

Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church

January 2025

A note from the Pastor's wife:

As I sit down to write this, I find myself overwhelmed with gratitude for each of you and the incredible support you have shown my husband in this ministry. Words cannot fully convey how much your love, encouragement, and prayers mean to both of us. As the wife of the pastor, I have witnessed firsthand the sacrifices and dedication that my husband pours into his calling, and I want to take this moment to acknowledge how much your support has meant to him and to our family.

In the book of 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, Paul exhorts us to "respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." Your faithfulness in coming to church, and working alongside him in ministry is such a testimony. It is because of your prayers, your encouragement, and your dedication to Mt. Hebron that the work of the Lord continues to thrive in this church.

Galatians 6:9 reminds us not to grow weary in doing good, "for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up." There are times when ministry can be challenging, when the weight of responsibility feels heavy, but knowing that we are surrounded by such a supportive and loving church family makes all the difference. Your faithfulness in serving alongside him is an incredible source of strength.

As a family, we have felt your love and your prayers. We have seen the ways you serve, give, and love one another. Your faithfulness strengthens my husband's hands for the work of ministry and makes him better equipped to lead with wisdom, grace, and integrity.

So thank you! Thank you for the blessing you are to us and for the ways you continue to support my husband and our family. Your kindness is appreciated, and we count it a joy to serve alongside such a wonderful congregation.

May God continue to bless you all, and may His favor be upon each of you as we enter into this new year.

Sarah Shealy

A Note of Thanks

We wanted to take a moment to offer our sincere thanks for the generous Christmas gift. Your thoughtful gesture is greatly appreciated and is a true blessing. We are so grateful for the kindness and support the church has shown us, and we feel truly fortunate to be part of such a wonderful community!

We hope you all had a wonderful holiday! Wishing you a Happy New Year as well.

The Shealy Family

Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church

ANNOUNCEMENTS

IN THE MAIL

My dear Church Family,

You continue to show me the true meaning of Christian love with cards, calls, emails, texts, notes, thoughts and most of all prayers over the past weeks. I am humbled and uplifted and looking forward to being back in Church and getting your "hugs".

Much love to all,
Clarice "Reece".

Dear Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church Family,

We received your letter this week that your congregation had lifted our congregation in prayer on December 8th. You cannot imagine what that has meant to us - especially at this time.

Hurricane Helene just recently uprooted a tremendous oak tree that landed on the roof of our fellowship hall. It did tremendous damage and we are in the process of getting estimates. Our church family praised the Lord for not letting it fall on our sanctuary.

Pastor Rick is now with the Orangeburg Lutheran Church. We are blest to have Pastor Judy McGuire serving our 3-Church Parish — Good shepherd Lutheran in Walterboro, Mt. Pleasant Lutheran and Ehrhardt Memorial Lutheran in Ehrhardt.

Again, thank you for your letter and all your members who signed. We also pray that God will continue to guide you as you share His love.
Merry Christmas!

In God's Service
Ehrhardt Memorial Church Family

WITTENBERG FOOD BANK

Leading up to Christmas, Mt. Hebron offered members the chance to purchase poinsettias, as usual. But this year, members also had the opportunity to make a donation to Wittenberg Lutheran's food bank ministry.

Collectively, a total of \$257.50 was raised! Your donations are greatly appreciated! Thank you for providing so generously to those in need!

Council installation will take place during worship on **Sunday, January 5th.**

Catechism class will meet **January 5th and 19th**
at 9:00am in the music room.

The **Western Conference of the LMM** will have their first quarter meeting on **Wednesday, January 8th at 7:00** at Wittenberg Lutheran in Leesville. The meal will be a lowcountry boil, at a cost of \$15 per person. Please let the pastor or LMM president Benji Leaphart know by January 5th if you plan to attend.

Church council will meet
Sunday, January 12th at 8:30am.

WELCA will meet **Thursday, January 16th**
at 6:00pm. All women are welcome!

LMM will meet **Sunday, January 19th at 8:30am.** All men are invited to join in this brief time of fellowship.

There will be a **congregational meeting**
after worship on **Sunday, January 26th.**
Annual reports will be presented and distributed.

There is a new **flower chart for 2025** in the narthex. If you would like to provide flowers for worship, please feel free to sign up. Thank you!

A big thank you to our Outreach Committee for preparing and distributing fruit bags during the Christmas Season. We appreciate your time and effort to provide this blessing for our members!

CHECK OUT OUR YOUTH!



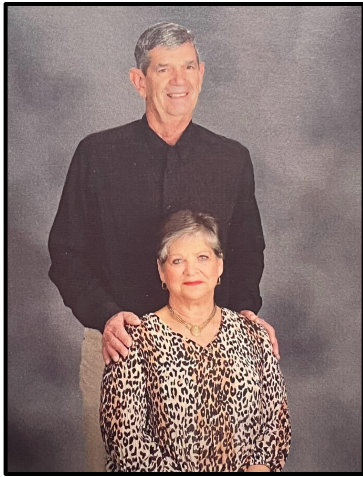
Congratulations to Matthew Leaphart! Matthew and his team competed in a robotics competition at Carolina Spring Middle School and won the Inspire Award.

This award was given to a team that demonstrated outstanding leadership through actions to other teams.

Well done, Matthew!

Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Beth Derrick and Billy married in 1971. Beth was a member at Nazareth Methodist Church, and the two of them never discussed which church they would join. Beth then left Mt Hebron for about 2 years but came back to attend church with her family.

Beth has served the church in many ways. She has been secretary to church council as a non-voting member, and when her children were young, she taught children's Sunday School. She was a member of WELCA serving in numerous positions, and even sang in the choir. In addition, Beth has supported Billy in all his commitments to the church.

Beth has a lot of memories in her 50+ years at Mt Hebron. Her favorite is the Christmas Eve service later in the evening, when the lights are turned off, candles are lit, and the Chrismon tree is standing majestically, while everyone is singing Silent Night. Beth now attend Mt. Hebron's 4:00 service and then attends Wittenberg's 10:30 PM and goes out at midnight with candles lit, luminaries lining the walkway, singing Silent Night and the church bells ringing in Christmas Day.

Beth cherishes time with her family. She cooks most every Sunday lunch for all 12 of them. She also lets them choose the menu for each of their birthday celebrations. Whenever time is available, Beth also loves to slip away to Edisto Beach.

Beth, thank you for your faithfulness!

CHURCH HISTORY FROM A TO Z

A is for Augustine, one of our great Church Fathers. Born in North Africa in 354 AD, Augustine excelled in school, becoming a professor in 374. He moved to Rome in 383, and then to Milan. While there, he met Ambrose, the city's bishop, who baptized him in 387. Returning to Africa, he became a priest and in 396 was appointed bishop of the city of Hippo, a post he held until his death 34 years later. His numerous sermons and writings have profoundly influenced the church. His views are still discussed 1600 years later. (*See the August 2024 newsletter for a fuller biography.*)

A is for African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church. The AME Church is an offshoot of the Methodist church, and the first Protestant denomination founded by black people. It was founded in 1816 by Richard Allen, the first black Methodist deacon in North America. On account of racism, Allen called five churches centered around Philadelphia to form a new denomination. Today, the AME church has a membership of around 2.5 million people.

A is for antisemitism, or prejudice towards Jews. The church has a long, sad history of antisemitic behavior. Based on a misunderstanding of the gospel accounts, Christians have blamed Jews for killing Jesus for centuries. Many early church leaders wrote harshly against the Jews. Martin Luther even wrote a treatise called *On the Jews and Their Lies*. Such thinking has led to the Holocaust and numerous other atrocities.

A is for apostles, the 12 closest followers of Jesus. They were chosen by him and sent out to proclaim the good news, heal the sick, and cast out demons. They travelled with Jesus during his ministry, and saw his healings and miracles firsthand. Though they fled when he was arrested, Jesus appeared to them after his resurrection and sent them forth to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them... and teaching them to obey" all that he commanded (Matt. 28:19-20). Several of the apostles - including the three closest to Jesus: Peter, James, and John - were fishermen.



The Last Supper, which shows Jesus and the apostles

Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church

Memory Verse of the Month

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

*"Commit your work to the LORD,
and your plans will be established."*

-Proverbs 16:3

PRAYER REQUESTS

As we enter 2025, pray that the Lord would
make his will known to our congregation, and
that we would be guided toward more opportunities to
spread God's love in our community.

Pray for nursing home and assisted living residents;
that they would be well tended to, and that they would
have many visits this year from family and friends.

Pray for our students as they return to school from
Christmas break. Pray the Lord would bless them in all
their endeavors, and guide them in right paths.

Pray for Clarice Howell as she recovers from surgery.
Pray for a speedy recovery and that the Lord would
relieve her pain.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

1/2 - Eli Kneece
1/5 - Betty L. Oxner
1/14 - Matthew Leaphart
1/21 - Bobby Brock
1/22 - Lance Oxner
1/23 - Roxanna Jernigan
1/23 - Ahlyer and Atley Derrick
1/25 - Ethan Barr
1/26 - Jenny Brantley
1/28 - Keith Oxner
1/29 - Candace Oxner

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

1/19 - Keith and Martha Oxner

JANUARY HELPERS

Greeters / Ushers

Hoyt Prosser and Adam Shealy

Lectors

1/5 - Hoyt Prosser
1/12 - Carlin Shealy
1/19 - Avery Derrick
1/26 - Janine McCartha

Tabulators

Glenn Harman and Benji Leaphart
Alternate: Kevin Shealy

Altar Guild

Clarice Howell and Janine McCartha

Acolytes

1/5 - Matthew Leaphart
1/12 - Ahlyer Derrick
1/19 - Kellen Shealy
1/26 - Atley Derrick

Crucifers

1/5 - Atley Derrick
1/12 - Garrett Barr

Torchbearers

1/5 - Garrett Barr and Ahlyer Derrick
1/12 - Atley Derrick and Matthew Leaphart

Flowers

1/5 - Eargle sisters
1/12 - OPEN
1/19 - Brittney Kaminer
1/26 - OPEN

Nursery

1/5 - Kristen Derrick and Benji Leaphart
1/12 - Farrah Leaphart and Sarah Shealy
1/19 - Carlin Shealy and Heather Worthly
1/26 - Amy Harman and Denise Derrick

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)
mthebrnpastor@gmail.com