

THE GRAPEVINE

THE NEWSLETTER OF OUR SAVIOUR LUTHERAN CHURCH

January 2026 **In This Issue**

Birthdays/Anniversaries.....	7
Commemoration Profiles	4
OSLC News.....	2,3
Prayer Requests.....	7
WELCA.....	5,6



The Grapevine is a monthly newsletter published by the staff & members of Our Saviour Lutheran Church
1500 Sunset Blvd
West Columbia, SC 29169
Phone: 803.794.8180
E-mail: oslc1957@sc.rr.com
Website: www.oursaviour.net

Reverend Joanna Gragg, Pastor
Cell: 864-992-1246
Primary email:
Pastorjoannagragg@gmail.com
Church email:
oslcpastor@sc.rr.com

Melodie Capole—Handbell Director

Epiphany: Noticing God at Work Among Us

January brings us into the season of Epiphany. Epiphany is a season for noticing how God is revealed in everyday life. During these weeks of the church year, we are invited to learn how to watch for God's presence in ordinary places and familiar rhythms.

During Epiphany, we hear scripture that reveals who Jesus is and, through him, who God is. At the Jordan River, Jesus is baptized, and a voice from heaven names him beloved. In Galilee, Jesus sits at table with tax collectors and sinners, where meals become places of belonging. Through healing, teaching, and calling disciples along the road, God is made known in daily life.

In 2025, our congregation lived into this way of God being made known in concrete and visible ways.

One clear example was our first Fall Festival. This was a faithful new way to show up as church right where we are. Neighbors stopped by on their way home from work. Others who pass our building regularly and have always wondered who we are came and experienced welcome and joy. This kind of presence reflects a God who meets people in motion and creates community through open space and shared delight.

We also experienced God's work through partnership. Our connections with St. Katherine's and Saluda River Academy continued to strengthen us and remind us that God often works through shared trust and collaboration. Throughout the year, God's generosity took shape through the Blessing Box and God's Helping Hands. Food was shared. Needs were met. What we receive from God was given for the sake of our neighbors.

(continued on page 2)

This understanding shaped our approach to stewardship in 2025. Stewardship was practiced as a response to God's generosity, rooted in gratitude and care.

In Bible study, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School Day, and our connections with Lutheran Campus Ministries, God's revealing light was present among us. These ministries created space for faith to grow through curiosity, conversation, and relationship. We also shared many moments of joy and celebration around shared meals. Our Christmas dinner was a success, with delicious food and prizes that added to the fun. We are grateful to Pastor Jackie Utley for performing, to the Gragg boys band for leading us in music, and to the Lutheran Men and Women who planned and provided this Christmas delight. These gatherings remind us that God's presence is often revealed in many ways, including a good, long sit-down dinner and time shared together. We are deeply thankful for this life we share.

As we look ahead to 2026, Epiphany invites us to continue these patterns of faithfulness. Another Fall Festival is already on the horizon. Ministries of care, generosity, and learning continue to grow, and partnerships remain central to how we live our calling.

Epiphany teaches us that God's light appears again and again in our life together. As we begin a new year, we do so with gratitude for what we have seen and with trust that God will continue to be revealed through open hands, open doors, and a community shaped by grace.

Peace in this season of light,
Pastor Joanna

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN JANUARY: PRACTICING ENGAGED LISTENING

As part of this Epiphany practice of noticing, you will be invited, though not required, to use an engaged listening practice during the sermons. This practice invites us to listen closely and attentively, trusting that God meets us in real words, real questions, and shared reflection.

In January, you will see simple listening sheets available in worship. They are offered as a tool to help you notice what you are hearing as the sermon unfolds. You are welcome to try this holy experiment as a way to slow down, stay curious, and trust that God is at work as we listen together.

YOUNG ADULTS MINISTRY SERVES DINNER FOR GAMECOCK LUTHERANS

This fall, our Young Adults cooked and served a full dinner for the Gamecock Lutherans at USC. What a joyful connection between our congregation and the campus community! We are grateful for Melodie Capole and Tyler Cox from OSLC for coordinating the meal, for Pastor Jesse CK, and for all the hungry students who shared in the meal. It is good to be part of a wider Lutheran family and we give thanks for the ways these relationships keep growing.

CONSTITUTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES BOOKLET

The 2025 Constitution Policies and Procedures Book may be picked up from the basket on the table in the Cameron Hall. Please take no more than you need.

OSLC NEWS & NOTES



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS December 2025

- Members of the Congregational Council for 2026 are: Sylvia Ford, Jim Garner, Pam Hanfland, Wayne Lybrand, Gail Marcum, Beverly Nivens, Steve Nivens, and Mark Satterwhite.
- Officers for 2026 are Pam Hanfland, President; Mark Satterwhite, Vice President; Meredith Cleland, Treasurer; and Charles Nicholson, Secretary.
- Team leaders or co-leaders are Jim Garner and Steve Nivens for Property, Mark Satterwhite and Steve Nivens for Fellowship, Beverly Nivens and Charles Nicholson for Worship, Wayne Lybrand for Stewardship, Gail Marcum and Beverly Nivens for Education, Gail Marcum for Service and Charitable Works, Pam Hanfland for Communication, Sylvia Ford for Memorials and Gifts, Pastor Joanna for Evangelism, and Melodie Capole and Beverly Niven for Young Adult Ministry.

GOD'S HELPING HANDS

God's Helping Hands current needs are: fruit cups, Vienna sausages, noodles, cream of mushroom, cream of chicken, and cream of potato soups, jello, cooking oil (no olive oil), crackers, cookies, canned tomatoes, canned beans, and Macaroni & Cheese. Please place donations in the designated container in the Cameron Hallway.

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study will resume on Wednesdays, beginning on January 7 at 10:30 am in the Conference Room.

JANUARY MINISTRIES

FLOWERS

Jan 4 Charles & Ruth
Nicholson

11 Dan Hanfland

18 Sandra & Howard
Hughes

25 *Need Volunteer

GREETERS

Steve & Beverly
Nivens

Theresa Garner

Steve & Beverly
Nivens

Linda Hill

WORSHIP

ASSISTANTS

Jan 4 *Need Volunteer

11 Beverly Nivens

18 Marie Lybrand

25 Gail Marcum

LECTORS

Steve Nivens

Pam Hanfland

Marika Lybrand

Linda Hill

JANUARY

USHERS

Chief Steve Nivens
*Need Volunteer

FEBRUARY

Gail Marcum
Steve Nivens

ALTAR GUILD

Steve & Beverly
Nivens

Gail Marcum &
Marie Lybrand

OFFERING PICKUP

Linda Griffith

Gail Marcum

TELLERS

Linda Griffith &
Melba Murphy

*Need Volunteers

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Steve Nivens

Steve Nivens

AVERAGE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

December 2025

WORSHIP—47

COMMEMORATION PROFILES

Ruth Nicholson

The Lutheran Church, as part of its worship, celebrates the lives of notable Christians of the past. Our hymnal provides a calendar (pp. 15–17) for us to follow which recognizes these individuals on the anniversary of their deaths.



COMMEMORATION PROFILES

January 15 Martin Luther King, Jr. Renewer of society, martyr (1929-1968)

Son of a Baptist minister in Atlanta, Georgia, Martin Luther King, Jr., earned degrees in sociology, religious studies and philosophy. After a pastorate in Montgomery, Alabama, King became co-pastor with his father at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. He studied and accepted wholeheartedly Mahatma Gandhi's doctrine of nonviolent civil disobedience. It was this idea that Dr. King took with him as he founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and led a multitude of marches and demonstrations on behalf of civil rights and against both social and economic discrimination. He is remembered for those efforts and for his eloquent speeches, such as the "I Have a Dream" speech of 1963. Dr. King was assassinated during a visit to assist striking sanitation workers in Memphis, Tennessee. In 1983, his birthday (January 15) was declared a national holiday.

January 21 Agnes, martyr (291- ca. 304)

Few facts about Agnes' life can be confirmed. Tradition has it that she was born into a noble Roman family whose members were Christians. During the reign of Emperor Diocletian, it is said, Agnes refused an offer of marriage from a Roman official, knowing full well that she might endanger herself by doing so. At the age of thirteen, Agnes was put to death by Roman authorities. She is considered the patron saint of young women.

January 28

Thomas Aquinas, teacher (1224-1274)

Born into a noble family, Thomas received his early education from Benedictine monks. At the University of Naples, however, he became convinced that he should join the Dominicans, an order of mendicant friars. His family was so opposed to this that they held him prisoner for fifteen months before relenting. Thomas' studies led him to become a philosopher and theologian who believed that Christian revelation and human knowledge come from the same divine source and are therefore not in conflict with each other. Within his short lifetime, Aquinas accomplished much as a teacher and a writer of theological works. In addition, he wrote hymns, one of which is ELW 476 ("Thee We Adore, O Savior"). The church canonized Aquinas in 1323.



ELCA PRESS RELEASES



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

- 12/09 A Message on the Tenth Anniversary of the Paris Climate Accords
- 12/14 Bishop Curry Issues Statement on Terror Attack on Jewish Community in Australia
- 12/14 Bishop Curry Issues Statement on Brown University Shooting

2026 OFFICERS

President—Marie Lybrand (Lydia)
803-397-0503
Vice-Pres—Linda Griffith (Rebekah)
803-920-3975
Treasurer—Ann Satterwhite (Lydia)
803-530-6249
Secretary—Caroline Raszewski (Lydia)
803-231-8642

Happy New Year

Another year begins and WELCA is off and running with plans for the year. Marie is recuperating from her fall over the Thanksgiving Holidays and as you read this, some are still traveling over the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Circles are requested to send articles to the Vice President for publication in The Grapevine before the last Monday of the month with a copy forwarded to the President for review. Information is normally due to the church secretary on the following Tuesday morning.

The Cameron and Rebekah Circles wish to thank everyone for their presence and support of the WELCA Christmas Social with LMM of OS. We sold 50 tickets with 100% turnout from ticket sales. That's awesome! A big shoutout to Patsy Horton for all the decorations and door prizes with assistance from Linda Griffith who set up everything with Tim's Catering Service for the delicious meal. Thank you to Pastor Jackie Utley for her rendition of Rahab in the Bible and thank you Pastor Nathan and David for leading us in our Christmas song fest. Last, but not least, thanks to our circle members and LMM who helped make this event successful. Happy New Year to you all!

Notice from Hospitality Volunteers: If your name is listed on the Hospitality list in the 2025 Church Ministry Directory (Page 19) and you wish to have it removed, please contact Sandra Hughes (803-622-6191) before December 31st.

Committee Assignments for 2026

Cameron (Growth) Isma Boland, Leader—Committee continues to keep their same duties yearly which encompasses the education function of Women of the ELCA, coordinates the Women of the ELCA Sunday, nursery monitors, children's activity bags, orders spiritual gifts for confirmands and baptisms and will continue to coordinate the decorating for Christmas in the Fellowship Hall.

Lydia (Community) Gail Marcum, Leader & Beverly Nivens, Recorder—Committee is responsible for the Easter Egg Hunt and a Social event. Circle meets the 2nd Monday in a member's home at 6 PM.

Rebekah (Action/Sunshine) Linda Hill, Leader, & Linda Griffith, Recorder—Committee is responsible for planning and implementing a Bible Study/Retreat, service project, and coordinating the Hospitality Committee Group beginning February 1 with Sandra Hughes serving as the primary contact with both Lindas as back-up. She will continue to send cards to congregation members and others as needed during 2026. This is an added responsibility to this circle since it is volunteer! Please call Sandra when cards need to be sent for illness, etc. Rebekah continues to meet with the Cameron Circle on the first Monday at 10:30 AM at the church

If circles are looking for program, Bible Study, or event/retreat suggestions or just information about SCWELCA, you might want to check out our SWO, ELCA, or Synod sites: www.scwelca.com

(The Ripple, retreats, convention, circle news)

Other Lutheran Camp Retreat Offerings for Adults:

Novusway - <https://novusway.org/>

Lutherock - <https://lutheridge.org/>

Luther Springs - <https://lutheridge.org/>

Lutheranch - <https://luthersprings.org/>

www.womenoftheelca.org

(triennial nominations/elections, business, Offerings and so much more!)

www.boldcafe.org

(on-line magazine & podcast)

www.scsynod.org

(staff, calendar, stewardship and subscribe to the magazine and weekly E-News for current happenings and information) Check it all out also on Facebook and Instagram!

(Information continued..)

2026 OSLC-WELCA Calendar of Events

January 11 (Sunday) Installation of Council, LMM & WELCA Officers.

January 18 (Sunday) 3 PM Executive Meeting/
Conference Room (Officers w/Circle leaders/
recorders) Opening Prayer: Marie Lybrand

March (TBA) World Day of Prayer

March 6-7 (Friday-Saturday) SCWELCA Retreat @
Camp Kinard Retreat Center

March 13-15 "*Wild Women Retreat*" at Lutheridge
With Pastor Joanna Gragg as leader.

March 15 (Sunday) Saxe Gotha Conference Meeting-
Faith/West Columbia.

April (TBA) OSLC-Newberry College Nursing
Scholarship Donations (Cameron Circle)

April 26 (Sunday) Joint Circle Meeting
Devotion/Prayer-Lydia
Refreshments-Cameron/Rebekah)

May 29-31 (Friday-Sunday) SCWELCA Retreat @
Isle of Palms Retreat Center

June 19-20 (Friday-Saturday) SCWELCA Convention/
Newberry-Lutheran Church of the Redeemer

July 16-19 Triennial Gathering in Des Moines, Iowa.

September 20 (Sunday) Saxe Gotha Conference
Meeting-Mt. Tabor/West Columbia

October 18 (Sunday) 3 PM Joint Circle Meeting
(Officer nominations/election)
Devotion/Prayer-Rebekah
Refreshments-Lydia

December (TBA) WELCA Executive Meeting
(circle leaders w/unit officers)
Opening Prayer: Gail Marcum



Pictures from the
WELCA/LMM Christmas Social

PRAYER REQUESTS

Those listed below have special prayers needs at this time. We keep the entire congregation in our prayers at all times, but sometimes special prayers are needed. If your name is on the list or you have added someone's name and they no longer need to be on the list, please contact the church secretary so the name can be removed.

The family of Paula Amick (sister of Beth Cleland)

Gary Black

Greg Chapman

Jeannie Chapman

Katie Doble

Anne Moye

The family of Carolyn Roof

Steve Rucker

Herman & Elizabeth Shealy

Marie Shealy

Debbie Chapman Tidmarsh (daughter of Jeannie Chapman)

DeLeon & Jane Wallace

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Beth Boland	1/02
Mark Satterwhite	1/05
Linda Griffith	1/10
Isma Boland	1/12
Albert Drafts	1/22
Alivia Havens	1/25
Greg Chapman	1/29

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Charles & Ruth Nicholson 1/04

Please Note: if there are any errors or omissions in birthdays or anniversaries, notify the church office. We want to make sure our records are correct.

GRAPEVINE ARTICLES

If you have articles, reports and/or pictures that you or your group would like printed in the next Grapevine, please send them to the Church Office by Monday, January 26.



Christmas Eve Worship



Entertainment at our December Community Lunch was provided by choirs from SRAA and from St. Katherine's Academy