

St. John's Lutheran Church ~ A Congregation of the North American Lutheran Church

### A PARTING WORD

**D**ear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

For a parting word the best one would have to be –Thanks” - thank you for the opportunity to serve you as your interim pastor. Many have expressed thanks and appreciation for my service among you. Someone said, –You have been a blessing for us.” But it has been a two way street. I have not only had the opportunity to be a blessing for you, you have been a blessing for me. I came to you somewhat wounded because in the North Carolina Synod ELCA, I had been judged unfit to serve. For over nine months I had not received a new interim assignment, even though opportunities were available. My self esteem was low. Then came your call. You have no idea how much I have appreciated and treasured the opportunity to walk with you in faith over the last eleven months. God has been good to us. Now you have a wonderful pastor who will serve you well. I leave you having a restored self



esteem, ready to continue to serve where God has lead me - to Christ United Lutheran Church in Granite Falls, a mission congregation of the NALC.

Now let me share a devotional thought. The first time I was in the Rocky Mountains, it was July, and there was still snow on the ground. Our children had a snowball fight. Like my time with you, I will never forget that first experience of the Rocky Mountains. I was awestruck by the awesomeness of those mountains. The scenic views as we drove up the mountains, crossed the continental divide, and then went down the other side were spectacular. It reminds me of one of our favorite hymns; –When I look down from (or up to) lofty mountain grandeur... Then sings my soul my Savior God to thee, How great thou art!” The God of Israel was first known to Abraham and Moses as a mountain God, –El Shaddai.”

The Bible frequently talks



about the heights and seeing God in the heights. God is always –high” above us, in the heavens and highest heavens. On that trip to the Rocky Mountains that I just mentioned, just a week before that, we had stood at the edge of another awesome wonder out west. We had seen the Grand Canyon in Arizona. There, it is not the heights of things that impresses you, but the depth of things. It is an awesome experience to stand on the edge of the canyon and peer down at the Colorado River, cutting through the canyon several thousand feet below you.

In thinking about these experiences, it occurs to me that we tend to look up for God

## OUR MUTUAL COVENANT

**W**elcome Pastor Tim and Rhonda. Welcome to the family of St. John's. We had been excited in the anticipation of calling you and now we are joyful in the reality of your being our Pastor. In the days and weeks ahead you will get to know us, and we you. As your letter of acceptance states, A "Call" is much more than a hiring of an employee, it is a mutual covenant acknowledging God's joining of an Ordained Minister (Pastor) and a body of Christ (congregation) together for the sake of Christ's own mission and ministry.

As a congregation it is incumbent on us that we treat our new Pastor with loving care and the following are some ways to help us as a congregation live up to our part of the covenant. Some of the ways we can do that are:

### **1: Pray for him daily.**

This is the first and the greatest of the ways we can help. This is a big job with big expectations and big stresses. Whatever strength our new minister has, it will be unequal to the task. He will need power from beyond himself. The stories are legion of ordinary ministers who have been prayed into greatness by their congregation. And if we pray for him, it will prepare our heart to receive the message God has for us through him.

### **2: Don't triangulate.**

Triangulation is telling Bob what you think about Joe without ever confronting Joe. It is a vicious sin, akin to bearing false witness. It is destructive of church life, business life, and family life. If you have something critical to say about him, say it to him directly. He'll appreciate your candor, and it will help him make the mid-course adjustments he'll need to make to do his job.

To the congregation council, I urge you not to conspire in triangulation. If someone gives you negative information about the pastor, you



Lead a life  
worthy of the calling ...  
making every effort  
to maintain the unity  
of the Spirit in  
the bond of peace.  
Ephesians 4:1-3

should respond in one of three ways. The most helpful is to say, "Please take that information to the pastor directly." If the complainer won't do it, say, "I will go with you." If the complainer won't go with you, then say, "I need to tell the pastor this, because this is important information he needs to succeed in his job."

The only way to disarm triangulators is not to cooperate with them. Tell them they need to act in a Christ-like way and go directly to the person they are criticizing.

### **3: Scale down your expectations.**

Our new pastor has many gifts and abilities, but some things he won't be good at. Some of you will think his preaching is great; others won't like it. Some will think he's wonderful and caring; others will think, because he can never know all your names, that he doesn't give a hoot about you. The expectations for a senior minister of this congregation are enormous, and I think, unrealistic. Each member has different ideas of what a minister should be and do. Trying to meet all those expectations is simply not possible.

### **4: Remember the concept of team ministry.**

In this church there are 12 Council members and one ordained pastor. Each has unique gifts

but none of them has all the gifts for leadership. That's why we are a team who has responsibility for the life and ministry in this church.

So if our new senior pastor doesn't do something well, that's OK. He can't be everything; he won't be everything. Remember the words of Alcoholics Anonymous: "Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern."

**5: Let him talk about the place he has come from.**

When we leave one location for another, we grieve for it. We'd never say to someone who lost her husband, "You shouldn't miss him so much. You shouldn't be talking about him." When we have invested ourselves in another community and another job, we miss them, too. So listen to his stories. They will open a window into his soul. As you listen, you will affirm where he has been and help him make the transition here.

**6: Join the Positive Brigade.**

Give him praise and positive feedback regularly, for we can be sure he'll get plenty of negative stuff. This is a critical and censorious culture. Life regularly tries to cut all of us down to size. Tell him how much you appreciate what he's doing. Give him a call. Even better, write him a note. There's something about taking the time to write a note, address it and put it in the mail that says, "This is really important to me."

**7: Remember that he has a life apart from this congregation.**

The church is a very seductive mistress. It will take everything from a minister, if he isn't careful. Churches come and go, but families are for a lifetime. I don't expect all of us will remember this point, but when he doesn't show up at your meeting, which to you is the most important thing in the world, maybe he's at a function that's important to his wife. Insist on his having a life beyond this church.

**8: Remember why he is called here.**

Eugene Peterson, in his seminal book, "The

Contemplative Pastor," says the three essential ingredients in ministry are praying, listening and preaching. If he does those three well, we'll have a great pastor. Remember, we didn't call a manager to run this complex machine, we called a spiritual leader.

**9: If you have given it the old college try and find you simply aren't happy with the new pastor, seek a new church home.**

Not every church fits every Christian. Not every pastor fits every parishioner. Rather than stay and carp and sow seeds of dissension, move on to where you can worship and serve with joy.

**10: Love him.**

Love him when he's preached a great sermon. Love him when he's delivered a bomb. Love him when he is strong and confident and assured. Love him when he's confused and uncertain and wavering.

The call of a pastor is a covenant, not a contract. A contract is when we hire someone. A covenant is when we marry someone - for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health.

I'm confident that he will work as hard as he can to keep up his end of the covenant. But as in a marriage, we, the members of the congregation, must keep up our end of the covenant - adjusting, learning, growing. If we pray for him and let him be himself, and let him bring the gifts God has given him, if we open our hearts to him, we will have many happy years together.

-based on article in *The Charlotte Observer*, by Terry Swicegood

One of the challenges Pastor Tim will face is learning all of our names. To assist him with this task, please begin wearing your name tag whenever you are on the church campus. This will be very helpful. If you have misplaced your name tag or your dog has eaten it, or it has simply disappeared from the rack, please see Janine or leave her a note and she will be glad to make you a new one.

Brian Sutton  
Council President





### Iredell Christian Ministries Collection



Thank you for the January collection of 76.4 pounds. On Sunday, February 12, we will collect the following items again: deodorant for men and women, pasta noodles, and jellies/jams.

Some items are always in short supply: baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, and black pepper. Don't forget if you would like to volunteer at ICM, contact Sandi Rabe at 704-838-1449.

### Children and Youth Ministry

Thanks to the Priscilla Circle for serving the Wednesday night meal on January 18. The Sarah Circle will serve the youth on Wednesday, February 15.

### Penny Power

Continue to save your pennies and bring them to circle each month or drop them in the green basket in the Library each Sunday. The money collected during 2012 will be given to the Barium Springs Home for Children. We will be doing our "Give Up Your Cents for Lent" project during Lent. This will begin on Sunday, February 26. Each of the five Sundays in Lent, you can bring your pennies (preferably rolled) or any other change and drop in the baskets on your way into the worship service. There will be a representative from St. John's WINGS at the side and narthex entrances to the nave to receive the collection.



### St. John's WINGS Sunday

Thank you to all who participated in the service for St. John's WINGS on Sunday, January 15. Kay Weaver, our guest speaker, gave a wonderful and inspiring talk about our call for discipleship. I have had several requests for a copy of the list of Biblical people that she used as examples. I have contacted her and hope to receive that soon so that I can share with all.

### "Spiritual-Tea"

St. John's WINGS invites all the women to join them for a "Spiritual-Tea" on Saturday, February 25 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. There will be a short Bible Study followed by "Tea Time".

Please drop in for some moments of grace and join in fellowship as Women of God. Call the church office (704-873-0222) or Brenda Dunn (704-876-4028) by Wednesday, February 23 to register. There is no cost but we do need to know the number attending for planning materials and refreshments. What a great way to begin our Lenten journey!



### Coming Events – Mark your calendars!

Women's Fellowship: "Spiritual-Tea"

Saturday, February 25, 2012

Program & Social Tea - 2:00 to 4:00 pm

Spa Day – "Finding the Beauty Within"

Saturday, August 11, 2012; 8:45 am — 1:00 pm

### January/February Service Opportunities

Kitchen Clean-up: Priscilla Circle

Visitation: Sarah Circle

Special Friends: Rebekah Circle

### February Circle Meetings

#### Rebekah Circle

Meets Wednesday, February 1 @ 9:30 am; Hostess:

Frances Coffey; Program: Patti Horinka

#### Priscilla Circle

Meets Monday, February 6 @ 6:30 pm in church lounge;

Program: Martha Kepley

#### Sarah Circle

Meets Wednesday, February 1 @ 9:30 am in church lounge

(Continued from page 4)

**March Circle Meetings**

**Rebekah Circle**

Meets Wednesday, March 7 @ 9:30 am;  
Hostess: Gail Pope; Program: Frances Coffey

**Priscilla Circle**

Meets Monday, March 5 @ 6:30-church lounge

**Sarah Circle**

Meets Wed, March 7 @ 9:30 am-church lounge

**Women's Circle Meetings—  
All Welcome!**

The women of St John's meet monthly, except for January and July, for Bible Study and fellowship in circles. If you would like more information about St. John's WINGS - *Women in God's Service*, contact one of the following:

*Patti Horinka*, Rebekah Circle ; 704-838-1419;  
*Brenda Dunn*, Priscilla Circle, 704-876-4028;  
*Avis Walsh*, Sarah Circle, 704-873-7037.

**Preschool News**

This month the children will be learning about Groundhog Day, Presidents' Day and celebrating Valentines Day. We will talk about how our family and friends love us, and about God's love for everyone. The children will have pajama day and will be able to bring their favorite 'stuffed' friends from home. We are also looking forward to being a part of the church service on February 12. Registration for the 2012-2013 year will begin on

February 13. If you know anyone who may be interested, please tell them to contact me. Have a blessed month.



Susan White,  
Preschool  
Director

(Continued from page 1)



in the heights, rather than in the depths –but both views are totally awesome. I am not the first who had that thought.

The famous American theologian, *Paul Tillich*, wrote about it. We need to reflect at times about how deeply God is involved in our lives. He not only stands above us in the heights, He is with us in the depths of life as well. Paul Tillich put it like this; *–Anyone who asks about God must not turn away from the world and look upwards into the heights, into heaven, but must in fact turn towards the world, exploring more deeply the world, their own existence, and their relationship to the existence of other people.*”

In our time together we have had the opportunity to see God in the ~~heights~~,” especially in worship at festival times. We have also had the opportunity to see God in the ~~depths~~,” especially when we have been challenged by accidents, illnesses, losses, and other difficulties. And all we can sing and say in the end is, – $\Theta$  Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder, consider all... Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee, How great thou art!” The Lord be with you and bless you always!

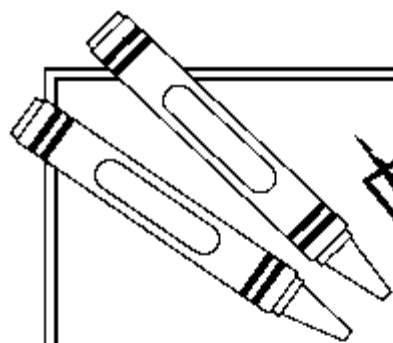
*Pastor Ron*

**Men's Community Breakfast**



**Saturday  
February 11  
8:00 AM — 10 AM**

Come & bring your neighbor  
Donations accepted to benefit  
Iredell Christian & 5th Street Ministries



# PUZZLE

## FOLLOW GOD'S EXAMPLE

In a letter to the church in Colossae, the apostle Paul wrote about the importance of forgiveness.

### • • • DIRECTIONS • • •

To complete Colossians 3:13 (NIV), use the smaller words to fill in the larger words.



gain as or ear van an for give  
gave her on it one other he an a

B \_\_\_\_\_ w \_\_\_\_\_ h each

ot \_\_\_\_\_ d \_\_\_\_\_ give

\_\_\_\_\_ e an \_\_\_\_\_ if \_\_\_\_\_ y

of you h \_\_\_\_\_ grie \_\_\_\_\_ ce

a \_\_\_\_\_ st some \_\_\_\_\_ .

For \_\_\_\_\_ as t \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ d

for \_\_\_\_\_ you."

COLOSSIANS 3:13, NIV

Answers: "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." Colossians 3:13, NIV



- February 1 Elizabeth Howerton  
Virginia Troutman
- February 2 Janice Mull
- February 4 Scott Neely
- February 5 Robert Pavelock
- February 6 Virgie Holland  
Betty Jo Litaker
- February 7 Daniel Dunn
- February 8 Teresa Watts
- February 9 Vickie Troutman
- February 10 Jerry Caskaddon
- February 11 Buddy Bolt
- February 13 Myrna Van Ravestein
- February 16 Deleta Hager
- February 18 Alysa Taylor
- February 19 Sue Hinson  
Brandon Allison
- February 20 Kayce Taylor
- February 21 Christopher Watts  
Logan Adams
- February 27 Virginia Whitley

◆ STEWARDSHIP

CORNER

Giving is more than a responsibility—  
it is a privilege;  
more than an act of obedience—  
it is evidence of our faith.”  
—William Arthur Ward

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

**February 5**

Comm Asst: Marcia Lindler, Roger Bejcek

Crucifer: John-Barron Davidson

Acolyte: Daniel Dunn

Altar Duty: Ann Bejcek

Lector: Gennifer Reiter

Nursery: Amy & Patrick Murphy

**February 12**

Comm Asst: John KARRIER, Bill Coffey

Crucifer: Tammy Combs

Acolyte: Gavin Combs

Altar Duty: Daniel Dunn

Lector: Brian Sutton

Nursery: Patti & Steve Horinka

**February 19**

Comm Asst: Patti Horinka, Phil Mills

Crucifer: Daniel Dunn

Acolyte: Sarah Murphy

Altar Duty: Frances Coffey

Lector: Melody Neely

Nursery: Renae & John KARRIER

**Ash Wednesday—February 22**

Lector: Roger Bejcek

Crucifer: Alonzo Burger

Acolyte: Daniel Dunn

**February 26**

Comm Asst: David Pope, Daniel Dunn

Crucifer: Alonzo Burger

Acolyte: Andrew Wilson

Altar Duty: Brenda Dunn

Lector: Frances Coffey

Nursery: Janice Mull, Paulette Rader

**February Ushers** — George Campbell Team:  
Billy Ray Compton, John KARRIER, Gary Mull,  
Cletis Wooten, Randy Tedder, Sherry Tedder, Jo  
Murphy, Laura Dishman

St. John's Lutheran Church  
PO Box 943 † Statesville, NC 28687

Located at: 740 N Center Street  
704-873-0222  
www.stjohnsstatesville.org

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit #120  
Statesville NC

Return Service Requested



---

March Proclaimer Deadline: February 24

---

WE WELCOME ...  
REV. TIMOTHY BEAN  
~ ST. JOHN'S NEXT PASTOR ~



There will be a Service of Installation on  
Sunday, February 12 at 3:00 PM  
~ Reception to follow in the fellowship hall ~

Join us as we install & welcome  
Pastor Tim and his wife, Rhonda

Pastor Bean begins at St. John's on Wednesday, February 1, 2012.