



Union Lutheran Church

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2026 March Messenger

Volume 3

MONTHLY MUSINGS: Repentance and the Office of the Keys

This month I would like us to focus on a particular section of the Catechism that we focus on especially during the season of Lent. It is a part of the Catechism that is often forgotten. It stands between Holy Baptism and Holy Communion: Repentance and the Office of the Keys.

Among the wide variety of Lutheran church bodies, there are differences of opinion about the status of the Office of the Keys. Some speak of it almost as if it were a sacrament, while others emphasize it as a powerful expression of the Gospel.

So, let's back up and ask: *What is a sacrament?* For Luther, a sacrament must have three things: i) Be instituted by Christ, ii) Have a visible, external/ earthly element, iii) Be a promise of the forgiveness of sins/ a means of grace. Since Baptism and Holy Communion have these three things, they are justifiably sacraments. However, the Office of the Keys does not have a visible or earthly element and as such does not serve to be a sacrament. It is however sacred in that, according to Luther in the Large Catechism, absolution is "the voice of the Gospel" and such have divine authority and saving power.

Now let's look more deeply at the Office of the Keys itself. In the New Testament, Jesus gives His Church a remarkable gift: the authority to forgive sins in His name. In John 20:22–23, the risen Christ breathes on His disciples and says, *"If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."* Martin Luther called this gift the Office of the Keys, and he understood it as a direct command of Christ.

Luther taught that the Office of the Keys is Christ's own work carried out through His Church. It is not a human invention or a tool for control, but a ministry of mercy and grace. As he explains in the *Small Catechism*, it is the authority *"to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant."*

Teaching on repentance is essential. Repentance is not self-improvement or moral progress. Chad Bird (a theologian and Pastor) explains it metaphorically when he says that repentance is not climbing upward toward God but being brought low (or to the end of ourselves) so that Christ may raise us up. Bird writes, ***"Repentance is not something we do in order to get God to love us; it is what God does to us through His Word."*** We do not repent to earn forgiveness. Rather, the Word of forgiveness creates repentance in us by exposing our sin and then destroying it with Christ's mercy. Repentance is the daily death of the old sinner and the daily resurrection of the forgiven child of God.



This authority belongs to the whole Church, since all believers are called to proclaim Christ's forgiveness. At the same time, Christ has given Pastors the public responsibility to exercise this office on behalf of the congregation through preaching, teaching, and absolution. When the Pastor declares forgiveness, it is not merely his/her word, but Christ's promise spoken aloud. Luther also strongly valued individual confession and absolution because the Gospel is meant to be heard personally — *for you*. Repentance should be concrete and specific: sins are named, not hidden, and forgiveness is spoken, not assumed. The Office of the Keys keeps the Church honest about sin and bold about grace.

The Office of the Keys reminds us that Christ continues to open heaven through His Word of forgiveness and to close the door to sin that destroys life. Through repentance and faith, the Church lives each day from Christ's mercy and is sent to share that mercy with the world.

Your Pastor,

Heidi W Punt

Sunday, March 1, 2026

Loose Offering: Mission Outreach Fund

Benevolence: North American Lutheran Seminary & Footprints in the Community

Monthly Project: Footprint of the Community Supplies, Amazon & Walmart gift cards for Melanie Corn, sponsored Seminarian

Deadline to confirm participation in Paintball on Saturday, March 7.

During the Lenten Season, we use twigs and branches instead of flowers to symbolize penitence, spiritual dryness, and preparation for Easter's rebirth, as flowers represent joy and celebration, which are set aside during this somber, reflective season of self-emptying and focus on Christ's sacrifice, mirroring the desert journey. Bare branches signify the spiritual "emptying" of sin, awaiting the new life of Easter, much like dormant plants awaiting spring.

9:10 a.m. Union Youth Choir

9:30 a.m. Children & Youth Sunday School
Nehemiah Rebuilds Jerusalem
Nehemiah 4:1-23; Ephesians 2:19-22

"So we rebuilt the wall ... for the people had a mind to work." Nehemiah 4:6

9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School

Rabbit Hole Sunday School Class

Nehemiah Rebuilds Jerusalem

Nehemiah 4:1-23; Ephesians 2:19-22

Drew Wise Sunday School Class

Loving God, Loving Others

Proverbs 28:18-22; Romans 15:1-7;

Philippians 2:1-8; Colossians 3:12, 4:1;

Mark 12:28-34; James 2:14-17

10:30 a.m. Worship & Holy Communion

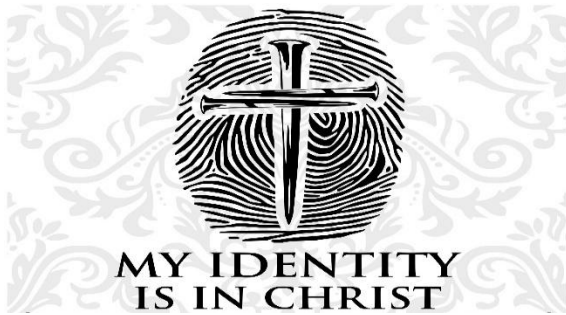
Genesis 12:1-9; Psalm 121:1-8; Romans

4:1-8, 13-17; John 3:1-17

Sermon: *The Seeker*

During Lent, the altar candles lit represent Jesus' life and ministry. Each week we will extinguish candles, remembering how we, the human race, rejected Jesus Christ, the light of the world. On Sunday, March 1, the Altar Candles and only 5 candelabra candles will be lit.

12 noon brief called meeting of the Church Council (*2026 Church Yearbook & Finances*)



MY IDENTITY IS IN CHRIST

Tuesdays, March 3, 10, 17 & 24

Lenten Meal

in the Dutch Meeting Hall at **6:00 p.m.**

Lenten Worship Service at 6:30 p.m.

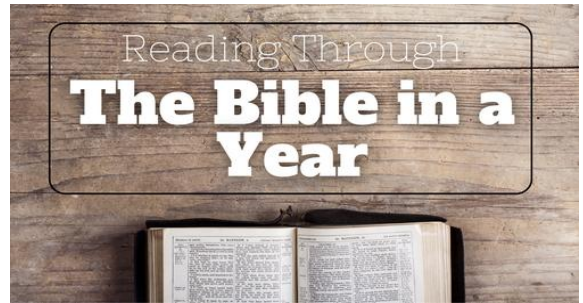
A Lenten sermon series on a "*Crisis in Identity*" explores shifting one's identity from performance, possessions, and cultural expectations to a secure, God-given identity as a beloved child and new creation in Christ. It addresses the internal struggle between false, self-created identities and a gospel-centered identity, encouraging believers to move from insecurity to purposeful grace-filled living.



Chapel Time at Autumn Care

"I was in prison and you visited me..." Matthew 25:36 reminds us that visiting the lonely is visiting Christ. Many residents at Autumn Care are unable to attend regular church services and often feel isolated.

Our congregation has the privilege of sponsoring **Chapel Time** on **Wednesdays, March 4 & 25, at 2:00 p.m.**



Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18 & 25

Catechism

Focus: Reading through the Bible in a Year

Location: Pastor Heidi's office

Time: 6:30 p.m.



Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18 & 25

Belles & Beaus

Location: Sanctuary

Time: 6:30 p.m.



Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18 & 25

Location: Sanctuary

Time: 7:30 p.m.



Pastor Heidi Punt is inviting women to a **Book Bible Study at 9:00 a.m. at Juice Life, Salisbury.** This month's studies are on **Fridays, March 6 & 20,** at Juice Life, 712 Jake Alexander Blvd W, Salisbury, NC 28147 (704) 603-8959.



Sunday, March 8, 2026

Loose Offering: Gerald Bame Memorial Scholarship Fund

Benevolence: North American Lutheran Seminary

Monthly Project: Amazon & Walmart gift cards for Melanie Corn, sponsored Seminarian

2026 Church Yearbooks are available for pick up. (Please take only one per family, thank you!)

During the Lenten Season, we use twigs and branches instead of flowers to symbolize penitence, spiritual dryness, and preparation for Easter's rebirth, as flowers represent joy and celebration, which are set aside during this somber, reflective season of self-emptying and focus on Christ's sacrifice, mirroring the desert journey. Bare branches signify the spiritual "emptying" of sin, awaiting the new life of Easter, much like dormant plants awaiting spring.

9:10 a.m. Union Youth Choir



Join us for **Line Dancing at Union Lutheran Church on Fridays, March 6, 13, 20 & 27 at 6:00 p.m.!** Come learn danced, enjoy great music, and fellowship with us. No partner or experience necessary. See you in the **Old Pine Center!** 🎵

Saturday, March 7

Billy Waller's Home Project

Funds are still needed for this project.

Location: Billy Waller

Time: 8:00 a.m. (leave from church parking lot)

We need electricians, plumbers, carpenters and willing helpers with appropriate tools and protective wear to serve.

Please contact the church office if you can help!

Sunday, March 8, 2026

9:30 a.m. Children & Youth Sunday School

Jonah Flees from God

Jonah 1:1-2:3, 7-10; Matthew 12:38-41

*The Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. **Jonah 1:27***

9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School

Rabbit Hole Sunday School Class

Jonah Flees from God

Jonah 1:1-2:3, 7-10; Matthew 12:38-41

Drew Wise Sunday School Class

Watching Our Consumption

Titus 1:5-9; Daniel 1:8-20; 1 Corinthians 9:19-27; 1 Timothy 4:7-12

10:30 a.m. Worship & Holy Communion

Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95:1-9; Romans 5:1-8; John 4:5-26, 27-30, 39-42

Sermon: *Welling Up*


During Lent, the altar candles lit represent Jesus' life and ministry. Each week we will extinguish candles, remembering how we, the human race, rejected Jesus Christ, the light of the world. On Sunday, March 8, the Altar Candles and only 4 candelabra candles will be lit.

*Hi Families of **Little Lutherans** (Joyful Lambs)! We are **gathering for a special lunch following worship at Blue Bay, E. Innes**, to chat about **upcoming events, trips and faith formation** for our children's ministry! Your input is valuable, please join us!!*


PAINTBALL ALERT!


We're getting a group together of young adults (youth & adults) for some, uh, colorful combat! We need 10 people to

commit to paintball action! Beware you will get dirty!!!

 **Date:** Sunday, March 8

 **Leaving Time:** 2:30 p.m.

 **Place:** Glory Road Paintball, 4209 North Rocky Road, Monroe, NC 28110

 Let Pastor Heidi know if you can make it by Sunday, March 1!

\$ Please bring spending money with you for snacks, refreshments, etc.

*Union Lutheran Church is hosting the **Piedmont-East Clergy meeting on Tuesday, March 10, at 9:00 a.m. in Conference #1.***



Hi Ladies, let's take a break and get together for encouragement, program, fellowship, and refreshments! The **Mary & Martha Circle** will catch up and read the Word on **Tuesday, March 10, at 2:00 p.m. in Conference #1.**

Thank you to Kay Morgan providing the refreshments and sharing God's Word!

We look forward to seeing you there!

*Come one, come all! The **Mission Outreach** will meet on **Wednesday, March 11, in Conference #1** to follow up on preparations for the **First Annual Cruise'n in May.***

Your input is invaluable as we move forward on this exciting fundraiser event!



*Join us for our **Congregation & Community meal on Wednesday, March 11, at 4:30 p.m. in the Dutch Meeting Hall.***

Thank you to Lucinda Fraley & Family who are providing and serving the meal.

Menu: BBQ chicken, potatoes, green beans, and drink.

Freewill Offering with proceeds to the General Fund.

Good Timers

Location: Dutch Meeting Hall

Program: To be determined

Date & Time: March 12 at 10:00 a.m.

Lunch:

Lakeview

Restaurant

All are invited!



Property, Cemetery & Columbarium
will meet **Thursday, March 12, at 6:30**
p.m. in Conference #1.

Sunday, March 15, 2026

Loose Offering: Building & Repair Fund

Benevolence: North American Lutheran Seminary

Monthly Project: Amazon & Walmart gift cards for Melanie Corn, sponsored Seminarian

2026 Church Yearbooks are available for pick up. (Please take only one per family, thank you!)

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9:10 a.m. Union Youth Choir

9:30 a.m. Children & Youth Sunday School
The Day of the Lord
Malachi 4:1-6; Matthew 17:1-13

*Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. **Malachi 4:5***

9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School

Rabbit Hole Sunday School Class
The Day of the Lord
Malachi 4:1-6; Matthew 17:1-13

Sunday, March 15, 2026

9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School

Drew Wise Sunday School Class

Giving to the Community

Exodus 20:12-17; Deuteronomy 15:1-11;

Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 10:25-37; James

1:27, 2:14-17

10:30 a.m. Worship & Holy Communion

Isaiah 42:14–21; Psalm 142:1–7; Ephesians

5:8–14; John 9:1–41

Sermon: *The Gift of Seeing*

During Lent, the altar candles lit represent Jesus' life and ministry. Each week we will extinguish candles, remembering how we, the human race, rejected Jesus Christ, the light of the world. On Sunday, March 15, the Altar Candles and only 3 candelabra candles will be lit.

Rescheduled: 12 noon Christian Education
(Please bring a bag lunch.)

Governance Board of the Congregation is made up of the **Pastor, Church Council & Umbrella Chairs**. This Board will meet for their first quarterly meeting, **Sunday, March 15, at 2:00 p.m.**, to review past events, projects, etc., and upcoming events, projects, etc.

Tentative Meeting following the Lenten Worship service on Tuesday, March 17 or March 24, of the ULC Scholarship Trustees.



Saturday, March 21
Alternate date: March 28

Come join us to beautify the church grounds and facilities for Holy Week on **Saturday, March 21, at 9:30 a.m.!** Bring your supplies, tools and anything you think could be useful.

Please note that Christmas Flowers will be removed from the Cemetery.

*A **Celebration of Life** for the family of Robert Honeycutt will be held on **Saturday, March 21, from 1:00 pm-4:00 pm, with a dinner at 2:30 pm, in the Dutch Meeting Hall at Union Luther Lutheran Church. In honor of his love for music and dancing, there will be some shag dancing. If you wish to attend the celebration of life and dinner, please RSVP to Kaitlyn Honeycutt at 704-223-0089.***

The Family has reserved the Dutch Meeting Hall from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 21.

Sunday, March 22, 2026

Loose Offering: Youth Missions Fund

Benevolence: North American Lutheran Seminary

Monthly Project: Amazon & Walmart gift cards for Melanie Corn, sponsored Seminarian

Deadline: newsletter articles and recommendations from the congregation for financial advisors for consideration to John Knight, Treasurer

During the Lenten Season, we use twigs and branches instead of flowers to symbolize penitence, spiritual dryness, and preparation for Easter's rebirth, as flowers represent joy and celebration, which are set aside during this somber, reflective season of self-emptying and focus on Christ's sacrifice, mirroring the desert journey. Bare branches

Sunday, March 22, 2026

signify the spiritual "emptying" of sin, awaiting the new life of Easter, much like dormant plants awaiting spring.

9:10 a.m. Union Youth Choir

9:30 a.m. Children & Youth Sunday School
Plot of the Council

John 11:45-57; Acts 4:1-12

"What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation." **John 11:47-48**

9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School

Rabbit Hole Sunday School Class

Plot of the Council

John 11:45-57; Acts 4:1-12

Drew Wise Sunday School Class

Welcoming Others in Christ

Colossians 3:1-11; Ruth 1:1-18; John 4:5-10, Acts 10:1-11:18

10:30 a.m. Worship & Holy Communion
Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130:1-8; Romans 8:1-11; John 11:1-45, 46-53

Sermon: *Not a Bang nor a Whimper*

During Lent, the altar candles lit represent Jesus' life and ministry. Each week we will extinguish candles, remembering how we, the human race, rejected Jesus Christ, the light of the world. On Sunday, March 22, the Altar Candles and only 2 candelabra candles will be lit.

A **Called Congregational Meeting** of Union Lutheran Church will be held **Sunday, March 22**, following worship in the Sanctuary with the purpose of discussing, reviewing and voting on the 2026 Church Yearbook.

4:00 p.m. Luther League (Faith, Faith)

*The Finance Team is seeking the congregation's advice on recommending local financial advisors to assist in investing portions of the land sale proceeds. Please submit names to John Knight, Treasurer, by Sunday, March 22. The Finance Team will select **four** advisors during their Wednesday, March 25, meeting.*

Finance Team will meet **Wednesday, March 25**, at **6:00 p.m.** in **Conference #1**.

The church office will print the April Messenger & Handouts on Friday, March 27.

Megan Cline has reserved the Old Pine Center & Kitchen for Saturday, March 28, from 1:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.



March 29, 2026

Palm Sunday is the day we celebrate the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, one week before His resurrection (Matthew 21:1-11). As Jesus entered the holy city, He neared the culmination of a long journey toward Golgotha. He had come to save the lost (Luke 19:10), and now was the time—this was the place—to secure that salvation. Palm Sunday marked the start of what is often called "Holy Week," the final seven days of Jesus' earthly ministry.

Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026

Loose Offering: Special Offering Fund

Benevolence: North American Lutheran Seminary

Monthly Project: Amazon & Walmart gift cards for Melanie Corn, sponsored Seminarian

Deadline: Gerald Bame Memorial Scholarship applications & Potted Flower list

During the Lenten Season, we use twigs and branches instead of flowers to symbolize penitence, spiritual dryness, and preparation for Easter's rebirth, as flowers represent joy and celebration, which are set aside during this somber, reflective season of self-emptying and focus on Christ's sacrifice, mirroring the desert journey. Bare branches signify the spiritual "emptying" of sin, awaiting the new life of Easter, much like dormant plants awaiting spring.

9:10 a.m. Union Youth Choir

9:30 a.m. Children & Youth Sunday School
Triumphant Entry

John 12:12-19; Psalm 24:3-10

They took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" **John 12:13**

9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School

Rabbit Hole Sunday School Class
Triumphant Entry

John 12:12-19; Psalm 24:3-10

Drew Wise Sunday School Class
Waiting for God's Peace

Revelation 5:8-14; Isaiah 2:2-4, 11:6-10;
John 18:28-38; Ephesians 4:4-6, 13-19; Acts

17:26-28

All are welcome to pick up palm branches as you enter the Sanctuary!

10:30 a.m. Worship & Holy Communion

Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 118:19-26;
Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 21:1-11

Sermon: *Holy Chaos*

For those who do not wish to keep their palm, please return the palm to the box when leaving.

During Lent, the altar candles lit represent Jesus' life and ministry. Each week we will extinguish candles, remembering how we, the human race, rejected Jesus Christ, the light of the world. On Sunday, March 29, the Altar Candles and only 1 candelabra candle on each side will be lit.

Gerald Bame Memorial Scholarship Application

Are you or your youth planning to attend college or vocational school this coming academic year? The Gerald Bame Memorial Scholarship Trustees is pleased to announce that applications for the Gerald Bame Memorial Scholarships are now available for pick up from the church office.

Our church is committed to investing in the next generation of leaders and supporting our students in their academic pursuits.

How to Apply:

- ***Pick up an application:*** Available on the blue top table in the Church Office.
- ***Deadline:*** All completed applications must be returned to the Church Office by Sunday, March 29, 2026.

For questions, please contact Frank Merrell, Trustee Chair.



Maundy Thursday

Maundy Thursday, April 2, 2026

4:00 p.m. & 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Exodus 24:3–11; Psalm 116:12-19;

Hebrews 9:11–22; Matthew 26:17–30

As Jesus gathered his closest friends for a Passover meal, he instituted what the Church calls, “Holy Communion.” He informed the disciples that he would not eat with them again until all things were fulfilled in the kingdom of God. As he blessed the bread and wine, he also blessed his followers with a life-giving gift. In return for that gift, one among them would betray him, but that would be no surprise to Jesus.



Good Friday

Good Friday, April 3, 2026

4:00 p.m. & 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Psalm 22:1–31;

Hebrews 4:14–16; 5:7–9; John 18:1–19:42

The solemnity and reality of Good Friday can affect us deeply as we get in touch with

our own sinfulness and culpability in Jesus’ suffering and death. Knowing that his death was drawing near he uttered, “I thirst.” When he received his last sip of sour wine he proclaimed, “It is finished.” Indeed it seemed as if darkness had won, that death was the last word, but even in the dark God continued to act.



🔒 All-Nighter Alert: Youth Lock-In! 🔒

Are you ready for a night of zero sleep and 100% fun? Our annual Good Friday Youth Lock-In is officially on the calendar for April 3 following the evening service. The Lock-in will end Saturday at 6:00 a.m.

What to Bring: Bible sleeping bag, pillow, comfortable clothes, etc.

The Passion Week						
Matthew 21–27						
Key events during Jesus’ final week						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Crowds cheer Jesus’ entry to Jerusalem (Palm Sunday) 21:1–11	Jesus angers leaders by throwing vendors out of the temple 21:12–46	Jesus confronts the hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders 23–25	Judas bribed to betray Jesus 26:14–16	The Last Supper; Judas betrays Jesus; Peter denies Jesus 26:17–75	Jesus’ crucifixion; the chief priests rally the people to chant, “Crucify him!” 27	



**Embracing the Silence
Good Friday Vigil, April 3
Following evening service
to 7:30 a.m. Saturday**

As we approach Holy Week, it is easy to jump ahead to the joy of Easter Sunday. However, the true weight of our salvation is found in the dark, silent hours of Good Friday. This year, we invite you to take part in our church's Good Friday Prayer Vigil, a dedicated time to sit with the reality of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

What is a Prayer Vigil?

A vigil is an act of "keeping watch." On Good Friday, we are not simply waiting for the weekend; we are standing at the foot of the cross, reflecting on the immense love that led Jesus to suffer for us. It is a time for silence, prayerful reflection, and adoration, recognizing the profound mystery of the Cross.

Why Participate?

- **Solidarity with Suffering:** It is a time to stand with those suffering in our world today, linking our prayers to the suffering of Jesus.
- **Deepened Reflection:** It allows us to process the "weight" of our sins and the immense grace of salvation.
- **A Moment of Pause:** In a fast-paced world, it is an intentional, sacred pause

to focus on the core of our faith.

Join Us

We invite you to join us in the sanctuary on Friday, April 3, 2026, following the Good Friday evening service for a time of quiet meditation and community prayer. *Please sign up for a time slot!*

Let us, with thankful hearts, remember the ultimate sacrifice that bought our freedom, as we prepare our hearts for the resurrection.

No Stations of the Cross this year.



Easter Flowers on Saturday, April 4, at 9:15 a.m. for the Inside Cross

As we approach the joyous celebration of the Resurrection, we invite you to participate in a beautiful Easter tradition. White flowers, white flowers such as daffodils and spirea for the inside cross, have long symbolized the purity, innocence, and divinity of Christ. The flower blooms announce the Good News that He is risen!



Potted Flowers for Easter Sunday

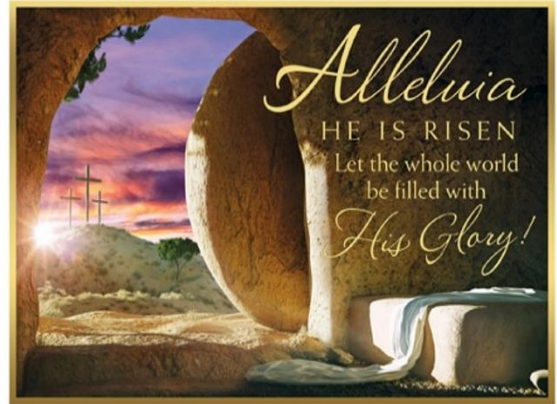
Everyone is invited to bring spring into the Sanctuary this **Easter Sunday, April 5**. As we make our way through Lent to the glory of Easter morning we look forward to **members bringing their own beautiful spring potted flowers**.

Examples are: tulips, hydrangeas, geraniums, peace lily, gerbera daisies, etc.

Please remember to **mark** your potted flowers before you **drop** them **off** on **Saturday, April 4**, between **11:00 a.m.-12 noon**.

An Easter Potted Flowers booklet of flowers placed in honor and/or in memory of loved ones will be provided. **Deadline** to turn in the form (located on page 19) to the church office by Palm Sunday, March 29.

*The **Season of Easter** is one of joy and renewed hope as we celebrate the miracle of all miracles: Jesus is risen from the dead, alleluia! The whole church, in heaven and on earth, sings of God's glorious power and rejoices in the new reality brought to human life through Christ - death no longer has the last word. The Savior of the world has overcome sin, death, and the devil for the sake of all those who believe in the power of God. Jesus has triumphed, and believers are promised eternity.*



Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026

You are invited to bring flowers from your yard for the outside cross.

Loose Offering: Mission Outreach Fund

Benevolence: Lutheran Military Veterans & Families, Inc.

Project: supplies for our local VA

7:30 a.m. Sunrise Service (*Dutch Meeting Hall*)
Exodus 14:10–15:1; Psalm 118:15–29; 1
Corinthians 15:1–11; John 20:1–18

8:15 a.m. Easter Breakfast (*Dutch Meeting Hall*)

9:00 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt & Games

9:30 a.m. Children & Youth Sunday School
Mary Encounters the Risen Jesus
John 20:11-18; Romans 6:1-11
Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord." **John 20:18**

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

Rabbit Hole Sunday School Class
Mary Encounters the Risen Jesus
John 20:11-18; Romans 6:1-11

Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026

Drew Wise Sunday School Class

Resurrection: The Future Hope

Luke 24:1-12; 1 Corinthians 15:3-20, 50-58;

Revelation 22:1-5

10:30 a.m. Easter Service (Sanctuary)

Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 16:1-11; Colossians

3:1-4; Matthew 28:1-10

Sermon: *On the Move*



Those Serving in March

Altar Guild: Patsy Lyerly, Vivian Sprinkle, Angie Poole, Mallory Eagle & Moses Miller

Acolytes: Mallory Eagle, Moses Miller, Bailey & Lucas Wilhelm

Crucifer (*Palm Sunday*): Nikki Nguyen

Communion Assistants: Patsy Lyerly, Vivian Sprinkle, Angie Poole, Mallory Eagle & Moses Miller

Lay Readers: Doris Shepherd, Karen Barringer, Mallory Eagle & Moses Miller

Ushers: Larry Barringer, Ali Davis, Don & Tara Davis

Live Streaming: Pete Nguyen

Sound System: Thad Mulkey, Dusty Morgan, Sr., & Dusty Morgan, Jr.

Offering Counters: Jennifer Curlee, Ali Davis, & Doris Shepherd

Sending Sunday Visitors Cards: Deena Lanning



Those Serving in April

Altar Guild: Cathy Painter, Jennifer & Scott Curlee

Acolytes: Jennifer & Scott Curlee

Communion Assistants: Cathy Painter, Jennifer & Scott Curlee, Elbert Kluttz & Wilhelm Family

Lay Readers: Sharon Leazer, Jennifer & Scott Curlee & Elbert Kluttz

Ushers: Larry Barringer, Ron Chase, Adam Thompson & Ronald Vellines

Live Streaming: Pete Nguyen

Sound System: Thad Mulkey, Dusty Morgan, Sr., & Dusty Morgan, Jr.

Offering Counters: Patsy Lyerly, Sonya Mulkey & Vivian Sprinkle

Sending Sunday Visitors Cards: Adam Leffew & Addison Queen



NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN SEMINARY

Monthly Benevolence Focus:

The North American Lutheran Seminary
Confessional. Orthodox. Evangelical.
Lutheran.

Bolstered by an interdependent network of five campuses, the North American Lutheran Seminary (NALS) is part of God's movement in this culture, time and place. Over the next decade, hundreds will be raised and formed in the Great Tradition of confessional and evangelical Lutheran Faith. The NALS is singularly focused on forming pastors and church leaders with an education that is shaped by Christian tradition and bound by the Holy Scriptures.

Upheld by world-class faculty, students have time and opportunity to reflect on the depth and beauty of their faith and be properly formed. The NALS has a commitment to truly cultivate the foundation and the deep roots necessary for tomorrow's pastors and church leaders to be the stewards of classic, orthodox, biblical theology in preparation for Word and Sacrament ministry in the North American Lutheran Church (NALC).

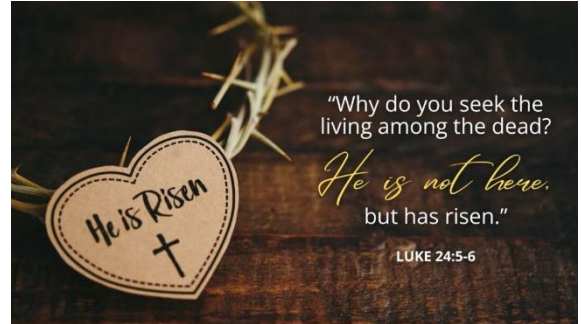
March Monthly Project: Amazon & Walmart gift cards for our sponsored Seminarian, Melanie Corn.

CMR Youth Spring Retreat

*Carolinas Mission Youth Spring Retreat
from April 17-29, 2026 at Murrells Inlet, SC.*

Theme: Faith in Action (James 2:17)

*Get ready for an incredible weekend of
worship, teaching, fellowship, and fun as we
grow closer to Jesus together by the coast!*



With the new Constitution in Article 12 the Governance Board of the Congregation is made up of the Pastor, Church Council, and Umbrella Chairs. This Board will meet quarterly to review past events, projects, etc., and upcoming events, projects, etc. Therefore, minutes from all Umbrella meetings will be shared first with the Governance Board and then included in the following month's *Messenger & Handouts*.

NALC Continental Youth Gathering in Roanoke, VA, is from July 7-10. Please contact Pastor Heidi if you will be attending.


Union Lutheran Church ★

FIRST ANNUAL CRUISE'N ★

- ✓ Rain or Shine
- ✓ All Years Models Cars & Trucks
- ✓ Fun for all ages!
- ✓ Food & Beverages
- ✓ 50/50 tickets & more!

 **Saturday**
16 May 2026

 **9:00 AM**
2:00 PM

 **4770 Bringle Ferry Rd**
Salisbury, NC 28146

CONTACT US

 704.636.5092

 <https://ulcsalisbury.org/>



Attendance Report

January Sunday School

4	36
11	43
18	33
25	Cancelled due to inclement weather & icy road conditions
Total	112
Average	37

February Sunday School

1	Cancelled due to inclement weather & icy road conditions
8	37
15	37
22	<u>38</u>
Total	112
Average	37

January Worship & Holy Communion

4	95
11	119
18	86
25	Cancelled due to inclement weather & icy road conditions
Total	300
Average	100

February Worship & Holy Communion

1	Cancelled due to inclement weather & icy road conditions
8	100
15	86
22	<u>103</u>

February Worship & Holy Communion

Total	289
Average	96

Lenten Worship Report

February	
18	59 Ash Wednesday
24	50
March	
3	_____
10	_____
17	_____
24	_____



"Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it." (Malachi 3:10).

Tithing is giving back to God what is His in the first placer.

Avenues of Giving:

- *Weekly Sunday Offering*
- *Mail*
- *<https://ulcsalisbury.org/give-online/> (Please note a service fee is charged for online giving.)*

Did you know we have a **Craft Room**? We do! Location is in the 6th-8th Grade Sunday School Class beside the Chapel (West Wing).

thank you

*Dear Union Lutheran Church,
Glenn and I would like to thank our church family for the prayers, calls, and cards kind words, and comfort during this difficult time. Your thoughtfulness truly brightened my days and showed God's love in action.
Sincerely, Glenn and Betty Sue Lowder*

Honorariums and Memorials Gifts Given to the Glory of God during February
A gift was received for the Cemetery Fund in honor of Dalton Thompson's 12th birthday by:
Sharon Leazer
A gift was received for the Cemetery Fund in memory of Dottie Kluttz by:
Cathy Kluttz Painter and Darcy Smyre
Gifts were received for the General Fund in memory of Andrea Misenheimer by:
Scott Misenheimer

Our Love and Sympathy is extended to Robert Honeycutt's (mower) on the death of his father, Robert Honeycutt, Sr. on Saturday. The funeral service will be held at the VA on March 2, 2026 at 2:30 p.m.

February Highlights

- On Sunday, February 1, worship was cancelled due to inclement weather and icy road conditions.
- Line Dancing began on Friday evenings in the small fellowship hall with Cheryl Kluttz leading.
- Amos Bible Study concluded in February.
- On Saturday, February 7, Andrew Scott Baker received his Eagle Scout award at Union Lutheran Church.



- In February, Sunday musicians, both laity and professionals have been called upon to lead the worship services. The following shared their musical talents with us, Brenda McCombs, Dawn Merrell, and Don Simmons.
- Thank you to Elaine Bowles, Judy Boyd, Phil Cauble, and Jordan Eagle for bringing down the craft supplies and organizing for use. Craft Room is now located in the 6th-8th Grade Sunday School Class.

February Highlights *continued*



- During the worship service on Sunday, February 8, Kiki Deaton was sent with a blessing as she leaves Salisbury to a facility. Our thoughts and prayers are with her and the family as they begin this new chapter.
- February Benevolence & Monthly Project: Footprints in the Community

Good Timers

The Good Timers met on February 12, 2026 in the Dutch Meeting Hall with Deena Lanning presiding. Deena Lanning had the devotions. Kathleen Agner won the door prize.

We had 17 regular members and 2 visitors (Keeler Morgan and Pastor Dieter Punt) present with an offering of \$22.00 being received.

February birthdays: Dawn Merrell (17), Sylvia Peeler (26).

There were no wedding anniversaries for this month.

Sarah Bame is now at Brookdale.

Sick Report: Faye Kesler, Doris Shepherd, Judy Boyd.

The Good Timers are in charge of the meal on March 3, 2026.

The program today was given by Pastor Heidi and Pastor Dieter on their trip to Turkey and Greece. They visited the museum in Corinth (a coastal city), Parthenon (castle and water source for Corinth). Wet footsteps was a calling card for weary soldiers. They told about the cistern, fish markets, ruins of Apollo, ruins of Agora, the Bema from where Paul preached, a cemetery, slave quarters behind the ruins. Athens (a dirty city) is where half of the population lives. Nothing is built higher than 10 stories. They traveled to MyKonos, Knossos, prison of St. Paul, city of Meteron, top of a mountain. There are 185 steps to the top.

Pastor Heidi had the blessing before we ate lunch.

*Respectfully Yours,
Ruby Leazer, Secretary*

Good Timers Treasurer Report February 2026

Beginning Balance	\$265.62
Received	\$22.00
Ending Balance	\$287.62

Respectfully,
Dick Shue, Treasurer



Potted Flowers

You are invited to add to the beauty of our Sanctuary this Easter by placing and dedicating potted flowers in honor or in memory of a loved one. The beautiful flowers will adorn the Sanctuary serving as a living tribute to those who have touched our lives.

Dedications will be listed in the Potted Flowers booklet.

Please drop off to the Sanctuary your signed potted flowers on Saturday, April 4, between 11:00 a.m.-12 noon.

You may take your plant(s) home after Easter Sunday, April 5.

Deadline: Palm Sunday, March 29



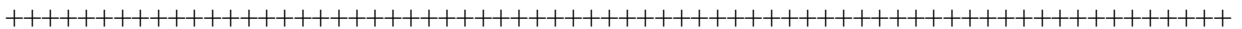
In Honor of _____

In Memory of _____

From _____

How many potted flowers? _____

An Easter Potted Flowers booklet of flowers placed in honor and/or in memory of loved ones will be provided. **Deadline** to turn in the form to the church office by Palm Sunday, March 29.



PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER...

Nursing Homes – Brenda Mahaley (Autumn Care Room 815), Ruth Monroe (Autumn Care Room 818), Jean Ray (Autumn Care Room 201), Sarah Bame (Brookdale Room 9), Pat Kluttz (Brookdale Room 56), Donnell Miller (Bethany Woods, Albemarle), Rachel Earnhardt (The Laurels), Charles & Becky Hartley (The Laurels Room 301), Mike Taylor (Trinity Oaks), Ann Tucker (Oak Park Retirement Room 236)

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER...

Homebound/Shut-ins Members/Special Needs –Tom Cole, Kiki Deaton, Rachel Earnhardt, Madison “Drew” Harrington, Linda Hartley, Pete Honbarrier, Howell and Teresa Kesler, James & Jean Kluttz, Glenn and Betty Sue Lowder, Harold Miller, Rev. TC & Mary Plexico, Macky Swicegood, Billy Waller & Michael Walton

Sick/Surgery/Recovery – Judy Boyd, Ken Davis, Jason Earnhardt, Robin Huffman, Susan Knight, Doris Ludwick, Patsy Lyerly, Richard and Kay Lyons, Troy Painter, Raelynn Rodgers, Brad Trexler & Pat Wiles

Continual Prayer – Rita Volker (Pastor Heidi’s aunt), Union Fire Department #76, Global Missions (Congo, SON Ministries, Slovakia & Haiti), Friends & Families of the avalanche victims (friends of Robyn Arey’s son), especially those affected by political unrest & those affected by natural disasters (Jamacia, Haiti, Alaska, North Dakota, Dominican Republic)

Please let us know...church staff are not automatically made aware of you or your family members and loved ones who are in the hospital, Hospice, a nursing home or shut-ins at home. This means we cannot minister to them without you letting us know. Please contact the church office (704) 636-5092 to keep us informed.

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OUR MISSION: Christ Centered - Mission Driven - Traditionally Grounded - Congregationally Focused **Matthew 28:18-20**

OUR VISION: Fellow Workers of the Gospel - Unified in Christ. **3 John 1:8; Ephesians 4:15-16; Romans 15:15-16**

OUR ACTION PLAN: Responsible management of God’s entrusted resources—time, talent, treasure & mission. **Genesis 1 & 2**

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2026 Church Council Members

2024-2026

Phil Cauble
Kevin Huffman
John Knight (*Treasurer*)
Thad Mulkey

2025-2027

Karen Barringer
Pete Nguyen (*President*)
Brad Trexler

2026-2027

Don Davis (*Vice-President*)
Ethan Wilhelm (*Secretary*)

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Lay Ministers: Tara Davis, Vicki Hunter, Steve Hutchens, Elbert Kluttz and Deena Lanning

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Union Lutheran Church

Office Hours: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Monday-Friday

Pastor Heidi Punt, Senior Pastor (pastor@ulcsalisbury.org)
Phil Cauble, Facility Manager
Genevieve Baker, ULC Staff Support (office@ulcsalisbury.org)
Pastor T. C. Plexico, Pastor Emeritus



March Birthdays

Tuesday, March 3	Karen Morgan
Saturday, March 7	Debbie Rinehart
Monday, March 9	Linda Hartley
Thursday, March 12	Brad Trexler
Friday, March 13	Tonya Burgess
Saturday, March 14	Frank Merrell
Friday, March 20	Nancy Kesler
Monday, March 23	Patrick Sigmon
Wednesday, March 25	Mark Cauble
Thursday, March 26	Monica Harris
Friday, March 27	Eddie Morgan
Sunday, March 29	Nikki Nguyen
Monday, March 30	Judy Boyd Lucas Kesler



March Anniversaries

Wednesday, March 4	Tyler and Felisaty Hunt
Friday, March 20	Joel and Tonya Burgess
Friday, March 27	Paul and Lynn Coughenour
Saturday, March 28	Steve and Mary Hutchens
Tuesday, March 31	Scott and Pamela Queen



Have we missed your birthday or anniversary? Please contact the church office (704) 636-5092 – we don't want to leave anyone out!

March - Dates & Times are subject to change

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:10 a.m. Union Youth Choir 9:30 a.m. Children & Youth Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship & Holy Communion 12 noon Called Church Council (2026 Church Yearbook)	2	3 6:00 p.m. Lenten Meal by the Good Timers (Dutch Meeting Hall) 6:30 p.m. Lenten Service (Dutch Meeting Hall))	4 2:00 p.m. Chapel Time Autumn Care 6:30 p.m. Catechism (Pastor's Office) 6:30 p.m. Belles & Beaus 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	5	6 9:00 a.m. Book Bible Study (Juice Life) 6:00 p.m. Line Dancing (Old Pine Center)	7 8:00 a.m. Billy Waller's home project
8 2026 Church Yearbook available for pick up Daylight Savings Time 9:10 a.m. Union Youth Choir 9:30 a.m. Children & Youth Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship & Holy Communion Little Lutherans (Joyful Lambs) Lunch (Blue Bay, E. Innes St.) 2:30 p.m. Union Youth (paintball)	9	10 9:30 a.m. Piedmont-East Clergy 2:00 p.m. Mary & Martha Circle 6:00 p.m. Lenten Meal by Property, Cemetery & Columbarium (Dutch Meeting Hall) 6:30 p.m. Lenten Service (Dutch Meeting Hall)	11 4:00 p.m. Mission Outreach (Cruise 'n) 4:30 p.m. Congregation & Community Meal 6:30 p.m. Catechism (Pastor's Office) 6:30 p.m. Belles & Beaus 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	12 10:00 a.m. Good Timers (Dutch Meeting Hall) 6:30 p.m. Property, Cemetery & Columbarium	13 6:00 p.m. Line Dancing (Old Pine Center)	14
15 2026 Church Yearbook available for pick up 9:10 a.m. Union Youth Choir 9:30 a.m. Children & Youth Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship & Holy Communion 12 noon Christian Education 2:00 p.m. Church Council + Governance Board	16	17 St. Patrick's Day 6:00 p.m. Lenten Meal by the Church Council (Dutch Meeting Hall) 6:30 p.m. Lenten Service (Dutch Meeting Hall) Tentative ULC Scholarship Trustees meeting	18 6:30 p.m. Catechism (Pastor's Office) 6:30 p.m. Belles & Beaus 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	19	20 9:00 a.m. Book Bible Study (Juice Life) 6:00 p.m. Line Dancing (Old Pine Center)	21 1:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Robert Honeycutt, Sr. Visitation (Dutch Meeting Hall) 9:30 a.m. Church Workday Christmas Flowers removed from Cemetery
22 Deadline for newsletter articles 9:10 a.m. Union Youth Choir 9:30 a.m. Children & Youth Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship & Holy Communion 12 noon Called Congregational Meeting (2026 Church Yearbook) 4:00 p.m. Luther League	23	24 6:00 p.m. Lenten Meal by the Rabbit Hole Adult Sunday School (Dutch Meeting Hall) 6:30 p.m. Lenten Service (Dutch Meeting Hall) Tentative ULC Scholarship Trustees meeting	25 2:00 p.m. Chapel Time Autumn Care 6:00 p.m. Finance 6:30 p.m. Catechism (Pastor's Office) 6:30 p.m. Belles & Beaus 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	26	27 6:00 p.m. Line Dancing (Old Pine Center) April Messenger & Handouts printed	28 Alternate date: 9:30 a.m. Church Workday Christmas Flowers removed from Cemetery 1:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Old Pine Center/Kitchen - Megan Cline
29 Holy Week begins...Palm Sunday 9:10 a.m. Union Youth Choir 9:30 a.m. Children & Youth Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Worship & Holy Communion Deadline for Gerald Bame Scholarship applications	30	31	2-27-26 Benevolence: NAL Seminary Project: Amazon & Walmart Gift cards as well as cash for Melanie Corn, Sponsored Seminarian			