

# *Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church*

March 2025

## *A note from the Pastor's desk:*

This month, we begin our annual journey through the season of Lent. It's a season which takes place between two mountaintop experiences: the Transfiguration of Jesus on the final Sunday of Epiphany, and his death on the cross on Good Friday. At the Transfiguration, we see the glory of God on full display. Jesus's clothes become dazzling white as a flash of lightning, Moses and Elijah appear and talk with him, and we hear a booming voice from the clouds: "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" (Luke 9:35) On Calvary, we see the glory of God but differently. The appearance of Jesus changes yet again: stripped of his clothing, he is covered in wounds and bleeding from being flogged and having the crown of thorns shoved down on his head. At the cross, we see the Savior of the world as one who is willing to die for sinful people, such as ourselves. A different voice proclaims, "Truly this man was God's Son!" (Mark 15:39)

The journey from one mountain to the other takes forty days. Forty is a richly symbolic number in scripture. The Israelites wandered in the wilderness forty years before God allowed them to enter the Promised Land (Numbers 14:34). In the Flood story, God caused it to rain forty days and nights while Noah and his family were adrift in the ark (Genesis 7:12). The prophet Elijah fasted forty days while journeying through the wilderness to Mt. Horeb, where he encountered God on the mountain (1 Kings 19:8). Moses was on Mt. Sinai forty days and nights, receiving the commandments from God (Exodus 24:18). In other words, forty represents those times of testing that seem like they're never going to end. (Have YOU ever had your own "forty-day journey" in the wilderness?) But of course, the forty days always come to an end: the rain stopped and the flood waters receded, Elijah made it to the mountain, Moses finally came down from the mountain, and God allowed the Israelites to enter the Promised Land after all.

Jesus was also in the wilderness forty days, being tested by Satan. During the forty-day season of Lent, we remember all the ways in which Jesus was tested on his way to the cross – and how he did not give in to the temptation to seek power or to avoid his fate. It's also a time to consider all the ways that the world tempts us to stop following Jesus, or turn aside from his teachings. This journey of discipleship lasts a lot longer than forty days: we'll be following in the footsteps of our Savior the rest of our lives. How can we make sure we don't go astray?

We might consider stepping up our faith practices. Lent traditionally brings a renewed focus on praying, almsgiving, and fasting. I would add to that list scripture reading, acts of service, worshipping together, and strengthening relationships with those around you. Engaging in one or more of these practices has the potential to bring you more fully into the presence of Jesus.

I look forward to meeting you along the way during this season! May you all be blessed with a meaningful Lenten season!

**-Pastor Christopher**

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### LUTHERAN SERVICES CAROLINAS

Lutheran Services Carolinas (LSC) is a faith-based health and human services organization serving children, families, and seniors in the Carolinas. In keeping with their mission, "Empowered by Christ, we walk together with all we serve," LSC assists and advocates for those they serve – both young and old – who need obstacles removed and pathways cleared on the way to a more fulfilling life. The vision of LSC is to fulfill the proclamation of Christ in John 10:10, "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." To learn more about LSC, please visit [lscarolinas.net](http://lscarolinas.net)

**Catechism class will meet March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am in the music room.**

**Shrove Tuesday pancake supper will be Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.**

**Ash Wednesday worship service will be Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.**

**Church council will meet Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 8:30am.**

**Lutheran Men in Mission will meet Sunday, March 16<sup>th</sup> at 8:30am**  
in the fellowship hall. All men are welcome!

**WELCA will meet Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm.** All women are welcome!

### CHRISTIAN MINISTRY CENTER UPDATE

It was an incredible fall quarter at the Christian Ministry Center! Many of you donated your time, food, and finances to provide much-needed food to our food-insecure clients that live in our community and those nearby. Not only did individuals and churches donate, but our local stores and restaurants went the extra mile as well! Walmart, KJ's, and Starbucks are our regular donors. They provide meat, produce, snacks, and other items that are much-needed. A shoutout to Harvest Hope Food Bank in Columbia! We're partners with them for the relationships we have with our local stores, among other things. They are all wonderful organizations, and we are blessed to be able to work with them.

Volunteers! The Lord has provided us with more hands and hearts. We would love to have at least six volunteers per shift, and He has brought them to us. We welcomed six new regular volunteers during the fall... Volunteering at the CMC isn't for everyone as it does sometimes require heavy lifting, and can be an incredibly fast-paced environment, but there are so many necessary jobs to be done that are slow-paced. For example, fulfillment. Groceries need to be bagged before we can give them out, eggs need to be checked, cleaned and bagged, bags need to be prepared by double bagging them, etc. We'll be happy to talk with you about volunteering and how you would like to participate!

On a final note, there are changes coming to the CMC this February. As of now, our clients receive pre-bagged groceries when they visit us, and although that works well for many folks, we will be offering a client choice system next month. Each client will be able to choose what will complement the food they have in their home, giving them the freedom and authority over their own grocery choices. They will be able to pick out food that they like, therefore creating less waste. This freedom of choice will empower them to shop for their families and themselves, and not feel as much like they are getting a hand-out. This choice will enable us to build better relationships and get better acquainted with our clients, and them with us. We may possibly be able to get a better idea of what they need most and be able to provide it to them.

*The full update can be found on the bulletin board outside the choir room. Also, CMC is now on Facebook!*



# *Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church*

## IN THE MAIL

January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025

Greetings to all of you!

I have been waiting a long time to write and update family and friends about my health and current treatments.

Mainly, I have been waiting for a plan to address the internal bleeding. The bleeding has a sense of irony attached to it.

So the story runs like this...

In 2022, I was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer. The treatment for this hung on 28 radiation treatments which were applied with great success as it beat back the cancer completely. I still go every 6 months for blood work and a consultation with the Radiation Oncologist.

Around this same time, Lucy was diagnosed with Head & Neck Cancer which required an extensive four-hour surgery followed by 30 radiation treatments.

Then, on a routine annual physical, I was diagnosed with AFIB, a heart malady related to a great deal of stroke activity. The AFIB, then, introduced to my body the use of blood thinners. The blood thinners caused complications with internal bleeding.

So the irony became that the Radiation Therapy, which saved my life with the Prostate Cancer, had damaged soft tissue in my colon and created what I simply refer to as a "leak" in my body. This became the battle with bleeding and a depletion of my body's hemoglobin. With this problem also came times when I was having brief periods of shortness of breath.

A healthy hemoglobin reading is normally about 13-18. Twice this past year I had readings of 5.4 and 4.4.

This complication led to a series of blood transfusion and transfusion of a special iron product. This has brought my hemoglobin back to 10. But this is only sustainable with periodic transfusions.

Back in December, I had a conversation with a Specialist who asked me if I would be open to Hyperbaric treatments which had been found to close small wounds like mine and actually regrow healthy tissue.

I received word yesterday (January 20<sup>th</sup>) that I had been approved for hyperbaric treatments. So my treatments will begin on January 29<sup>th</sup>. At some point, it will be determined whether I will have 40 treatments or 60 treatments. Each treatment is a 3-hour commitment.

This is by far my best option for getting to where I need to be. In the interim, since late November, I have had to do a lot of self-care with special compounded enemas and injected foams four times a day.

Many, many people have been kind to call and ask about me, but the reality for me is that it is easier to write and explain all of this than to have conversations about it several times a day or week.

I have only had one bad period of illness which sidelined me for 4 days. Other than that, I have maintained an active life and average two funerals a week and also supplying at congregations on Sunday. There is a severe shortage of pastors and so I am glad to help in this way. Shortly I will begin the Season of Lent and help a congregation to have weekly Lenten services, plus Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter.

So, I am doing well. I have good doctors. Lucy and I are still plugged in to our oncologists for follow-ups.

Actually, my biggest concern is that Lucy receives her care through the Affordable Care Act and that Act is now in peril (along with 30 million other people) because of the people who have taken control of the government who have vowed to end it.

That is all I know for now. I will do another update at some point during the hyperbaric treatments.

Peace and Prayers to all of you!

February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

I completed my 6<sup>th</sup> hyperbaric treatment today. They are going well and my doctor told me that we will have our first review between treatments 15-20.

Being in the hyperbaric chamber for three hours a day is sort of like a Jacques Cousteau experience, like an underwater 1-man sub, only oxygen instead of water.

-Pastor Mark Bredholt

# Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Jean Ruff has belonged to Mt. Hebron her entire life, all 83 years of it. Along the way, she has endured many challenges, including the early loss of her husband Murray, working long hours to make ends meet in order to provide for her two children, and trying to survive a pandemic – just to name a few. And yet Jean is still here, and she humorously gives the credit to “Jesus and Clorox.”

Jean’s whole family, the Eargles, belonged to Mt. Hebron. As a kid, she loved attending Sunday School, and used to hold onto the handouts from class. She fondly remembers Easter egg hunts, and her time in Luther League. Once she got older, she met Murray Ruff, a Methodist from Newberry. They married, and he joined Mt. Hebron. Together they raised two children – Joey and Melissa.

As an adult, Jean loved singing in the choir. In fact, she looked forward to it! Music has always been one of her favorite parts of the worship service. Throughout the years, not only did Jean sing in the choir, but she also helped with VBS, served on the Outreach Committee, and visited nursing home residents. And even as an adult, she still loved coming to Sunday School – especially when Pat Prosser was the teacher.

In her spare time, Jean likes to tend to her garden, do yard work, and feed the neighborhood cats. Jean, thank you for your faithful witness and for being a part of Mt. Hebron for all these years!

## CHURCH HISTORY FROM A TO Z

**C is for Calvin, John**, 16<sup>th</sup>-century Protestant Reformer. He was active in France, but fled to Switzerland due to religious persecution. His work *Institutes of the Christian Religion* summarizes his theology. His followers (Calvinists) later distanced themselves from Lutherans by their views on communion, predestination, and election. (See May 2024 newsletter for a fuller biography.)

**C is for creed**, a basic statement of faith (from Latin *credo*, “I believe”). The Apostles’ Creed dates from the earliest centuries of Christianity (but was probably not written by the apostles). It emphasizes Jesus’s humanity. The Nicene Creed, the official statement of belief from the Council of Nicaea in 325, emphasizes Jesus’s divinity. The 6<sup>th</sup>-century Athanasian Creed focuses on the Trinity.

**C is for Crusades**, a series of religious wars led by the medieval church. The first Crusade began in 1095, with the intent of reclaiming the Holy Land from Muslim rule. Though initially successful, the Muslims later regained control. Over the next few centuries, later Crusades were directed against church dissidents.

**C is for communion**, also called the Eucharist or the Lord’s Supper. In communion, we partake of bread and wine or grape juice around the altar. This rite was instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper with his disciples. In communion, we are reminded of Jesus’s death on the cross, and offered forgiveness of sins. We are called to invite others to join us at the table!

**C is for Constantine**, Roman emperor from 306 to 337. Just before a battle in 312, he was directed in a vision to put the chi-rho symbol (☩) on his soldiers’ shields. After winning the battle, he converted to Christianity and decreed the Edict of Milan the following year, which legalized Christianity and ended religious persecution.



*The Siege of Damascus (1148)*, a Second Crusade battle  
From a 15<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript by Sébastien Mamerot



# Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church

## Memory Verse of the Month

Let's memorize scripture together!  
Take time this month to memorize  
the following verse:

*"Speak out for those who cannot speak,  
for the rights of all the destitute.  
Speak out, judge righteously,  
defend the rights of the poor and needy."*

**-Proverbs 31:8-9**

## PRAYER REQUESTS

As we enter the Lenten season, pray that the Lord would draw us closer to himself and open our hearts to repentance and renewal.

Pray for the families of Frances Shealy and Mildred Derrick. Ask the Lord to comfort them and give them strength during their time of loss.

During this cold and flu season, pray for all those battling long- and short-term illnesses. Ask the Lord to heal all those who are sick.

Pray for Lutheran Services Carolinas, Christian Ministry Center, and other service organizations that take care of the needs of many people.

Pray for all children and youth around the world, that they would have the chance to have normal childhoods, and that they would live in security.

Pray for our world leaders, that they would work to end long-lasting conflicts and make it possible for all people to prosper and live in safety.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

3/3 - Christopher Derrick  
3/7 - Caleb Shealy  
3/8 - Megan Derrick Byrd  
3/9 - Beth Derrick  
3/15 - Robert Sawicki  
3/21 - Matthew Kneece  
3/23 - Deborah Cook  
3/28 - Carlin Shealy

## MARCH HELPERS

### Greeters / Ushers

Barbara, Bobby, and Laiken Brock

### Lectors

3/2 - Joann Shealy  
3/9 - Farrah Leaphart  
3/16 - Adrianna Oxner  
3/23 - Beverly Barr  
3/30 - Del Derrick

### Tabulators

Clay Derrick and Adam Shealy  
*Alternate: Farrah Leaphart*

### Altar Guild

Kevin, Carlin, Kellen, and Caleb Shealy

### Acolytes

3/2 - Kellen Shealy  
3/9 - Matthew Leaphart  
3/16 - Garrett Barr  
3/23 - Atley Derrick  
3/30 - Ahlyer Derrick

### Crucifers

3/2 - Matthew Leaphart

### Torchbearers

3/2 - Garrett Barr and Atley Derrick

### Flowers

3/2 - Kevin and Carlin Shealy  
3/9 - Clarice Howell  
3/16 - Lent greenery  
3/23 - Lent greenery  
3/30 - Lent greenery

### Nursery

3/2 - Sarah Shealy and Carlin Shealy  
3/9 - Farrah Leaphart and Kristin Derrick  
3/16 - Denise Derrick and Benji Leaphart  
3/23 - Heather Worthy and Amy Harman  
3/30 - Sarah Shealy and Farrah Leaphart

## Contact Pastor Christopher!

If you have a prayer request, questions,  
or would like to speak with our pastor,  
you can reach him at:

803-580-5215 (office)  
803-940-7143 (cell)  
[mthebronpastor@gmail.com](mailto:mthebronpastor@gmail.com)