



We are now beginning a study of **Holy Week** and **Easter**. The *Family Newsletter* has been mailed out. You are encouraged to make Sunday Church School an intentional part of your Lenten practice.

Beginning Wednesday, March 7 we will have evening prayer services with the focus being on **The Women Witnesses**. A homily will be presented each night by a different woman in our congregation who will take on the role of a Biblical woman to share the story of Jesus and how their relationship with him changed their lives. Over the course of the 5 weeks of Lent we will hear the witness of:

- ♦ **Mary, Mother of our Lord**
- ♦ **Anna, the Prophetess**
- ♦ **Mary Magdalene**
- ♦ **The Woman at the Well**
- ♦ **Pilates Wife**

This service will take place in the fellowship hall after the congregational meal each night. **The meal time is 6:00 pm. Series begins at 6:30 pm.**

Each of our Lenten Wednesdays will utilize *Holden Evening Prayer* written in 1985 by Marty Haugen, composer of *Now The Feast and Celebration*, while Marty was the musician-in-residence at Holden Village, a Lutheran retreat center in Washington state. This lovely setting of Vespers follows traditional form while using contemporary and inclusive language. Plan to join us for each service. We will begin the services at about 6:30 pm. Plan to join us even if you are just arriving for the meal.

Beginning Sunday, March 4 we begin a 4-week support group on ***Grief: The Reluctant Journey***.

If you, or someone you know, is grieving the death of a loved one, you are encouraged to join us **each Sunday in March at 2:00 pm in the church parlor**. A 4-week commitment is required. The sessions will be supportive, educational and will help normalize the process of grief. Those interested need to **RSVP by March 2 to Beth Brittain** at revbethbrittain@gmail.com or 704-956-1203.

The Auxiliary of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary

In 1934, in the midst of the Great Depression, a letter appeared in the July edition of the *North Carolina Lutheran* written by Pastor H. A. McCullough, outlining a critical financial situation that existed at Southern Seminary. This call for help awakened an impassioned response from Mary McClanahan Holland, long-time supporter of missions in the southern Lutheran church. It took another six years before a formal organization was formed but on May 20, 1940, "a large group of women, brought together by Mrs. E. C. Cooper, wife of the president of the Seminary at that time, met in the Seminary Reception Room and organized an auxiliary to be known as THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY OF THE LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SOUTHERN SEMINARY."

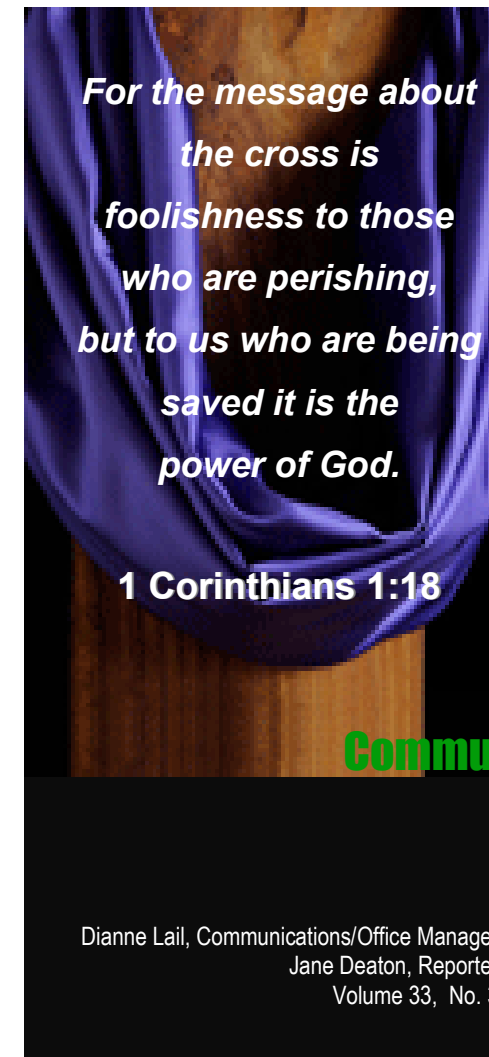
Holy Comforter's connection with our seminary auxiliary began when we proposed honoring members of our church with life membership to the auxiliary. Each life membership **OR** memorial is a \$100 donation to the auxiliary. **Beverly Reynolds and Barbara Beale** will be accepting donations on Sundays, **March 11 & 18**. Checks should be made out to Holy Comforter with a notation that it is for the LTSS Auxiliary. The Auxiliary provides for non-budgeted needs through this membership.

Holy Comforter

Comment

Holy Comforter Lutheran Church P.O. Box 666 Belmont, NC 28012
704-825-2483 holycomforter@gmail.com

Dr. K. Michael Varn, Pastor
Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster
Rev. Beth Brittain, Christian Education



Communion Opportunities For March
March 4 The Second Sunday in Lent
March 25 The Fifth Sunday in Lent

SUNDAY SCHEDULE 9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am The Service
Church Office Hours Monday-Friday
8:30 am—3:00 pm

From the Pastor's Desk

My first communion occurred on the day of my confirmation. It was the "reward" for completing 3 years of catechetical classes every Wednesday afternoon for 2 ½ hours with 18 other teenagers. (Taught at St. Paul's, Columbia by Pastor Shelby) Back then the classes were torture. We had to read five or six books and take tests on them, listen to what seemed like endless lectures, and, maybe worst of all, memorizing most of Luther's catechism wholesale. Then, having to stand up in front of the class and recite the memorized works. By the time I finished those 3 years, I was ready for a reward --- ANY reward.

The truth is that Holy Communion is not a reward at all, we couldn't do enough to earn it. It is a free gift of God's grace given to us to nurture us in our faith and response for Christ dying on the cross for us. More than three decades ago, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) began re-thinking the idea of making us wait until we are prepared, confirmed before we can receive this gift of grace.

The 1st Communion Class will be held Saturday, March 24 and then followed up on Sunday, March 25 at 4:00 pm. A parent or guardian **MUST** accompany your child to both classes.

DEADLINE for April Newsletter information and articles is March 19. Please have all information to Dianne by this date so there is time to layout, print and mail newsletter.

The church decided to begin allowing 3rd graders receive communion. Setting the bar at third grade was not arbitrary. After much study the decision was made because it was the earliest age a child could comprehend the significance, meaning, and "holiness" of this Lutheran sacrament.

Now the debate is over whether or not we can withhold God's grace in the sacrament from anyone --- regardless of age. While that debate continues, we, at Holy Comforter will communion our children when they are in the 1st grade. This means that parents, like never before, will have to play a primary role in the encouragement and instruction in this vital participation of God's Holy Sacrament.

PAX, Pastor Mike

Anyone who has not had communion instruction (First Grade & Up) needs to fill in the form below and **give to Pastor Mike**.



First Communion Class Sign-Up Form

Date: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

CHURCH SCHEDULE:

Saturday, March 3 Young Women's Group
7:00 pm Fellowship Hall, Bring appetizer/finger food

Sunday, March 4 2nd Sunday in Lent

9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am The Service w/**Holy Communion**

Monday, March 5 Morning Circle

10:30 am Meet at HC to carpool to home of Pat Roberson. Bring a sandwich.

Saturday, March 10 Confirmation Class

8:30 am Carpool to Resurrection in Kings Mountain

Sunday, March 11 3rd Sunday in Lent

9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am The Service

Council meets after

Saturday, March 17 Kids' Club (K-Grade 6)

1:00 pm **St. Patrick's Day Party** in fellowship hall

Sunday, March 18 4th Sunday in Lent

9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am The Service

Sunday, March 25 5th Sunday in Lent

9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am The Service w/**Holy Communion**

Sundays: 10:10 am Choir

5:00 pm Handbells
6:00 pm Church Choir
8:00 pm Nar-Anon

Tuesdays: 2:30-4:30 pm Tutoring

7:00 pm Nar-Anon

Lenten Wednesdays: 6:00 pm Meal

6:30 pm Evening Prayer Service
7:15 pm Chamber Choir

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Treasurer's Report (Charles Mauney)

<u>Report for Month</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>Year-To-Date</u>
Budget Expenses:	\$18,559.25	\$18,559.25
Actual Receipts:	16,412.17	16,412.17
Actual Expenses:	16,903.21	16,903.21
Loss for Month:	<\$ 491.04>	
Loss Year-to-Date:		<\$ 491.04>

Vision Fund Pledge Summary Report

(Jack Tench) (5-8-08 thru 3-13-11)

Balance on Pledge: \$ 89,210.33

Forwarded to Vision Fund 15,406.85

Balance Building Fund (Vision & Reno) \$129,196.52

ASSISTING MINISTERS:

LECTORS: Billy Joye, Rebecca Yount

ACOLYTES: Madison Carr, Ashton Nault

CRUCIFERS: Katie Baker
Alyssa Buchanan

ALTAR GUILD: (Team 1)

Bev Mauney, Co-Captain

Brad Milton, Co-Captain

Carmen De Nicholas Harvey Elliott

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS: (Team C)

Sherry Alexander

Fran Holland

Charles Mauney

Dee Smith

EUCHARIST PRESENTERS:

March 4: Caroline & Tracey Nault

March 25: Caroline & Tracey Nault

GREETERS:

March 4: Angie Koehler

March 11: Angie Koehler

March 18: Pat Long

March 25: Pat Koehler

USHERS:

March 4, 11, & 18: Courtney Gatlin +
Volunteer/s

March 25: Bill Hollar + Volunteer/s

FLOWERS:

March 4: Pastor Mike & Lynn Varn

Sarah, Laura & Elizabeth Tench

March 11: De Nicholas Family & Dianne Lail

Beth Brittain

March 18: Paul, Caroline, Aaron & Ashton

Cher Grant & Linda Grimsley

March 25: Trudy Whitener

Jack & Laura Tench



Kids' Club will meet **Saturday, March 17** in the fellowship hall at 1:00 pm. **St. Patrick's Day** festivities will be the theme for this meeting.



Birthstone: Aquamarine
Birth Flower: Daffodil

1: The continental Congress adopts Articles of Confederation. 1781
1: 1st US edition of Sherlock Holmes (Study in Scarlet) published. 1890.
1: Hoover Dam is completed. 1936
4: First Congress of the United States held in New York. 1789
4: American Automobile Association (AAA) founded in Chicago. 1902
4: "Happy Birthday To You" published by Claydon Sunny. 1924
7: Charles Miller received a patent for the sewing machine that stitches buttonholes! 1854
7: Alexander Graham Bell patents telephone. 1876
7: North Carolina State University is founded by the NC General Assembly. 1887
10: Abraham Lincoln applies for a patent; only US President to do so. 1849
11: 1st normal school in US opens, Concord Academy, Concord, Vt. 1823
11: Free city delivery of mail was authorized by the U.S. Postal Service. 1863
14: The submarine Monarch lays telephone cable along the English Channel bed to prepare for the first telephone links across the Channel. 1891
15: Christopher Columbus returns to Spain after first new world voyage. 1493
17: 1st official St Patrick's Day. 1753
17: Henry Jones, patents self-raising flour. 1845
22: Gutenberg Bible became the 1st printed book. 1457
23: George Frideric Handel's oratorio "Messiah" premieres in London. 1743
23: Patrick Henry proclaims "Give me liberty or give me death." 1775
27: US Navy founded on this day. 1794

MUSIC NEWS

Due to lack of response we will be unable to offer a handbell class this year during our Lenten Wednesdays. We appreciate the interest of those who registered, but just like a ball team, we need a minimum number to play the game. Again, here at Holy Comforter, several children and youth have expressed an interest in forming a new children/youth ensemble. We have had ensembles in the past. As children aged out of some of these groups it has become more and more difficult to compete with after school activities, homework, scouts, dance, sports, parental custody issues, overburdened family schedules, finding a convenient meeting time, etc.

There are many churches that offer phenomenal programs. Some gather together "religiously" and develop an unbelievable *glorious sound*. This does not just happen without commitment and sacrifice. We will continue to encourage children, youth, and parents to put church ministry at the top of the list. Many give freely of time and talents; but it saddens this director of music that the church so often must take a back seat when it comes to programming. Even the Worship and Sunday School hour takes a beating, due to all the alternatives that our society now places before us.

It really is not about what the church has to offer...but what "WE" have to offer. Our gifts of service to Christ require our time. The church is not this renovated educational building, but bodies and souls.

Please continue to pray for our church ministry to strengthen for the sake of the Kingdom. I don't think that Jesus meant that it would be easy when he said, "Take up your Cross, and follow Me."

Greg Cline



When my sister, Sabrina, got engaged in 1989 she decided to get married at Holy Comforter even though the family had moved its membership to Good Shepherd in Mt. Holly in 1978. Upon meeting Pastor Mike for the first time I was struck by how welcoming and engaging he was. He made it seem as if my family and I had never left Holy Comforter.

There are several things that impress me about Pastor Mike, his vast knowledge and his sense of humor, but the two that stand out the most are his positive attitude and how he treats other people. No problem is too big and he always will find a way to solve it. I've witnessed this attitude on many occasions as a member of church council and assisting him with the youth group. Through his teachings and sermons, I have spiritually grown and try to incorporate the lessons into my everyday life. The most important one being to treat people with respect and they will do the same in kind.

Thank you Pastor Mike for being the person you are and for making me a better person. **Fran Holland**

Lillian E. Lineberger Scholarship Fund

The Lillian E. Lineberger Scholarship was established as an endowment by Mrs. Lineberger to the congregation to reinforce students of the church in their learning and in the accomplishment of an undergraduate or graduate degree. Her hope was that this bequest would help improve their lives, and in turn, serve and enrich the lives of others.

The awards will be made once a year from the interest accrued on the endowment. That amount will be distributed equally among accepted applicants who must apply the funds toward tuition or books. Checks will be made out to the applicant's school.

An application form and a copy of the list of requirements for application are available from the church office or via email at holycomforter@gmail.com. You must print out the application because two signatures are required. **Deadline for submittal is April 29, 2012.**



"Hot cross bun, a round bun made from a rich yeast dough containing flour, milk, sugar, butter, eggs, currants, and spices, such as cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, and cloves. In England, hot cross buns are **traditionally eaten on Good Friday**; they are marked on top with a cross, wither cut in the dough or composed of strips of pastry. The mark is of ancient origin, connected with religious offerings of bread, which replaced earlier, less civilized offerings of blood... According to superstition, hot cross buns and loaves baked on Good Friday never went mouldy, and were sometimes kept as charms from one year to the next.

--Oxford Companion to Food, Alan Davidson [Oxford University Press:Oxford] 1999 (p. 114)

MARCH 2012



We recognize and celebrate these birthdays in the month of March. We are thankful for the life and spirit of those we celebrate. May the blessings of God flow in the life of each of you.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Each Sunday during March there will be a support group called <i>Grief: The Reluctant Journey</i>.</p> <p>2:00 pm Meet in Church Parlor</p>	<p>Daylight Savings Time Begins March 11</p> 			1	2	<p>3 Young Women's Group 7:00 pm Fellowship Hall Bring appetizer/ Finger food to Share. All women, young or young-at-heart are welcome!</p>
<p>4 2nd Sunday in Lent 9:30am Sunday school 10:10 am Church Choir 10:30 am The Service with Holy Communion 5:00 pm Handbells 6:00 pm Church Choir 8:00 pm Nar-Anon</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Stained Glass 6:30-8:30 pm</p>	<p>6</p> <p>2:30-4:30 pm Tutoring</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Lenten Wednesday 5:00 pm Handbell Class 6:00 pm Meal 6:30 pm Evening Prayer Service 7:15 pm Chamber Choir</p>	8	9	<p>10 Confirmation Class 8:30am Meet to carpool to Resurrection in Kings Mountain</p>
<p>11 3rd Sunday in Lent  9:30am Sunday school 10:10 am Church Choir 10:30 am The Service Council meets after 5:00 pm Handbells 6:00 pm Church Choir 8:00 pm Nar-Anon</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Stained Glass 6:30-8:30 pm</p>	<p>13</p> <p>2:30-4:30 pm Tutoring</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Lenten Wednesday 5:00 pm Handbell Class 6:00 pm Meal 6:30 pm Evening Prayer Service 7:15 pm Chamber Choir</p>	15	16	<p>17</p>  <p>1:00 pm St. Patrick's Day Party</p> 
<p>18 4th Sunday in Lent 9:30am Sunday school 10:10 am Church Choir 10:30 am The Service 5:00 pm Handbells 6:00 pm Church Choir 8:00 pm Nar-Anon</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Stained Glass 6:30-8:30 pm</p>	<p>20</p> <p>2:30-4:30 pm Tutoring</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Lenten Wednesday 5:00 pm Handbell Class 6:00 pm Meal 6:30 pm Evening Prayer Service 7:15 pm Chamber Choir</p>	22	23	<p>24</p> <p>1st Communion Class 9:00am Children & parents Meet for class in Fellowship hall.</p>
<p>25 5th Sunday in Lent 9:30am Sunday school 10:10 am Church Choir 10:30 am The Service with Holy Communion 4:00 pm 1st Com. Class 5:00 pm Handbells 6:00 pm Church Choir 8:00 pm Nar-Anon</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Stained Glass 6:30-8:30 pm</p>	<p>27</p> <p>2:30-4:30 pm Tutoring</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Lenten Wednesday 5:00 pm Handbell Class 6:00 pm Meal 6:30 pm Evening Prayer Service 7:15 pm Chamber Choir</p>	29	30	31

March 4 Dean Halvorson
Jesse Whitley

March 5 Robin Ratchford

March 6 Ann Ashe
Debbie Baker
Jo Singleton

March 7 Holly Harper

March 8 Graham Baakko
Lydia Lawrence

March 10 Virginia Crump
Dee Smith

March 11 Thomas Kasmer

March 12 Arden De Nicholas
Gayla Foscue

March 14 Tyler Ange
Tracey Nault
Nancy Powell

March 18 Melinda Lingerfelt

March 21 John Beasley

March 22 Louise Day

March 24 Timothy Baakko

March 25 Pat Koehler

March 26 Hailey Ange
Cheryl Grant

March 28 Doris Meekins

March 31 Pat Long

NOTE: If we have unintentionally left any member's name off this list, or if there are any errors, please call the church office.

