebrew babies under evil Pharaoh and sadly forward to evil in our own days.
- * *December 29* the Lutheran churches commemorate St. David, prophet and king, who prophetically looked for his Son who would truly rule forever our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Samuel 7, Psalm 2, Psalm 110, and Matthew 1:1-25).
- * Eight days after Christmas day, the Name and Circumcision of Jesus on *New Year's Day* is kept and we celebrate Alpha and Omega, the Lord of all time (Luke 2:15-21).
- * Finally, the 12th day of Christmas is *January 5* and while there are no biblical commemorations here, it may be a time of final festivities. Shakespeare's famous play Twelfth Night is set on this day.

Let us celebrate, contemplate, and grow closer to our Lord Jesus as we keep the Twelve Days of Christmas in 2023!

Peace in Christ,
Pastor Michael





Worship Assistants ~ DECEMBER



	December 3 1 st Advent	December 10 2 nd Advent	December 17 3 rd Advent	Dec. 24 AM 4 th Advent	Dec. 24 PM Christmas Eve	December 31
Acolyte	Cameron Bell	Corbin Brown	Luke Hoffman	Renwick Royston	Elena Hoffman	Bryson Lineberger
Crucifer	Bram Comer	Maddie Potter	Maddie Potter	Ethan Lineberger	Bram Comer	Lillian Robinson
Lector	Pam Overcash	Katherine Sanders	Crown Hoffman	Jason Sanders	Baker Sanders	Jenny Williamson
Assistant Minister	Norman Overcash		Nancy Witman			Sylvia Fogle
Banner Bearer					Noah Comer	
Bible Bearer					Luke Hoffman	
Torch Bearers					Olivia Berghello Jordan Hoffman	
First Aid/ AED/CPR	Crown Hoffman	Tammy Royston	Debra Hoffman	Mark Thornburg	Mark Thornburg	Ervin Hoffman

Council Members of the Month: Steve Ritchie & Nancy Witman

*** If you have a conflict on your scheduled Sunday, please find a replacement and contact the church office. ***



ADVENT EVENING SERVICES

Wednesdays in December

7:00pm in the Sanctuary

Advent is a season in the church calendar dedicated to the hopeful anticipation for the arrival or "advent" of Jesus. During the four week period leading up to Christmas, we will engage in prayer, meditation, and scripture study that emphasizes hope, peace, love, and joy. Join us Wednesday evenings in December: **December 6, 13th, and 20th at 7pm** as we slow down and focus on preparing for Christmas.



Congregational Meeting

December 3 during the 10:00 Worship Service

**LUTHERAN CHAPEL
CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL MINUTES
NOVEMBER 19, 2023**

Council made decisions and discussed the following:

- A financial report was provided and although giving was down for the month of October, there is still a positive net balance of \$5,081.
- Lutheran Chapel was the beneficiary of two different estates. A motion was unanimously passed to be good stewards and give 10% of the beneficiary money to the NC Synod.
- A motion was unanimously passed to receive Brooke Lovett into membership at Lutheran Chapel.
- Council approved unanimously to have Roger Myers serve as Cantor.
- Council agreed to sponsor a congregational-wide Bible study that is intentionally Lutheran in doctrine.
- The Outreach Committee will sponsor a “Love Your Neighbor Sunday” on February 11, 2024.
- An urgent repair on the gas line was unanimously approved.
- Six names were submitted to serve on Council. They will be introduced at the Congregational Meeting with a brief statement about them before a vote is taken.

The next full council meeting, including new council members, is scheduled for December 17.

FROM THE TREASURER...

Lutheran Chapel Income Statement Actual vs Budget for 10 months of the year ending 10/31/2023:

	Actual October 2023	Actual YTD	2023 Budget YTD	2023 Budget Over/(Under)
Receipts	\$ 27,975.07	\$273,393.05	\$300,000.00	\$ (26,606.95)
Distributions	\$ 23,577.50	\$268,311.88	\$ 309,526.67	\$ (41,214.79)
Net Cash	\$ 4,397.57	\$5,081.17		



**Treasurer
Report**

With the month of October donations exceeding expenses by over \$4,000, the year to date has a positive balance of over \$5,000. Donations typically increase during the Fall and Christmas Season; however, we will continue to carefully watch the budget.

If you have any questions, please contact Ken Obenauf, Treasurer or Terry Ratchford, Finance Committee Chair.





CIRCLE NEWS

- ⇒ *Esther Circle* will be meeting on Monday, December 4 at 10:00 at the **home of Debra Hoffman**.
- ⇒ *Rebecca Circle* will gather Tuesday, December 12 at 6pm in the **Family Life Center** for a Christmas dinner.

Dear WELCA Ladies,

Thank you for the thoughtful gift card you sent to me for the fall. It will come in handy for toiletries and other items.

I am proud to be a member of Lutheran Chapel!

Most sincerely,
Alex Berghello



Ladies Night Celebration

Saturday, December 2

6:00pm

Family Life Center



Musical entertainment will be provided by Adam Rose.

Door prizes to be awarded.

We look forward to a wonderful night together.



ATTENTION OWLS!

(Older Wiser LutheranS)

Join us for our next OWL-standing time of fellowship!

R.O.'s BBQ

Thursday, December 14th

(2nd Thursday of month!)

11:00am

CHRISTMAS CANTATA



DECEMBER 10, 2023

Our cantata this year will feature the children and youth, the Luther Choir, an instrument duet, the Chapel Ringers, the Chancel Choir, the people of Lutheran Chapel and the Word of God.

Please plan to attend as we proclaim the prophecy and coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

There will be a birthday party for Jesus following the Cantata to complete our celebration.



Christmas Eve Worship Schedule



10:00am Service of the Word

4th Sunday in Advent

7:30pm Holy Communion &

Candlelight Service

(Prelude music begins at 7:00)

Merry
Christmas



Please join us for a baby shower honoring

Fabiola and Bill Carroll

Sunday, December 17, 2023

in the Family Life Center
immediately following worship.

The proud parents are expecting a
baby boy in January.

They are registered at Amazon and Target.



*The music department wishes
you a very happy advent
season as we prepare for the
coming of Jesus.*

*May your days be filled with
Hope, Peace, Love and Joy.*

From Nancy Witman, former chair of the search committee for a pianist/organist:

I would like to express my deep appreciation to the members of the search committee for their time, input and commitment to this very important job search. Thank you to Katherine Sanders, Mark Thornburg, Crown Hoffman and to Kathie Riebe. Kudos to each one of you!



Bio for our new pianist, Dr Juan Vizcarra

Dr. Juan Vizcarra began his piano studies at the age of seven in his native town, Arequipa, Peru under the tutelage of his father, Prof. Tomas Vizcarra.

After receiving his Master of Music degree from Texas Christian University in 2009, and a Doctor of Music degree from University of North Texas in 2015, Juan has worked as a teacher in several music institutions in Texas, served as pianist for Sunday services at Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church, as well as frequently performing concerts and recitals in Peru and the United States. He performed a lecture recital on Wagner transcriptions for the 2015 American Liszt Society Festival in Denton, Texas and recorded two volumes of piano transcriptions of Richard Wagner for Toccata Classics.

Dr. Vizcarra is thrilled to join the staff at Lutheran Chapel Church and brings over 20 years of experience collaborating with choirs, orchestras, instrumentalists, and singers both in Peru and in the United States. He continues to share his love for music by teaching piano remotely to students of all ages and levels.

He and his family relocated to North Carolina this past August after his wife, also a professional pianist, accepted a collaborative pianist position at Appalachian State University. He and his wife live in Hickory with their beloved 6-year-old daughter.



As the end of the year approaches, traditionally we present Church Staff with a "thank you" gift. There are several ways you can give your gift. You can drop your it in the offering plate, mail it or drop it by the Church office; or you can hand it to one of the Executive Council members or church treasurer – Crown Hoffman, Jason Sanders, Debra Hoffman or Ken Obenauf, Treasurer. Please note "Staff Gift" on your contribution. *Cut off for contributions is Sunday, December 10.*

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

The Social Ministry Committee would like to sincerely thank everyone for your many gifts over the last couple months. During the Thanksgiving holidays, we as a church family made a real difference in the lives of many families. Your generosity is overwhelming. Because of your generous donations, we were able to provide 143 families with a \$25.00 gift card through the schools and we also helped an additional family in our community to help purchase grocery items needed for their Thanksgiving meals. A note was placed with each gift card with a Thanksgiving prayer. What a blessing to these families as we all struggle during this time.

Also, our church family filled 70 Samaritan's Purse Christmas shoeboxes. The gift of each shoebox is an opportunity to share the true meaning of Christmas with children in desperate situations around the world. The gifts you pack into each box bring smiles to children while also sharing the opportunity through children's literature about God's greatest gift, His Son, Jesus Christ.

We are continuing our collection of food for CAM. Gifts of food can be placed in the CAM blue collection box in the hallway of the Sunday School classrooms or in the basket in the Narthex of the Sanctuary. Crisis Assistance Ministry is very grateful to Lutheran Chapel for our continued giving of food.

Our church family touches many lives through gifts from ministries of different committees in our church. Through these gifts, needs are met and hopefully the people know that they are loved and cared for. We pray that we are making a difference in the lives of our neighbors as we share God's love and blessings - whether it be a Thanksgiving meal, a daily meal for families or a Christmas shoebox for a child.



Social Ministry Committee

DECEMBER LOVE OFFERING

Lutheran Chapel Emergency Family Fund

Our love offering for December will be donated to our Emergency Family Fund. This fund is used throughout the year for emergency situations when families are in need in our church family or community. The purpose of the Emergency Family Fund is to provide emergency and temporary financial assistance to members of Lutheran Chapel Church. Additionally, if funds are available, we can provide help on a limited basis when requested by a church member to assist someone with a special need. This fund is intended to provide emergency assistance only - not long-term care. We can provide assistance to pay such things as a utility bill, car payment, mortgage or rent payment, medical bills, or provide food for a person or family.

Thank you for your generous donations to this fund that enable us to give families hope and a helping hand when circumstances beyond their control force them into needing emergency help.

Social Ministry Committee

ANGEL TREE

Bessemer City Boys & Girls Club

Angel gifts for the Bessemer City Boys & Girls Club should be returned to the church *unwrapped* by **Sunday, December 3rd**. If you were unable to shop but would like to contribute, there's still time to make a monetary donation. Please make your check payable to Lutheran Chapel Church and write *Boys & Girls Club Angel Tree* in the memo line.

The Outreach Team will be going to the Club on December 15 for a Christmas party that will include the Christmas Story, crafts, cookie decorating, games, Christmas carols and finally a visit from Santa. Let's make this special for the 57 boys and girls at the Bessemer City Boys & Girls Club. Thank you so very much.



God's Love Is Free! -The Outreach Team

From Heaven Above by Martin Luther

There are fifteen verses to *From Heaven Above* by Martin Luther. Consequently, we don't sing it too often in corporate worship. Yet the words of Luther, translated by Catherine Winkworth, are powerful. Consider them for Christmas 2023. Sing it. Say it. Pray it. Rejoice!

*Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes
And see what in the manger lies.
Who is this Child, so young and fair?
It is the Christ Child lying there.*

*Welcome to earth, O noble Guest,
Through whom the sinful world is blest!
You came to share my misery
That You might share Your joy with me.*

*And so it pleases You to see
This simple truth revealed to me:
That worldly honor, wealth, and might
Are weak and worthless in Your sight.*

*Ah dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,
A quiet chamber set apart
For You to dwell within my heart.*

*My heart for very joy must leap;
My lips no more can silence keep.
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue
That sweetest ancient cradlesong:*

*Glory to God in highest heaven,
Who unto us His Son is given!
While angels sing with pious mirth
A glad new year to all the earth.*



2023 CONTRIBUTIONS

It's time to get your 2023 pledges up-to-date!

All donations to the church must be turned in by December 31 to be properly credited to your account for the year.



Altar Flowers

2024 ALTAR FLOWER CALENDAR

If you'd like to sign up for a special Sunday in 2024, please contact Susan Lewis at 704-914-8451.

SEND A NOTE OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS

Betty Klimek

Park Pointe Village
3025 Chesbrough Blvd.
Rm 510
Rock Hill, SC 29732



Betty Little

Covenant Village
1351 Robinwood Rd.
Apt. A-205
Gastonia, NC 28054



Helen McCarter

ARP Manor
2900 Union Road
Apt. 114
Gastonia, NC 28054

December CEleBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS

Wanda Anthony	1	Henry Gaines	16
Bettina Royston	3	Pete Henderson	16
Fred Ward	4	Ryan Thornburg	19
Ethan Lineberger	5	Erin Potter	24
Sloan Robinson, Jr.	8	Pat Lindler	25
Mark McCauley	9	Alisa Marlowe	25
Gail Brown	11	Josh Baker	27
George Cashion	11	Jason Bradley	27
Mason Swindler	12	Holt Cloninger	27
Lynn Evans	13	Harrison Swindler	27
Roger Myers	13	Barbara Peacock	31
Olivia Hovis	15		

annIVERSARIES




Gene & Myra Weaver	6
Bill & Kay Robinson	19
Ken & Ann Marie Lentz	30
Terry & Trish Ratchford	30
Chuck & Lisa Burch	31
Sid & Leigh Woody	31



*Anniversaries
and Birthdays*

If we missed your birthday or anniversary, please let the office know so that we can enter it into the database.

December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 9:00 CBS (FH) 1:00 Set-up for Ladies Night	2 9:30 Hungry Peeps (FH) 6:00 Ladies Night Celebration (FLC)
3 <i>1st Sunday Advent</i> 8:30 Fellowship 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship & Congregational Mtg. 11:05 Luther Choir 11:35 Chancel Choir 12:45 Instrumental Reh. 8:00 Faith Group (FH)	4 8:30 Preschool 10:00 Esther Circle @ Debra Hoffman's Home	5 8:30 Preschool 10:00 Clothing Closet Workday 5:30 CBS (CR/CH/4 CIRm)	6 8:30 Preschool 5:30 Chapel Ringers 7:00 Advent Service (S)	7 8:30 Preschool 11:00 Bible Study (L)	8 9:00 CBS (FH)	9 9:30 Hungry Peeps (FH)
10 <i>2nd Sunday Advent</i> 8:30 Fellowship 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Cantata 11:30 Chancel Choir 12:45 Instrumental Reh. 8:00 Faith Group (FH)	11 8:30 Preschool	12 8:30 Preschool 10:00 Clothing Closet Workday 5:30 CBS (CR/CH/4 CIRm) 6:00 Rebecca Circle (FLC) 7:00 Cantamos Choir (FH)	13 8:30 Preschool 5:30 Chapel Ringers 7:00 Advent Service (S)	14 8:30 Preschool 10:00 Bible Study (L) 11:00 OWLS @ R.O.'s BBQ	15 9:00 CBS (FH)	16 9:30 Hungry Peeps (FH)
17 <i>3rd Sunday Advent</i> 8:30 Fellowship 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 11:00 Confirmation (YR) 11:00 Council Mtg. (CR) 11:00 Baby Shower (FLC) 11:30 Chancel Choir 12:45 Instrumental Reh. 8:00 Faith Group (FH)	18 8:30 Preschool <i>Newsletter Articles Due</i>	19 8:30 Preschool 10:00 Clothing Closet Workday 7:00 Cantamos Choir (FH)	20 8:30 Preschool 5:30 Chapel Ringers 7:00 Advent Service (S)	21 11:00 Bible Study (L)	22	23 9:30 Hungry Peeps (FH)
24 <i>4th Sunday Advent Christmas Eve</i> 8:30 Fellowship 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 7:00 Prelude Music 7:30 Candlelight Service 8:00 Faith Group (FH)	25 <i>Merry Christmas</i> 	26 <i>Church Office Closed</i>	27	28	29	30 9:30 Hungry Peeps (FH)
31 8:30 Fellowship 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship 11:30 Chancel Choir 8:00 Faith Group (FH)						

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Michael C. Comer, Pastor

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Preschool: 704-864-5136

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www.facebook.com/lccgastonia

MISSION STATEMENT: We at Lutheran Chapel Church are called by God to PROCLAIM Christ as Lord and Savior; to SEEK and INVITE the unchurched into the fellowship of faith; to SERVE God and to NURTURE one another's faith and spiritual growth by being a loving, caring and compassionate community of believers.