

Living Waters News
February 2023

P.O. Box 2230
Cherokee, NC 28719
Church Phone: 828-497-3730
Pastor Phone: 918-868-4166



Church: lwcherokee@frontier.com
Newsletter: lwnewsletter@ymail.com
Pastor email: prjack@frontier.com
Pantry Phone: 828-788-6455

Greetings from the rainy mountains of Western North Carolina.

In the name of Jesus Christ, peace be with you.

“And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with who I am well pleased.” Matthew 3: 16,17

During our time after Epiphany, we will hear about the baptism of Jesus, his presentation at the temple, and his transfiguration. We will also hear about how he begins his public ministry, how he calls his disciple, and we will also hear his teachings and his preachings. All of this is about the Epiphany season.

For many pastors, the Sacrament of Baptism is quite special, it assures us of the love of God, it's the beginning of new life for the person who has been baptized. The feeling of the Holy Spirit being present, surrounding us with a feeling that Jesus felt when he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove.

What a holy moment that must have been for Jesus, hearing the voice which assures him that indeed he is the Son of God, with whom God is well pleased.

Let us always remember that we are affirmed, validated, and chosen children of God through our own baptism.

A statement made by one of our former presiding bishop of the ELCA has always stuck in my mind: he said, “Do not let the waters of our baptism become stagnant.” It is through our baptism that we are called to be disciples of Christ, and to remain proactive in our Christian faith, may we ever remain diligent on our journey through life. May each of us remain faithful followers of Christ, and abide by his teachings, living in a relationship with Christ and one another; loving, forgiving and trusting in God's Beloved Son.

May the peace of our Lord and Savior strengthen you in the time ahead. Amen

“Each of us was given grace according to the measure of God.” Ephesians 4:7

Pastor Jack



You Are Invited!

We invite you to come and visit us anytime you are in our area or to plan a mission trip to the Cherokee Indian Reservation and join us for Worship. At Living Waters we honor our culture and Native Traditions as well as our Lutheran Theology. We begin our Worship Service by smudging to cleanse our hearts and minds and prepare us for worship. We open our worship service using the hand drum and singing the Cherokee Morning song. Living Waters is blessed to have Partners in Ministry who support us through financial giving, Spiritual support, and visits.

If you would like to become a Partner in Ministry with Living Waters we invite you to contact

Pastor Jack at prjack@frontier.com

St. Francis' quote, "Preach the gospel at all times and when necessary, use words."



Women's Group Officers

Dorine George – President
Debra Uhler – Vice President
Josephine Teesateskie – Treasurer
Lisa Russell – Secretary
For more information, please contact
Any women's group member.



Secret Sisters!

For all the ladies who have signed up to be a Secret Sister please remember to see Jo Jo about the items your sister may like. Again this year we remind everyone to try and do at least one small gesture every month to encourage your secret sister. We will begin SS surprises in February.



REMINDER

Please remember to dump your cups before you put them in the trash cans. Adults please help our little ones learn to dump their cups.



Living Waters Leadership Meeting February 12th after service

Please bring a dish to pass at the potluck.



Women's Group Craft Project

We will be making
Sock Gnome's
after church on

Sunday February 5th.

If you would like to participate please bring a solid color sock and a brightly colored sock. All other materials will be provided.

We will have finger foods to enjoy while we are working. Please bring a dish to pass.



Women's Group Helpers

Food Prep- Lisa & Debra
Clean UP – Shelly & Annie
Dishes – Le & Dorine
Bus Person – Sally & Wynonna
Tables – Church Men
Drinks and Ice - Alex
Floaters – JoJo & Dean
Iceman- Bugs

The life you touch for good or ill will touch another life, and that in turn another, until who knows where it stops or in what far place and time your touch will be felt. Our lives are linked together. No man is an island.

Frederick Buechner



Thank you to all who helped take down the Christmas Decorations. We appreciate you.



March 5, 2023

Danielle DeNise our DEM from the NC Synod Offices will be visiting with us. Please plan to come and show your support.



Congratulations to Annie Durant and Zach Cooksey on their recent engagement. They are planning their wedding for October.

Women's Group February Project

Tsali Care Nursing Center

The women's group will be collecting items during the month of February for BINGO prizes to be delivered to Tsali Care. Some items you might consider:

Word Search puzzle books, shampoo, lotion, small stuffed animal, lap blanket, socks, pens and paper, blank greeting cards (stamps), tumbler, slippers,



If God didn't send Jesus into the world to condemn it, I doubt he sent you to.



Check us out On Facebook

Living Waters Cherokee NC

Thank you to Iann for volunteering to help with the Administration duties for this page.

Living Waters
Newsletter by Email

If you or someone you know would like to receive the Living Waters Monthly Newsletter by Email please email your name and address too:
lwnewsletter@ymail.com



Living Waters Food Pantry has been testing out a new program since Nov. This new endeavor is called the Brown Bag Program. Twice a month we prepare Brown Bags full of nutritious food for seniors in need of supplemental food. We take these bags to area agencies who then distribute the bags to seniors who have mobility, financial or transportation difficulties. This vital food ensures they don't miss meals and receive the nutritious food they need to stay healthy. We would like to thank all those who are helping to make this program a success.



Living Waters Food Pantry
January 4th & 5th
18th & 19th

If you or your organization would like to have a food drive for LW food pantry please contact Lisa or Pastor Jack.

If you would like to contribute financially to the Living Waters Food Pantry please designate your check in the memo line to Food Pantry.



245 I Love You!

Living Waters Food Pantry/Resource Center was recently gifted with funds to do some remodeling projects around the pantry. As we begin to tackle these projects we ask for your patience. We will be building new shelves, painting, closing in the ceiling and working on storage areas. Thank you to Lisa and Le for the new shelving and organization of the pantry kitchen.



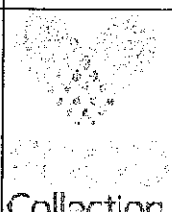
Current wish list of the
Food Pantry and Resource Center
Canned Meat, Cereal, Pop Tarts,
Dish Soap, Shampoo, Deoderant, Bar Soap



Thank you to Allison McVann for donating furniture for a young family preparing to move into their first home. We appreciate your help.



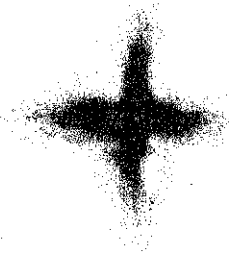
Thank you to John & Debra Davis for donating over 1000 pairs of brand new sandals to the Resource Center. Thanks to their generous donation we were able to share with Teen Challenge, The Children's Home, No Wrong Door and some other agencies helping those in need.



Thank you to Digger and Shadow for helping Lisa retrieve over 150 cases of drinks and 26 cases of potato chips that we were able to share with our clients. Thank you to Uncle Joe for helping Lisa retrieve enough personal hygiene items to serve 170 families.

I was ask recently why I personally purchase items from those who come to us for help when I really don't need or even sometimes want what they are selling. The answer is simple. Those who come are not asking for a hand out, they are not trying to take advantage of us, they are trying to make their own way. They want to feel like they are capable of taking care of themselves. So yes, I do buy things I don't want or need sometimes. I want those who are coming to know that I believe in them. I want to do my part to help them in such a small way. As a friend said, "you are offering Charity wrapped in Dignity" and that is so valuable.

Lakota leader, Crazy Horse, was once quoted as "This Jesus that the Christians speak of, he sounds like a good man. Why don't they follow his teachings?"



Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday will be on February 22nd this year.

On Ash Wednesday, as Lent begins, worshipers' foreheads are often marked with ashes in the sign of the cross. The ashes traditionally come from burning palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday. In Old Testament days, ashes were a sign of mourning and repentance. Today, some worshipers wipe off the ashes before leaving church, to symbolize being cleansed from sin by Jesus' death; others wear the ashes the rest of the day, carrying the cross of Christ into the world. The speaking of Genesis 3:19 often accompanies the placement of ashes:

"You are dust, and to dust you shall return."



Many stories about the origin of Valentine's Day have come down through the centuries. There's no definitive story, but most revolve around the imprisonment of Valentinus (St. Valentine) for his disregard of Roman laws.

Many legends are also associated with Valentine's Day. For example, because birds seemed to arrive and mate in some countries in mid-February, human couples came to be called "love birds."

In 1667, the first recorded Valentine card was printed. Today, people will give their sweethearts countless millions of cards and acres of heart-shaped boxes filled with candy. But why wait for Valentine's Day to share love with others?

Remember Jesus' words in John 13:34 (NRSV):

"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another."



We extend a special Welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, widowed, gay, confused, filthy rich, comfortable or dirt poor. We extend a special Welcome to wailing babies and excited toddlers. We welcome you whether you can sing like Pavarotti or just growl quietly to yourself.

You're welcome here if you're just browsing, 'just woke up or just got out of prison. We don't care if you're more Christian than the Archbishop of Canterbury, or haven't been to church since Christmas ten years ago. We extend a special welcome to those who are over 60 but not grown up yet, and to teenagers who are growing up too fast. We welcome keep-fit-moms, football dads, starving artists, tree-huggers, latte-sippers, vegetarians, junk food eaters. We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted. We welcome you if you're having problems, are down in the dumps or don't like "organized religion." We welcome those who think the earth is flat, work too hard, don't work, can't spell, or are here because granny is visiting and wanted to come to Church. We welcome those who are inked, pierced, both and neither. We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down their throats as kids or got lost in the mountains and would up here by mistake. We welcome tourists, seekers, doubters..... and YOU!

For whatever the reason -- We are glad you are here!!

Go to church even if you aren't in charge.
If you're on staff but don't have an assignment, go and be with the people. Worship with your family.
Sit with a visitor. Our greatest ministry is done between the pew and the platform.

When you think of faith as a war to be won, you will see people as enemies to be conquered.
When you think of faith as a world to be explored, you will see people as neighbors to be loved.

The intentions that have the most valuable impact are not the ones endlessly honed to perfection.
They're the ones you actually carry out.



I recently heard that only 5% of Native Americans identify as Evangelical Christians. When one considers that some Native Americans have been exposed to Christianity since the mid 1600's, that is a startlingly low percentage. Starting a church on a reservation with the same mindset by which one would start a church in Hickory, NC will undoubtedly establish significant barriers before the launching of the initial Sunday service!

The 5% reception rate communicates one thing quite loudly; Whatever has been practiced for 300 years has not worked very well. Endeavors to "reach" native Americans have failed to accomplish the task. Well-meaning missionaries have sought to engage Native Americans for three centuries.

When missions is driven by assimilation goals that are culturally, linguistically and historically insensitive it is highly unlikely that anything close to an indigenous church will result. This is why, perhaps, the term **mis-reached** is the most accurate term to describe the attempts to reach Native Americans.

At Living Waters we approach ministry as a means to enhance the lives and culture of our people as opposed to replacing and destroying it. If we don't live like Jesus lived, love like Jesus loved, and give like Jesus gave, then we have not earned the right to speak into the hearts of our people. For this reason, the majority of the ministry we do at Living Waters is under the radar. While anyone who chooses to follow Jesus will need to make concessions in certain areas of their lives, we understand that if Native people cannot envision Christianity fitting into their lives, they will never listen to it from our mouths. Being a part of it, we know our native heritage and what aspects of Christianity will work within it without sacrificing culture. We are proud to be Native people and know that Creator wants us to minister to his people in a way that reaches their hearts.



At Living Waters Food Pantry we make every effort to show God's Love and compassion to those who come to us seeking help. We make attempts to get to know the people and families that come to the pantry. We remind them that through God's Love we are *ALL ONE FAMILY*, we love and care about them.

Recently during a chaotic distribution day due to the weather conditions, change of schedules and many people in need of a "friend", I was Blessed to have the opportunity to witness how our actions and words influence others.

As I have thought about these situations it has impressed upon my heart how each of these people who come to receive food and/or clothing for their families are part of an Amazing Ministry.

A ministry of Love, a ministry of Caring, a ministry of Helping one another, a ministry of Family.

I mentioned this to a friend and was surprised by his reply. He said "the staff at Living Waters Food Pantry has set the standard by which you treat *ALL* who come seeking help. They are part of your family, the family of God. You don't judge, question or condemn, you help in any way you can. You care about them and their families, hug them, comfort them, laugh with them and cry with them, regardless of who they are or where they come from. You expect nothing in return except that they are "nice" to each other and your staff. You have taught those coming to the pantry "how" to love *ALL* people. What you are seeing is a reflection of the way you have treated them."

Each of us are given the opportunity to minister to people we encounter each day through our actions and the way we reflect God's Love for us. Do we *take* these opportunities or do we just go about our daily lives without thought about *WHO* may be watching us? Live your life in a way that others will want to know "why" you are different.

Take the opportunities you are given to show God's Love.

Live richly for the sake of doing it. Experience for yourself the highs and lows, the pains and pleasures, the wonders, joys, disappointments and satisfactions.

Embrace every opportunity to go, to learn, to see and hear and know and connect.

Give courage and action to your curiosity and let it push you to new levels of participation.

Refuse to enslave yourself to what other people think. Set forth to fulfill the robust potential that lives within you, not to impress but to magnify life's richness.

Respect your fears, listen to what they have to say, but don't let them prevent you from living fully.

Treasure all you already know and always be eager to experience more.

Go beyond just thinking about it, talking about it, imagining it and planning it.
Now is your time to step forward and get it done.

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Deadline to direct your dollars is March 31, 2015
Through Thrivent Choice Dollars, eligible benefit members of Thrivent Financial for Lutheran can recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes part of its charitable funds each year by directing their designated Choice Dollars.

Choice Dollars Accumulate In Your Account!

Even if you already allocated Choice Dollars in 2014, your Dollars are not automatically allocated for the rest of the year. Also, you may have additional Dollars in your account since they accumulate throughout the year.

To designate your Choice Dollars for Living Waters Lutheran Church for the first time or again this year, the directions are printed in this newsletter to walk you through the process. Keep in mind that there may be more than one eligible person in your household and each person needs to specifically direct his or her own Choice Dollars.

Thank you to those who have directed your Choice Dollars to helping the ministry at Living Waters.

How to Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars

Online

1. Visit Thrivent.com/thrivent.choice
2. Scroll down and click the "Get Started" button in the "How do I Direct My Designated Choice Dollars" box
3. Log in and enter your user ID and password
4. Look for your Choice Dollars to direct on the right side of your screen
5. Search for "Living Waters Lutheran Church" in "Cherokee, NC" to be taken right to our listing.
6. Click on "Direct Now" to direct your designated Choice Dollars to benefit Living Waters Lutheran Church.

By Phone

Call 1-800-847-4836 and when prompted, say "Thrivent Choice"

Press 1 to direct Choice Dollars or press 2 to hear the Thrivent Choice program terms and conditions. Please be sure to specify that you want to designate Living Waters Lutheran Church in Cherokee, North Carolina.



Why should we observe Lent?

This 40-day season of repentance and reflection that begins on Ash Wednesday has three important purposes. Lent helps us STOP, LOOK and LISTEN.

We observe Lent because it tells us to STOP and rest awhile — and to stop sinning. Lent tells us to LOOK inward for an honest self-examination, to look upward to see the cross of Jesus with healing and love, and to look forward to the hope of the Resurrection. And we observe Lent because it tells us to LISTEN — to the voice of God, the words of Christ and the movement of the Holy Spirit.

STOP, LOOK and LISTEN! These commands that are so crucial for travel safety are also important for our journey through Lent.

ONE

ONE tree can start a forest;
ONE smile can begin a friendship;
ONE hand can lift a soul;
ONE word can frame a goal;
ONE candle can wipe out darkness;
ONE laugh can conquer gloom;
ONE hope can raise your spirits;
ONE touch can show you care;
ONE life can make the difference;
Be that ONE today.



Our Condolences to the family of Ken Phillips.

Ken was the founder and President of the Native American Heritage Museum in Corbin, KY.

God's response to Lazarus' death was not, "He's in a better place," and it wasn't, "Don't worry; you'll see him again." His response was to weep. That's it. Jesus wept. A Christlike response to someone's grief is to grieve with them. NO platitudes or "stoic strength." Just weep.

Living Waters Food Pantry/ Resource Center
2022 Year End Report

Household Served	<u>10,634</u>		
Individuals Served	<u>33,874</u>		
		<u>TEFAP distributed</u>	
		Swain	56,899.10
		Jackson	29,051.44
		<u>Total</u>	<u>85,950.54</u>
Pounds of Kid Packs Distributed	25,697.88		
Pounds of Donated Foods Distributed	14,397.00		
Pounds of Salvaged Food Distributed	6817.27		
Pounds of Non-Food Items Distributed	11,285.00		
Pounds from MANNA Distributed	227,603.10		
<u>Total Pounds Distributed</u>	<u>285,800.25</u>		
Purchased From MANNA	\$13,024.57		
Purchased from other sources	\$28,975.38		
Delivery Charges	\$4,395.02		
<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>\$46,394.97</u>		
Donations	\$30,206.64		
Synod gift	\$10,000.00		
MANNA – Reimbursements, etc	\$613.47		
<u>Total Donations</u>	<u>\$40,820.11</u>		
		<u>Difference</u>	<u>-\$5,574.86</u>

We have calculated a food box given at distribution if purchased would cost approx. \$500.00. Each household receives non-perishable foods, frozen foods/meats, fresh produce, refrigerated items, hygiene items, bread/bakery items and could include diapers, depends, cat or dog food.

Based on the figures from our accounting data:

We have taken the expense of \$46,394.97 and turned it into \$5,317,000.00 worth of items that have been given to households in our community.

We have served **10,634 households at a cost to us of \$4.50 per household.**

Now, I know it is frequently advised to make yourself irreplaceable at your work. To be irreplaceable means your company will do almost anything to keep you because it would be next to impossible to find someone who could do all that you do with the same level of expertise. While that may be the rule for the corporate world, I argue that ministry should be different. One essential reason is that the base motivations are fundamentally different. When you make yourself irreplaceable in your employment, your main focus is *you*—*you* want to do good work so the company sees *your* value and becomes so averse to losing *you* that they are willing to make accommodations just to keep *you*.

In ministry, your main concern should not be *you*; it should be *servicing others for the cause of Christ*. Making ministry your greater concern looks like training others to do the tasks you do and giving them the freedom to take ownership. It looks like wanting to see the ministry succeed whether you are in leadership or not. It looks like wanting to see the longevity of the ministry more than you want to be remembered.

It is a natural human desire to want to be irreplaceable, and it would be easy to allow this desire to drive your motivation for ministry, but nobody ever said ministry was easy. In fact, they said it was difficult. But that is what I prayed for.

I prayed that the ministry would not only continue after I am gone, but that it would become better than it ever was when I was leading it.

Sometimes it's good and necessary to respond.
Other times it's more appropriate to let things be.

Wisdom is knowing the difference.

Strength is abiding by that wisdom.

Will your response actually contribute value?

Or is the primary reason for it to prove a point?

If you're too eager to respond, too quick to react, you can get drawn into situations where no one wins. Is that really how you wish to spend any of the priceless moments of your life?

When you can jump in and make a useful contribution, by all means do so.

But when all you have to offer is an angry reaction,
you'll soon come to thank yourself for having the restraint to leave it alone.

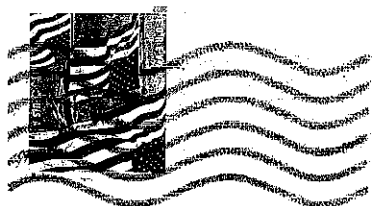
Just because you can respond, just because you want to react, doesn't mean it's the best choice.

Consider the actual value of what you can offer before you put it forward.



47401-551000

St. Thomas Lutheran Church
3800 E 3rd Street
Bloomington, IN 47401



GREENVILLE SC 296
9 FEB 2023 PM 1 L

LWLG
? O. Box 2230
Cherokee, NC 28719