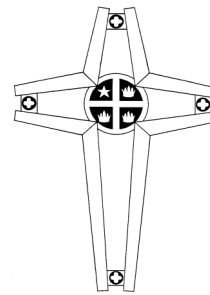


# The Star

The Monthly Newsletter of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Epiphany  
An ELCA Congregation



Volume MMXXIV  
Number 1  
January 2024

God calls us to: "**Grow** our relationship with God,  
**connect** with each other, and **serve** the world."



Dear Epiphany Disciples,

When I was a summer camp counselor at Lutheridge, Friday night dinner would always have a special feel to it. One of the things that made it special was that the program directors took time to say thanks. One by one, groups of people were asked to stand up – Bible study leaders, other adults helping throughout the week, staff who worked in the dining hall to serve meals, staff who worked as lifeguards and other essential roles, counselors who spent their weeks with campers, and then the campers themselves. It was always a weekly reminder of how many people it takes to make something like summer camp happen.

I think about that when I think about Advent and Christmas in churches like ours. If we were in the sanctuary right now, I imagine saying, "Stand up if you helped to set the Altar for Communion this December." "Stand up if you were an usher." "Stand up if you sang in the choir, were a cantor, or played a musical instrument." "Stand up if you were a lector, communion assistant, assisting minister, acolyte, or crucifer." "Stand up if you helped provide Christmas presents for our partners in Nora, Virginia or Ibrahim Elementary School." "Stand up if you helped provide food, set up, or clean up at Advent dinners on Wednesday nights." "Stand up if you made contact with someone who you knew was having a difficult time this December." "Stand up if you prayed for the people of Epiphany during December."

Pretty soon everyone in the room would all be standing up because it takes all of us to make things happen in December. Thanks, Epiphany.

On a personal note, I also want to thank the many people who sent Christmas cards, baked goodies, and other remembrances this Christmas. They are very appreciated, and we thank God for the many ways you are gifts to us.

Things are always busy at Epiphany. In January we have quite a few things to be mindful of, including:

-January 7 is Epiphany Sunday. As we celebrate our congregation's namesake, we will also offer our intentions to give for the 2024 annual budget. Thank you for the ways in which you embody the Magi in the Epiphany story, who presented their gifts to Jesus.

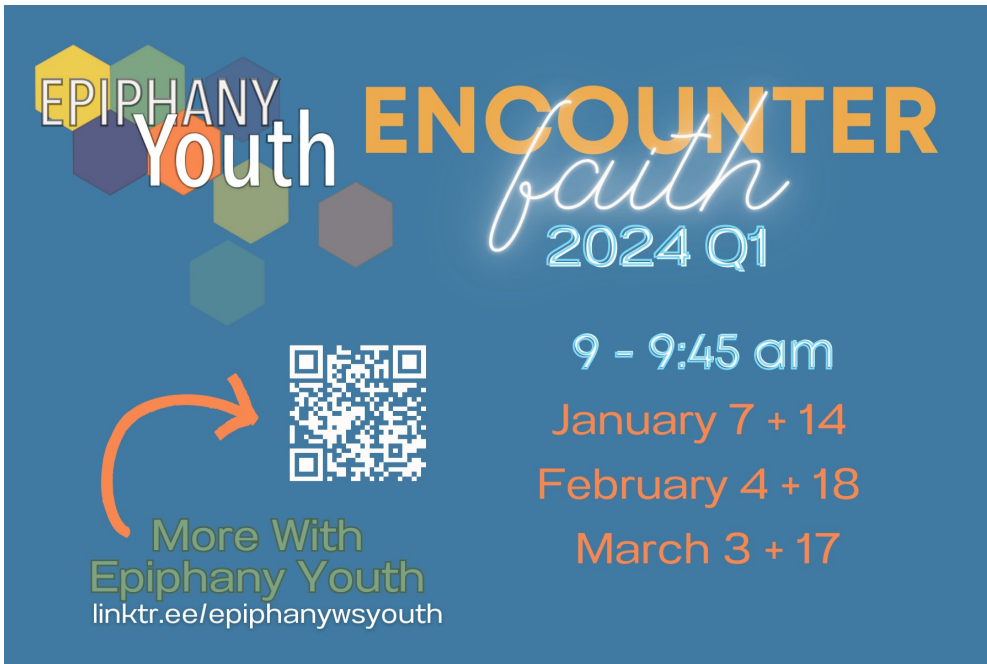
-January 28 following worship is our Annual Meeting. We will receive the Annual Report, vote on the recommendation from Council for new Endowment Committee Members, hear an important update from the Capital Campaign Team, and vote on a budget for 2024. (A friendly reminder to anyone who includes things in the Annual Report that it's not too soon to get that in now!)

Happy New Year! I'm excited and praying expectantly about what God will do through us in 2024!

In Christ,

*Pastor Ruell*





**EPIPHANY Youth ENCOUNTER faith**  
2024 Q1

9 - 9:45 am  
January 7 + 14  
February 4 + 18  
March 3 + 17

More With Epiphany Youth  
[linktr.ee/epiphanywsyouth](https://linktr.ee/epiphanywsyouth)

**Youth Encounter Faith Will Resume in January!**

Encounter Faith is a 45-minute time for a deeper dive into scripture, prayer, and our lives for **6th - 12th grade students.**

We Hope To See You Here!

**The NC Synod's Lutheran Youth Organization's 2024 Assembly is coming up this February.**

Middle and High School Students are invited to join Youth from around the state in Greensboro for a Two-Night Assembly with worship, learning, and fun led for youth, by youth.

This year's theme is "Y'all means All"

Check Out [EpiphanyWS.org/youth](https://EpiphanyWS.org/youth) for more information or reach out to Liz!



Want to Get Involved? Get Coffee?  
Have Questions?

Liz Dinkins  
336-589-6879

[ldinkins@epiphanyws.org](mailto:ldinkins@epiphanyws.org)

[Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Website](#) | [Calendar](#)



## LUTHERAN STUDENT MOVEMENT MEALS

Please pray for our students over the remainder of their Christmas break and as they return to Campus for Classes by January 17th. Our first LSM of the year will be January 23rd

We're continuing to work a Campus Ministry Committee to support the work Epiphany is doing in partnership with Wake Students - If you're Wake Alumni, Lutheran Student Movement Alumni, or have a heart for college students / college ministry I'd love to chat with you! Please reach out and let me know!

Lastly, I'd love for you to follow us on social media:

[Wake LSM \(College\) Instagram](#) | [Wake LSM \(College\) Facebook](#)

Or Set a Meeting with Me [Here](#) or [ldinkins@epiphanyws.org](mailto:ldinkins@epiphanyws.org) or 336-589-6879

Peace Be With Y'all



It's time to start thinking about meals for our Campus Ministry folks at Wake Forest. We need meals for 8-10 people with a preference for no red meat. Meals need to be at the church by 5 pm on Tuesday afternoons.

You may purchase a gift card in the amount of \$60 in lieu of a home cooked meal. If you choose this option, you need to get the card to Liz 2 days prior to the selected date.

Here a link to the SignUpGenius:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0B48A4A62FAAF58-46969061-campus>

Dear Members of Epiphany,

For 15 months, between August 2022 and October 2023, my husband, John, battled advanced prostate cancer. On November 3, 2023, he lost his battle, and we lost him.

I remember talking with Pastor Russell in September of 2022 about John's diagnosis and treatment. He told me that we did not have to battle this alone - that Epiphany was our church family, and would be right by our sides.

And he was right.

It's hard to put into words what your support has meant to me and my family, and express how grateful we are. We have literally felt the arms of Jesus around us in every hug, heard his voice in your words of encouragement and hope, gained his strength from your prayers, and known his love in your concern and condolences.

Thank you. We love you all.

Terry Wooding



## Calling All Members of Thrivent Financial

Thrivent is here to help you make a difference. They will provide the resources needed to get started on a fundraiser, educational event or service activity, including up to \$250 in seed money.

Each member can receive two Action Teams (grants) per year but can only use one in a month.

The Outreach Committee is busy making plans for 2024. We want to get an idea of how many interested Thrivent members we have. Then we are going to plan projects and sign up Thrivent members for the various activities. Technical help will be available for assistance with the application process.

To sign up to help and for any questions, contact Patti Deal [phdheelfan@yahoo.com](mailto:phdheelfan@yahoo.com). Please respond by January 9.



As we begin 2024, Women of the ELCA want to thank our congregation for helping with our projects during 2023. We collected items for Ronald McDonald House, Crisis Control, the Diaper Bank, Domestic Violence Shelter, and The Dwelling.

Our executive board will be meeting on Sunday, January 14, to begin making plans for 2024. We invite all women of Epiphany to participate in our opportunities for fellowship, learning, service, and fun.

From January 14-February 4 we will once again be collecting items for Ronald McDonald House. Needs include:

- Single serve snacks and breakfast items ( chips, crackers, pretzels, cookies, raisins, nuts, granola bars, pop tarts, cereal, and fruit cups)
- Toilet paper, paper towels, sanitizing wipes
- 13 gallon trash bags

There will be a box in the narthex to collect these items.

### ***Dates:***

*January 9- Mary Martha Circle- 10 am-- fellowship hall*

*January 9- Dorothy Circle-7 PM- church*

*January 11- Nora Deal Circle- 11:30 am- fellowship hall*

*January 14- executive board- after church service*

**Brain cells die, skin cells die, even hair cells die.**

**But FAT CELLS... must have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior because they seem to have eternal life.**



Happy New Year from your church council! We had a very busy 2023, and we are looking forward to a productive 2024. We said goodbye to three of our members: Terry Wiley, Diana Stindt, and Matt Imboden. Thank you very much for your commitment and time to serving on

the council. We have welcomed three new members: Debbie Spurlock, Penny Mothershed, and Kathy Knecht. Thank you to all of our candidates. We greatly appreciate your willingness to serve on the council.

In 2024, our capital campaign will begin; the funds raised will be used to renew our church home with some facility upgrades and some long-needed repairs. We are very excited about building our church youth ministry.

Please do not hesitate to contact one of the council members with comments, concerns or suggestions.

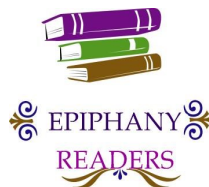
May your year be filled with peace, prosperity and love. May God's blessings shower upon you and bestow up you a bright, healthy and peaceful new year.

Epiphany Church Council



**Next meeting: January 17, 2024  
1:30 pm  
Fellowship Hall**

The Epiphany Readers will meet by Zoom at 7pm on Thursday, January 25th. The book that will be discussed in January is *The Rose Code* by Kate Quinn. All are welcome to join in the discussion.



To Join Zoom Meeting:  
<https://bit.ly/EpiphanyReaders>



**“Like so much care work-done by and largely by women, especially women of color- it is often invisible, even when it is happening right in front of you.”**

“The Labor of love.”-Collen Farrell, MSN Article RSS -

*The Nation* Oct 16/23, 2023 Issue

The EECC is currently seeking a highly qualified, experienced pre K teacher to finish the year with the 4/5 year olds. Ms. Riley is getting married this spring and will be moving to Raleigh.

It may be interesting to see a little more about what is required to work in child care. Here is a short list by definition, of what would be needed to fill the position. The list is not inclusive.

**Child care Provider (child kar pro vid er) n.**

Chef, baker, janitor, sock and shoe finder, coat buttoner, boot fitter, bottle washer, grocery shopper, diaper changer, protector, dish washer, nose wiper, vegetable pusher, floor sweeper, waiter, story teller, playground attendant, PE teacher, activity director, driver, zoo keeper, inspector, aerobics instructor, tutor, entertainer, therapist, manager, derby instructor, performer, bookkeeper, self-esteem builder, teacher, helper, well-wisher, nurse, traffic controller, noise controller, life saver, thinker, problem solver, engineer, designer, councilor, safety instructor, arbitrator, creator, inventor, companion, musician, historian, technician, dietician, athlete, beautician, fire marshal, analyst, artist, dentist, scientist, biologist, technologist, accountant, manicurist, receptionist, environmentalist, pharmacist, hygienist, speech therapist, reader, builder, informer, composer, supervisor, author, navigator, peacemaker, friend.....

-Copied- Adults & Children’s Alliance

I wonder if we expect too much? I don’t think so! The staff and I are grateful to share the work of Epiphany with our community, and look forward to another year (29th) at EECC.

In His Service,  
Lisa Nichols, Director



EECC Staff



ELCA  
GOOD  
GIFTS  
CATALOG



### ELCA Good Gifts Collection until 1/7

Remember, children and the congregation have until Sunday, January 7th to collect money for ELCA Good Gifts. This year, the children

hope to raise enough money to buy a goat for a farming community in need. Fresh milk from a goat provides daily nutrition for children and their families. What's more, goats are incredibly quick to reproduce, and they provide an opportunity for families to pass the gift on to others. Our goal for the whole congregation is to be able to purchase 5 family farms (\$715 a piece)! To find out more about ELCA Good Gifts, please visit: <https://goodgifts.elca.org/>

**Encounter: Faith will be on a break for Christmas and New Year's Eve. We will return on Sunday, January 7th.**



### Movie Night Sunday, January 14th, 5-7 PM

There will be a movie night for all children on **Sunday, January 14th at 5:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall**. Come in your pajamas and prepare to get cozy! Children can bring pillows, blankets, sleeping bags, or a comfy portable chair to sit on. We will have popcorn and drinks available. This is a drop off event, but parents are welcome to stay and enjoy the movie with us.

## BIG NEWS! Save the Date!

Lutheroad is back again this year and will be here at Epiphany the week of June 10-14!. We will once again be partnering with Augsburg Lutheran Church, so let's rekindle those friendships we made last year! Be on the lookout for more details and registration information.



If you missed the world premier of the Epiphany Kids' Christmas Pageant, you can view it here:

<https://youtu.be/7Xup3r0NruM>



If you have milestones to celebrate, please contact Mickey Miller.



# Our Epiphany Family

Help us keep our prayer list current by letting us know if there are those who need to be included.



*Jim Lippard* has been awarded the Cecil Green Award by the Brain Injury Association of North Carolina on the occasion of their 40th anniversary. The award recognizes a leader within the brain injury community who has created systematic change. (Picture to come soon.)



Thanks to \$300 donated by our members, Epiphany received over 800 pairs of socks. The sock distribution company gave us some free pairs due to the number of pairs we purchased and because of our mission projects.



Missions receiving socks were The Dwelling, Christ's Beloved Community, Smith Farm Elementary, Nora Virginia Community Center, and Forsyth County Senior Services.

### GIFT OF THE MONTH ITEMS FOR JANUARY

**CRISIS CONTROL MINISTRY** - Beef stew, saltine crackers

**SAMARITAN MINISTRIES** - Canned fruit, sugar, deodorant, high efficiency laundry detergent packs/pods, ground beef (50 lbs.)

**RONALD McDONALD HOUSE** - Paper towels; 13-gallon trash bags; individual snacks & drinks; <https://rmhcpt.org/make-a-difference/wish-list/>

**TRINITY GLEN** - Deodorant

**TRINITY ELMS** - Fronts of greeting cards, body lotion, body wash, bath items, deodorant, snacks, note cards

**CBC FOOD PANTRY** - Volunteers to take food donations from church to CBC and to work stocking shelves/distributing food twice a month

**THE DWELLING** - New T-shirts, new underwear, new socks, mouth care products, shower supplies

**EECC** - Cheerios, raisins, applesauce (individual, plain)

**IBRAHAM FOOD PANTRY** - Diapers/pullups sizes 2-6



**Ministers, All the People of Epiphany**  
**Pastor,** Pastor Russell Peek  
 Email: pastorrussell@epiphanyws.org  
**Pastor of Visitation,** Pastor Joanna Stallings  
 Email: jstallings@epiphanyws.org  
**Director of Music,** Patryck Nuss  
 E-mail: music@epiphanyws.org  
**Director of Youth & Campus Ministry,** Liz Dinkins  
 E-mail: ldinkins@epiphanyws.org  
**Director of Children's Ministries,** Lauren Saldaña  
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**Web Site:** www.epiphanyws.org

**2023 Congregation Council**

**Officers:**  
 Chris Schultz, Pres.  
 Betty Benardo, VP  
 Terry Wiley, Treas.  
 Mark Tellefsen, Sec.

**Non-Council Officers:**  
 Mickey Miller, Fin. Sec.  
 Jackie Pierson, Asst. Tr. Payroll

**Members-Elect for 2024-2026**

**Members:**  
 Patti Deal  
 Dan Meckley  
 Matt Imboden  
 Sarah Lischer  
 Diana Stindt  
 Pastor Russell Peek

**Kathy Knecht**  
**Penny Mothershed**  
**Debbie Spurlock**

*"If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it."*  
*John 14:14, NRSV*

**LET US PRAY FOR...**

**Leaders of church & state, especially**

<i>Our Congregation Council</i>	<i>Pastor Russell Peek</i>
<i>Christ's Beloved Community</i>	<i>President Joe Biden</i>
<i>Bishop Elizabeth Eaton</i>	<i>Governor Roy Cooper</i>
<i>Bishop Timothy Smith</i>	<i>Mayor Allen Joines</i>

*All victims of war and any form of violence*

**Our sister congregations and our missionary in Mexico**

*Pastor Emily Norris, Deacon Brooke De Jong, and the people of the Dwelling*  
*Fr. Javier Arias and the people of Christ's Beloved Community*  
*Pr. David Brondos and the Theological Community of Mexico*  
*The people of Mupini Parish, Namibia*

**Active duty military personnel, especially**

*Travis Gerdes*  
*Randal Middleton*  
*Connor Oldland*  
*David Schultz*

**Family & friends of the congregation in need, especially**

<i>Judy Allison</i>	<i>Carolyn Graham</i>	<i>Robert &amp; Mary Peak</i>
<i>Ashley Blackburn</i>	<i>Linda Grale</i>	<i>Wyatt Axel Petersen</i>
<i>Hannah Kestner Bockover</i>	<i>Pam Holcomb</i>	<i>Steve Reno</i>
<i>Thomas &amp; Mary Cannon</i>	<i>Robin Hoots</i>	<i>Shelly Saldaña</i>
<i>Clark Family</i>	<i>David Howard</i>	<i>Nora Schweitzer</i>
<i>William Collette</i>	<i>Kathy Hoyle</i>	<i>Liz Shumate</i>
<i>Judy Crouch</i>	<i>Jean Jarvis</i>	<i>Sue Slezak</i>
<i>Rose Debruhl</i>	<i>Katie Lippard</i>	<i>Michele Stanfield</i>
<i>Paul DeJute</i>	<i>Chad Marion</i>	<i>Laura Turlington</i>
<i>Sylvia Ann Derrick</i>	<i>Linda McKenna</i>	<i>Alan Vestal</i>
<i>Carl Dubose</i>	<i>Terry McKinney</i>	<i>Emma Wester</i>
<i>Dot Elvington</i>	<i>Allison Morris</i>	<i>Lynn Wiemann</i>
<i>Howard Flichman</i>	<i>Kirsten Nuss</i>	<i>Nicole Williams</i>
<i>Pat &amp; Joanne Gill</i>	<i>Annette Pardue</i>	<i>Leigh Yarner</i>

**Members in need, especially**

<i>The Rev. John Beeg</i>	<i>Jim Lippard</i>	<i>Patsy Pritts</i>
<i>Sharen Bond</i>	<i>Jane Lyerly</i>	<i>Wanda Rabb</i>
<i>Ann Cannon</i>	<i>Jean Mock</i>	<i>Susan Tellefsen</i>
<i>Chad Kraft</i>	<i>Paul Oldland</i>	

**Our Christian love and sympathy to the family and friends of**

*Linda Davis*  
*Dale Blewett*  
*Becky Yarborough*



*Elizabeth Horton, Homestead Hills*  
*Bert Joines, Homestead Hills*  
*Doris Kent, Forsyth Court*  
*Sue Muhler, Brookdale Senior Living*  
*Carl Schlager, The Stratford, High Point*



*Bonnie Bryant*  
*Cole Lippard*  
*Polly Rector*  
*Robert Walker*

**January Birthdays**

Sue Muhler	1/4
Laura Arens	1/6
Ann Cannon	1/6
Brighton Lapidus	1/7
Lizzie Blank	1/8
An Bunjang	1/9
Amanda Reich	1/9
Morgan Tacik	1/10
Mike Spain	1/12
Joanne Stallings	1/18
Joe Cannon	1/21
Connor Forrest	1/21
Matt Imboden	1/23
Santiago Saldaña	1/23
Chris Schultz	1/23
Gloria Muday	1/25
Oliver Imboden	1/26
Lee Ann Meckley	1/27
Debra Sloop	1/27
Calvin Sherman	1/28

**January Baptisms**

Stephen Ball	1/1
Marjorie Cassidy	1/1
Bob Martin	1/1
Darlene Martin	1/1
Clinton Moyer	1/1
Marilyn Mullane	1/1
Leann Pace	1/1
Terry Wooding	1/1
Dan King	1/3
Grady Watson	1/9
Betty Benardo	1/12
Jared Hunter	1/13
Alex Saphar	1/14
Cailee Wilcut	1/18
Cole Lippard	1/24
Lauren Robins	1/25
Santiago Saldaña	1/27
Henry Sloop	1/27
Charlene Wellborn	1/27
Lindsey Robins	1/29
Ann Cannon	1/31



**Make A Note**

**Patti Deal:**  
[patthdeal@gmail.com](mailto:patthdeal@gmail.com)

**Jean Mock:**  
[malvinamock7@gmail.com](mailto:malvinamock7@gmail.com)



<i>Jared &amp; Corey Wilcut</i>	<i>1/1</i>
<i>Jim &amp; Jackie Pierson</i>	<i>1/4</i>
<i>David &amp; Charlene Wellborn</i>	<i>1/12</i>
<i>Lew &amp; Jeanie Saphar</i>	<i>1/14</i>

We wish you many more years of happiness!



We received thanks from:  
 Samaritan Ministries

Larry and Nancy Grush wish to thank our Epiphany Family members for their prayers and condolences at the death of our brother-in-law and close friend on December 4.





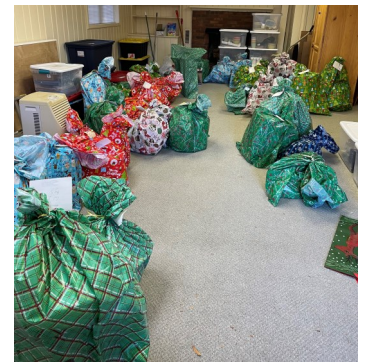
**Wreath Making**



**Nora Deal Circle Cookie Exchange**



**Ibrahim's Santa's Helpers**



**Christmas at Ibrahim**





Each bag is personalized for a special child

Mary White, the amazing heart and soul of the community center



Categorized and organized!



Bins of sorted underwear and socks



Completed bags for tots under 2 years old

**Thanks**

How grateful the folks were to see not one but two vehicles appearing on that cloudy Monday morning, loaded with toys, games, sporting goods, puzzles, books, underwear, and socks to help bring joy and wide-eyed excitement to more than 600 children in the mountains of

Appalachia, and how grateful I was for John Hood, who drove the long trip with a car-full, as well!

The community center was bustling with activity when we got there, and with their small group of volunteers, they made quick work of unloading and sorting Epiphany's gifts. While a list of 600 children seems insurmountable to us, the group there is amazingly organized and efficient, and during the last week before their party, work days and nights to finish filling the bags. No child is left out, because they make sure that extra bags are filled for those who didn't get to register, or are new to the community.

Thank you, Epiphany family, for your kind hearts and lovingly sharing the Light through God's gifts to us.

Peace, Joy, and Love,  
Kathleen Tucker



**A Very Merry Christmas in  
Nora, Virginia**

Lutherans have always loved a good paradox. In a world that would seduce us into either/or camps—us vs. them—we’ve always known that we are saint AND sinner, already AND not yet, justice AND mercy, law AND Gospel people. I get that there are times when we must indeed choose, perhaps in the political realm and especially from a military perspective. Still, false dichotomies drive a wedge into God’s greatest gift of relationship.



Fundamentalism is the weapon of choice in these extreme dichotomies. History shows us over and over that with fundamentalism’s absolutes, in order for me to be right, you must be wrong. In order for me to be saved, you must be damned. Ultimately, in order for me to live, you must die. This is where, once again, we find ourselves in the ancient conflict between Israelis and Palestinians manifesting this time around in the Israel-Hamas war.

The brazen and brutally ruthless recent sneak attack on innocent Israeli and other citizens by Hamas is unthinkable, unacceptable, and we appropriately denounce it thoroughly. That much most people in the international community, including many, if not most, Palestinians, seem to agree on. One could hardly expect no retaliation for such atrocity. But anything beyond these statements hinting at not just pulling drowning folks out of the river but going upstream to see if you can help them from falling in evokes visceral reactions from religious as well as political pundits. We have received more negative communication than ever before over what our ELCA presiding bishop said early on about this conflict. The most common accusation tying all those contacts together is one word: antisemitic. Lutherans are antisemitic, folks said, for even hinting that there might have been any systemic persecution or abuse of the Palestinians that—while not excusing the actions of Hamas (nothing could)—might explain some of the realities contributing to desperate measures by victims of Israeli settlements, occupation, walls, sanctions, etc. In other words, in a world that in grief, fear, and anger seems bent on choosing “We stand with Israel” or “We support the Palestinians,” we dare to consider *both/and* in terms of support and *neither/nor* in terms of Zionist or jihadist platforms.

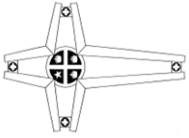
Israel maintains, not incorrectly, that Hamas is a terrorist group, that Hamas is, even so, the official government of Gaza, that Hamas hides in tunnels under hospitals and refugee camps thereby putting fellow innocent Palestinians in danger, and so on. So complicated. So tragic. This is where I think—perhaps strangely at first glance—of Eve, the mother of Cain and Abel, near the very beginning of scripture’s narrative about the challenge of human interaction and relationship. Abel’s offering was pleasing to God, but Cain’s wasn’t, so Cain killed his brother Abel. Aren’t you just certain that while Eve grieved her murdered son, she also grieved her murderer son who was then banished? And that the Father of the so-called Prodigal Son grieved not only his wayward and squandering son but also his self-righteous son who refused to celebrate? My point is that life and relationships are complicated. Like the social media meme simply yet poignantly states, it’s entirely possible to be heartbroken for more than one group embroiled in brokenness and conflict. While consequences are real and unavoidable, humanly speaking, we long for and cling to the ultimate promise of reconciliation.

I’m surely no expert on this conflict in the Holy Land that is thousands of years old. But in 1990 I read a book that helped open up my understanding of that conflict from the point of view of the Palestinians. The book was called *Blood Brothers* by Elias Chacour. He spoke to the NC Synod group on our 2018 trip to the Holy Land, along with Mitri Raheb and others. They are Palestinian Christians, and Raheb is a Lutheran pastor. [Augusta Victoria Hospital](#) is our Lutheran World Federation hospital serving Palestinians in the Holy Land and funded, in part, by the U.S. Government. Whatever else I might say here, I need to assure you that not all Palestinians, not even most Palestinians, are terrorists. Likewise, as evidenced by increasing protests among Israelis prior to this current war, not all Israelis agree with the settlements and occupation of Palestine. And neither does international law that established both the nation of Israel and the Palestinian territories in 1948.

Like Hawkeye reminded Father Mulcahy during a MASH episode, war is worse than hell. When Fr. Mulcahy asked why, Hawkeye asked, “Who goes to hell?” “The wicked,” said the priest. Hawkeye went on to explain that in war that’s not how it is. The innocent suffer the most, not the wicked, at the whims of the relatively few powerful in government, military, and economic terms. For the life of me, as horrific as it is to fathom what Hamas did and is doing, it doesn’t seem that killing and destroying and displacing and annihilating tens if not hundreds of thousands more innocent people will somehow bring an end to this conflict. More violence will beget more violence, history has taught us. I, therefore, join the voices calling and praying for a ceasefire and an upcoming Advent-renewed focus on the Jew who comes among us as the one who will fulfill the ancient prophecies of our swords beat into ploughshares and our spears into pruning hooks for all nations, the Prince of Peace who taught us, “You have heard it said, an eye for an eye, but I say to you, ‘Love your enemies...’”

Lord, have mercy.

Walking with you,  
Tim Smith, NC Synod Bishop



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Every Sunday 9 am Adult Encounter: Faith 9 am Kids Encounter: Faith 9 am Youth E.F. (1st & 3rd) 9:30 am Backpack Prep 10am Worship	1 New Year's Day  <b>Office &amp; EECC Closed</b>	2  9 10 am Mary-Martha Cir. (FH) 5-8 pm CC Team Mtgs. (CR, AL, FH) 7 pm Dorothy Circle	3 10 am EECC Chapel 3 pm Staff	4  11 11:30 am Nora Deal Cir.	5  12	6  13
7 <b>Epiphany/Intent to Give</b> 9 am Youth Encounter: Faith AW International Potluck Good Gifts due	8 7 pm Executive Comm.	9 16 Annual Reports Due 6 pm Handbells	10 10 am EECC Chapel 11 am CC Zoom Noon Staff Lunch 6 pm Choir	18 6 pm Management	19  20 10 am Epiphany Quilters (FH)	27  26 7 pm Epiphany Readers
14 <b>Celebration Sunday</b> 9 am Youth Encounter: Faith 5-7 pm Movie Night (FH)	15 <b>MLK, Jr. Day</b>  <b>Office Closed</b>  7 pm Congregation Council	22 5-8:30 pm CC Team Meetings 6 pm EECC Committee	17 10 am EECC Ch. (FH) 1:30 pm Widows Might 3 pm Staff 6 pm Choir	25 7 pm Epiphany Readers	26  27	31 10 am EECC Ch. 3 pm Staff 6 pm Choir
21  28 <b>After Worship Annual Meeting (FH)</b>	22 5-8:30 pm CC Team Meetings 6 pm EECC Committee	23 11 am Bible Study (AL) 6 pm LSM 6 pm Handbells	24 10 am EECC Ch. 3 pm Staff 6 pm Choir	29  30 11 am Bible Study (AL) 6 pm LSM 6 pm Handbells	30  31 10 am EECC Ch. 3 pm Staff 6 pm Choir	31  30 11 am Bible Study (AL) 6 pm LSM 6 pm Handbells