



January 2012

Wings

"They who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles"

The Newsletter Of St. John's Lutheran Church • 100 St. John's Church Road • Concord • North Carolina • 28025

WE ARE INCLUDED

Shortly on the scene in the New Testament is The Three Wise Men. Another name we call this event is "The Gift of the Magi". The only gospel to note the event is Matthew as it begins his second chapter. Yet, the Christian Church devotes an entire season to that single event in the life of Jesus. Yes, this event is *that* important because it foreshadows the inclusion of gentiles into Christ's family and that should interest each of us.

There is no doubt that the medieval Church misunderstood who these "wise men" were. We have been incorrectly influenced by the song "We Three Kings", and in fact, those who came to visit Jesus were not kings and there probably were more than three. When the song states that they were from the "orient", that is not to mean the Far East, but rather what is modern day Iraq. The original language of the New Testament, Greek, uses the word "Magians" to describe the wise men. They were considered "wise" because they studied the stars, they were intellectual astrologers and highly regarded by their native country. Their profession also meant that they were a type of oriental magician, but much more. Actually, they were an elite wealthy class and highly influential in the political choosing of the nation's leader. Therefore, instead of being "kings" they had a lot of sway in the choosing of their king. When these astrologers witnessed something quite different and strange in the night sky they naturally considered it to be "a sign" of something or someone great. Thus, being interested in finding out what the moving star meant they decided to follow it.

Three foreigners entering Jerusalem would not typically cause alert to King Herod. However, it

was extremely likely that the Magi, being rich and important, traveled in a caravan, which meant more safety. Therefore, when their caravan approached Jerusalem Herod's soldiers would be alert. In fact, the Holy Land was a geographical area that had been overrun periodically by foreign armies, so Herod was probably concerned that the Magi may be spies to determine Herod's might. I would say that Herod was afraid of the Magi. What is significant in Matthew's gospel is that three gifts are mentioned, but not three wise men; there could have been quite a few traveling in the caravan.

The first to visit Jesus was the shepherds, probably because that metaphor will be used for Christ. Jesus' kingship would not be worldly, but rather sacrificial, loving and forgiving. Scripture tells us that the shepherds saw Jesus lying in the manger in the stable. However, the second to visit is the Magi and it appears that they have come a bit later. According to scripture Joseph, Mary and the baby were already out of the stable and lodging somewhere. We are so used to seeing these nativity scenes that show the wise men at the manger, however, scripture clearly differs.

So, why should the Magi be significant to you and I? Simply, they were not Jewish. Those outside of Judaism, commonly called "Gentiles", come into Christ's life early. The message is clear, Jesus comes into the world to shepherd all of His flock, including those who are not of the genetic line of Abraham. The message of salvation is for the entire world, and in fact, this is the message that the Magi would have on their lips as they leave Bethlehem. This is the theme of Epiphany.

Let Christ's light shine, Pastor Mark

REMINDER: The Social Ministry Committee (Jim Hayes, Etta Rowland, Keith Cook, Frances Ann Lentz, Betty Honeycutt, and Jan Tanner) is your contact if you have a need or know of a need in the community.

The **Social Ministry Committee** is starting two new programs this year to assist our shut-ins and our elderly:

1. Providing transportation for our elderly and shut-ins who have trouble finding transportation to and from doctor appointments and other necessary appointments. If you need assistance call Lori, the church secretary and she will notify Jan Tanner who will coordinate the transportation. Or just call Jan. Anyone who would like to be added to the list of drivers can also call Jan.
2. Helping with minor repairs and yard clean-up for our elderly and shut-ins. The home owner will pay for any needed materials and a group of volunteers will do the project. Contact Jim Hayes. Don't worry; Jim won't be doing the important stuff. He will serve as your contact and get the ball rolling. Call Jim if you would like to be added to our list of volunteers to help with minor home repairs and yard clean-up.



CCM Pantry Items

- Green Beans
- Sweet Peas
- Corn
- Rice
- Pasta Items
- Canned tomatoes, mixed veggies
- Canned Meat
- Used or unused Plastic Grocery Bags

Demands are high for both locations. Thank you for your donations this holiday season.

Mt. Pleasant Food Pantry Items

- Jello
- Sugar
- Canned pasta
- Cornmeal
- Macaroni and cheese
- Spaghetti noodles, sauce
- Canned vegetables

Women of the ELCA

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Mission: "To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ."

Margaret Shipton Circle

Tuesday, January 3 at 10:00 a.m.
Visit Shut-ins

Ellen Cox Circle

Tuesday, January 3 at 7:00 p.m.
Hostess: Melanie Hudson

Elizabeth Cauble Circle

Monday, January 9 at 6:30 p.m.
Leader: Planning Session
Hostess: Paula Ritchie

Shell Gardner Circle

Thursday, January 12 at 7:00 p.m.
Annual New Year's Dinner

**Church Council will meet on Sunday,
January 8 at 6:00 p.m.**

Lutheran Men in Mission of St. John's

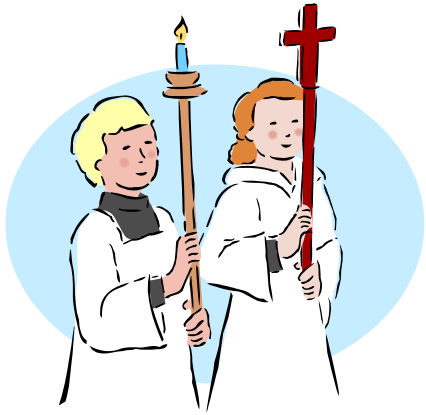
No meeting in January

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"The vision of LMM is for every man to have a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ through an effective men's ministry in every congregation."

Deadline Reminders

Please turn in any Sunday bulletin announcements by 12:00pm on the Tuesday before that Sunday. Please turn in February 2012 Newsletter information by Monday, January 16. The newsletter will be in your mailboxes by Sunday, January 29.



WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR JANUARY

8:30 A. M.

Reader	OPEN
Acolyte	OPEN
Communion Assistants	OPEN
Preparation	Bill and Cathy Feehan
Presenter	OPEN

11:00 A.M.

Reader	Jim Hayes
Crucifer	Susan Hayes
Acolyte	OPEN
Torch Bearers	Maya Heath, Ava Heath
Banner Bearer	Jim Hayes
Communion: Assistant	OPEN
Helpers	Jim & Susan Hayes
Presenter	Maya Heath, Ava Heath

Teller Team

Madelyn Suther, Charlie Eudy, Peggy Clontz,
Tammy DeVitto, John DeVitto

Ushers for January

8:30
OPEN

11:00
Ken Rowland
Rick McRorie
David Rowland
Bob Cavalline
Bob Blackwelder
Jimmy Lentz

Ushers for February

8:30
OPEN

11:00
Phil Fisher
Jeff Culp
Blake Hinson
Keith Cook
Hunter Miller
Phillip Casper

Flower Calendar for January

SIGN - UP Sheet in Narthex, or please call the office if you want to add your name to a date.

- 1 -
- 8 -
- 15 - Casper/ Shuping
- 22 -
- 29 -

Greeters for January

- 8:30 - George Cobb
- 11:00 – OPEN

Nursery Schedule for January

- 1 - OPEN
- 8 - OPEN
- 15 - Francie and Wlalter Austin
- 22 - OPEN
- 29 - OPEN

Children's Church for January

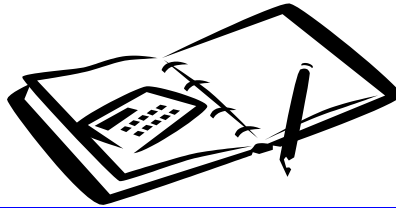
- 1 - OPEN
- 8 - OPEN
- 15 - OPEN
- 22 - OPEN
- 29 - OPEN

Altar Guild for January

Frances Lentz, Kim Cook

In Charge of Cleaning Fellowship Bldg and Goins Hall Kitchen for January

Lutheran Men in Mission



ATTENDANCE IN NOVEMBER 2011

	<u>8:30</u>		<u>11:00</u>		<u>Total</u>	
6 -	54		95		149	
13 -	----- 102	-----			102	(Annual Meeting)
20 -	50		107		157	
20 -	----- 63	-----				(Thanksgiving 4pm)
27 -	62		109		171	
Average—	55.33		103.67		144.75	(Total inc. 11/13)

OUR STEWARDSHIP OF FINANCES FOR NOVEMBER

General Fund Finances

Current needed each month: \$22,881.83

<u>Month</u>	<u>Offerings Given</u>	<u>Other Income</u>	<u>Total Income</u>	<u>Budget Spend</u>
November	\$17,227.02	\$604.56	\$17,831.58	\$21,778.22

Total available General Funds on November 30, 2011 = \$(37,372.92)

Note: Other income may include one or more of the following: tax refunds, rental income, use of building, Sunday school, Children of the Church, and non-specified loose offerings. Copies of last month's Treasurer's Report and Council Minutes are available from the church office during normal business hours and are posted outside the office on the bulletin board or on the table. Questions may be directed to the Financial Officers.

Benevolence Fund Finances

Total Benevolence needed each month: \$4,606.00

Given in November - \$2,867

Enjoy the Convenience of Electronic Giving

As St. John's prepares for a new year, it is important to know what support we can depend on from our congregation members. By knowing what you are willing to commit financially, we are able to better plan for the future. Please consider setting up a recurring giving plan. Automating your financial commitments means your contributions will be received on a steady, uninterrupted basis. To set up a recurring giving schedule, visit us online at www.stjohnslutheranchurch.net and locate the Donate button and set up your recurring giving schedule. The first time you give, you will select a password that will enable you to log in at any time and make changes to your giving or view your complete online giving history. Or if it's easier, complete a paper authorization form and return it to the church office.

DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS GIVEN IN NOVEMBER

Bernice Ferguson Music Fund given in memory of Jo Petrea by Lewis and Jane Cress.

Bldg and Improvement Fund given in honor of Morgan Walker by the Nussman/Goins Sunday School Class.

Children's Choir Fund given in memory of Buck Waddell by the Hugh Kluttz Family,.

Columbarium Fund given in memory of Jo Petrea by the Hugh Kluttz Family, in memory of Jo Petrea by Bernice Ferguson.

Foy O. and Betty F. Ritchie Playschool Scholarship Fund given in memory of Betty F. Ritchie by Bernice Ferguson, in memory of Betty F. Ritchie by Mike and Janice Harkey.

General Fund given in memory of Betty F. Ritchie by the Hugh Kluttz Family, in memory of Betty F. Ritchie, Buck Waddell and Catherine Heintz by Don and Paula Ritchie.

Heritage Center Fund given in memory of Paul and Bessie Cline by Ned and Linda Cline.

Melissa Martin Playground Fund given in memory of Catherine Heintz by Leon and Ann Ensley.

Hospice and Palliative Care of Cabarrus County

If you would like to help us provide care to our patients and families, please consider donating any items from our wish list. Please contact our Community Education & Outreach Coordinator, Becky Bahn at 704-935-9452 for more information. Our website is www.hpccc.org. **Thank you for your willingness to help!**

BITS AND PIECES

Confirmation: Saturday, January 7 at 8:30am - 11:30am at Mt. Olive.

2012 Yearbook and Directory: Please provide year-end committee reports to the office by Sunday, January 8. Please provide any address changes to the office no later than Tuesday, January 3. If you would like to be a part of one of the committees and have not signed up, please let the committee chair from 2011 (in the yearbook) know as soon as possible. You may leave a note in the office door, call 704-436-6081, or send an email to office@stjohnslutheranchurch.net. Thanks for your help and volunteering your time and talents.

2012 Worship Assistants: There are still openings for you to volunteer your time and talents in 2012. Please call the office if you would like to find a place where you can help. Thank you.

2012 Pledges: We will accept offering pledges during both services on Sunday, January 1.

January 1: Worship next week is "Lessons and Carols" at 8:30am and at 11:00am. Sunday School is 9:45am.

Up-coming Events: Agape Kure Beach Ministries: 919 - 552-9421 for details

* Summer is coming! We are searching for quality Christian young adults to serve as counselors on our 2012 summer staff. Applicants must be 19 years minimum, love kids, and want a fun and exciting challenge.

* Summer brochures will be arriving at your church soon. Information is available on the web site in early Jan.

* Saturday Safari February 18, 2012: Choose your own topic, 10 people required in your group. Cost is \$8 per person, \$40 maximum per family. Pre-registration is required (aceed@agapekurebeach.org)

* Building Youth Groups is for grades 3-5. This is a growing part of our ministry to your church. We have space available this spring for your church April 13-15. Contact Katie if you are interested or want more information.

* Openings for summer day camps: July 1-6, July 15-20, and July 29 - August 3 we have openings for your church. We also offer Middle School Day Camp.



SONSHINE PACKS

There's a growing population of children in our area that do not have adequate food during the weekends or holidays. These children arrive at school on Monday mornings and they are tired and lethargic and cannot perform to their abilities. The lack of food now is impacting their education and their future. The Shell Gardner Circle has a calling to help make a difference by providing food assistance for one family of children at Mt. Pleasant Elementary School and Mt. Pleasant High School. We are sponsoring a total of four children. The community outreach project is called "Sonshine Packs." We are starting with one family with the hope of expanding this ministry to more families and children in need.

Each Friday the children will be sent home with a backpack filled with food for the weekend. The children will bring the empty backpacks back to school on Monday for us to refill them again for the following weekend.

We would like for the congregation to prayerfully consider supporting this ministry through a monetary donation or food donations. If you choose to support the Sonshine Packs with a monetary donation, please make checks payable to The Shell Gardner Circle. There will be a basket in the Narthex for donations. If you wish to donate food items, they can be placed in the cry room.

The food items must be non-perishable, single-serving, and easy to prepare. Suggested food items: soup (Progresso soup contains the most nutrition and has the lowest amount of sodium) spaghetti products (Spaghetti-O's), macaroni and cheese, vegetables, fruit cups, oatmeal, grits, pudding, popcorn, shelf-stable milk (chocolate and white), juice boxes. The key for the food items is that they are single-serving, easy to prepare and shelf stable. These foods are foods that can be eaten with a little bit of heat or right from the box. (If you buy food, please keep receipts and give to Bonita R. or Ellen G.)

The Shell Gardner Circle would like to thank you in advance for your support of this new St. John's ministry.

St. John's Lutheran Church
100 St. John's Church Road
Concord, NC 28025
Church Office: 704-436-6081
Pastor Ericson Home: 704-262-9702
Office Hours: Mon - Thu, 8am - 3pm

The Rev. Dr. Mark J. Ericson, Pastor
The Rev. Ted W. Goins, Pastor Emeritus
Mr. Ned Hudson, Council Vice-President
Lori Pittard, Secretary and Financial Bookkeeper
Catherine Ritch, Music/Youth/Children's Director
Mrs. Anna Harwood, Playschool Director
Playschool: 704-436-9274

➡ Look us up on the web at
www.stjohnslutheranchurch.net

MISSION STATEMENT

We people of God,
Who are joined together as St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Believe we are guided by the Holy Spirit
To proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ
Through Word and Sacraments.

In fulfillment of this mission we:

- Give praise and thanksgiving to God in joyful worship;
- Strengthen and nourish each other as a loving and caring family;
- Actively minister to the spiritual and physical needs of people in our community and the world;
- Provide continuing Christian education from birth to death.