A church dedicated to the glory of God
in the service of humanity through worship,
congregational care, faith formation
and the stewardship of life.

THE WORSHIP OF GOD
THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT; RICE BOWL; JOINING SUNDAY
6 December 2015 at Eleven o’clock in the morning

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS BEFORE GOD
The Music in Preparation for Worship is intended to draw the people from the outside world into the presence of God. You are invited to remain silent during this time.

Please silence your cell phone.

THE SILENT MEDITATION
We, this people, on a small and lonely planet
Traveling through casual space
Past aloof stars, across the way of indifferent suns
To a destination where all signs tell us
It is possible and imperative that we learn
A brave and startling truth

And when we come to it
To the day of peacemaking
When we release our fingers
From fists of hostility
And allow the pure air to cool our palms...

We, this people, on this small and drifting planet
Whose hands can strike with such abandon
That in a twinkling, life is sapped from the living
Yet those same hands can touch with such healing, irresistible tenderness
That the haughty neck is happy to bow
And the proud back is glad to bend
Out of such chaos, of such contradiction
We learn that we are neither devils nor divines . . .

When we come to it
We must confess that we are the possible
We are the miraculous, the true wonder of this world
That is when, and only when
We come to it.

Maya Angelou, excerpt from When We Come To It

THE RINGING OF THE ANGELUS BELL
The ringing of the Angelus Bell, a three-fold ringing of three, signifies the presence of the triune God: Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit. In ancient practice it was rung as a noonday prayer calling the whole community to prayers for peace.
THE OPENING VOLUNTARY
“Fantasia on Veni Emmanuel”  Alec Rowley
(1892-1958)

THE CALL TO WORSHIP
Leader:   The Lord be with you.
People:   And also with you.

At this time, everyone is invited to sign the friendship register found at the end of each pew. If you are our guest today, we welcome you especially and ask that you include your address, phone number, and email. If you are interested in learning more about our church, we invite you to note this on the register. Immediately following worship, everyone is invited to the New Member Reception in Heaton Hall.

*THE OPENING SENTENCES
Leader:   A prophet, John, calls to us from the wilderness
People:   calling us to repentance, a new way of being.
Leader:   Let us make straight the paths we now walk and
prepare the way for God’s justice, love and peace.
People:   Prepare we the way of the Lord!

*THE PROCESSION AND OPENING OF THE BIBLE
“Hail to the Lord’s Anointed”

*THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF PEACE
John and Courtenay Monfore
with Emma and Avery

Leader:   We light the second candle of Advent as the candle of Peace,
in memory and in hope of the fulfillment of the prophet’s vision
where “swords will be beat into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks,
and we shall learn war no more.”

(Lighting the Candle of Peace.)

People:   (singing)
O come, Desire of nations, bind
All peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
Fill the whole world with heaven’s peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

+ During the interlude, 3 and 4 year olds will leave with their teachers. They may be picked up in Room 107 after worship.

THE CALL TO CONFESSION

THE SILENT CONFESSION

THE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, Emmanuel, as we prepare for your coming,
some of us are moving through Advent tethered to our unresolved yesterdays.
Our sense of anticipation has been dulled, our expectations exceed reality
and our desires surpass possibility.

God of Peace, forgive us. Grant us patience to seek the true meaning of these days.
Grant us hope to wait for the Messiah even when we cannot hear the angels singing.
Be known to us this day through your healing power, God of Christmas,
as we pray in the name of Jesus the Christ, who was and is and is to come. Amen.
THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

*THE GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

Ancient words of greeting and forgiveness may be used when Passing the Peace to those around you, saying either: “The peace of God be with you” or “The peace of Christ be with you.” The response may be: “And also with you.”

THE WORD OF GOD IS PROCLAIMED AND HEARD

THE HEBREW LESSON

“Every Valley Shall be Exalted” from Messiah  
George Frideric Handel  
(1685-1759)

Todd Geer, tenor

THE GOSPEL LESSONS

Leader:  
for the Word of God in scripture,  
for the Word of God among us,  
for the Word of God within us.

People:  Thanks be to God.

*THE SERMON HYMN

“Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”  
Stuttgart

Number 69

+  As the interlude begins, children in grades TK-5 are invited to go through the door beside the Lectern to join adult teachers. Parents may pick up their children in the Cornwell Gym.

THE SERMON

“The Reverend Ms. Chrissy Tatum Williamson

“In the Way of Peace”

THE TIME FOR SILENT REFLECTION

THE CONGREGATION Responds to God’s Word

THE CHURCH AT PRAYER

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

THE OFFERING

The Loose Plate Missions Offering for December supports the work of Med Assist.
THE ANTHEM

“Creation Will Be at Peace”
In the holy mountain of the Lord all war and strife will cease;
in the holy mountain of the Lord
creation will be at peace.
The wolf will lie down with the lamb,
The cow and bear will feed,
their young will play together;
a little child will lead.
The leopard and goat will graze,
the lion will feed on straw.
They will war no more;
a child will lead them all.

Isaiah 11: 6-9
J. Paul Williams (1937-2010)

THE RICE BOWL
If you wish to help alleviate hunger in the world through the Rice Bowl Offering, come forward and
place your contribution in the basket at the Chancel steps. The Rice Bowl Offering is designated for
Hunger Relief: Loaves and Fishes (local) and Stop Hunger Now (international).

THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

*THE READING OF THE CHURCH COVENANT

See back page.

*THE PRESENTATION OF GIFTS

*THE DOXOLOGY

O Glorious God, to you we bring
All that we are as offering;
Spirit of peace, among us dwell;
Come, Jesus, our Emmanuel. Amen.

(Text: Paula Meador Testerman)

*THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION

THE COMMUNITY DEPARTS FOR MINISTRY

*THE PROCESSION INTO THE WORLD AND CLOSING OF THE BIBLE

“People look East”

Besançon

THE BLESSING AND BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

“Voluntary on Consolation”

David N. Johnson
(1922-1987)

* Those who wish may stand.
+ The ushers will seat those who are waiting.

Following worship, all guests and members are invited
to the New Member Reception in Heaton Hall.
Leading worship today with The Reverend Ms. Chrissy Tatum Williamson, are The Reverend Mr. Barry Zane Metzger, Church Administrator, Mariah B. Currin, Director of New Member Ministry, and Jeff Trenning, member of the congregation.

The Chancel Choir leads worship through music with Frances L. Morrison, Associate Minister of Music and Dr. Matthew Manwarren, Organist.

The acolytes are James Emmanuel, Adam Cranford and Taylor Riley.

The sound technician is Eric Roberts. The webcast technician is John Bambach.

The Deacon of the Week for December 6-12 is Jeanne Steele, jhsteele@carolina.rr.com, 704.365.3816.
THE READINGS FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2015

Luke 3:2-6 (The Inclusive Bible)

In those days, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the Word of God came to John, ben-Zechariah, in the desert. John went through the entire region of the Jordan proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as is written in the words of Isaiah, the prophet:

“A herald’s voice in the desert, crying,
‘Make ready the way of our God;
clear a straight path.
Every valley will be filled,
and every mountain and hill will be leveled.
The twisted paths will be made straight,
and the rough road smooth-
and all humankind will see the salvation of God.’”

Matthew 3:9 (NRSV)

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
Advent Schedule 2015

Sunday, December 6 – Advent II

Worship
11:00 am in the Sanctuary

Carols in the Round
6:30 pm in Heaton Hall

Saturday, December 12

Children’s Christmas Pageant
4:00 - 5:00pm in Heaton Hall

Sunday, December 13 – Advent III

Service of Lessons and Carols
11:00 am Worship in the Sanctuary

Wednesday, December 16

Wonderful Wednesday Family Dinner and Christmas Festival
5:45 pm in Heaton Hall
(Reservations by noon on 12/14 by phone x56 or email runderwood@mpbconline.org)

Saturday, December 19

Taize Prayer Service
5:30-6:15 in the Chapel

Sunday, December 20 – Advent IV

“A Ceremony of Carols” with Choir and Harp
11:00 am Worship in the Sanctuary

Thursday, December 24 – Christmas Eve

Family-Friendly Worship
4:00 pm in the Sanctuary

The Music of Christmas by Harp and Organ
5:30 pm in the Sanctuary

Candlelight Worship with Communion
6:00 pm in the Sanctuary

Nativity Tableau with Communion
7:15 - 8:00 pm “drop in” in the Sanctuary
THE CHURCH IN WITNESS AND MISSION

TODAY

December 6: THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT; JOINING SUNDAY; RICE BOWL;
THE REVEREND CHRISSY TATUM WILLIAMSON PREACHING
8:30 Charlotte Community of Mindfulness Meditation Group, Room 27
9:00 New Member Class Breakfast and Pictures, Cornwell Center Lounge
9:45 Children’s Faith Formation, Preschool and Elementary Wings
9:45 Youth Faith Formation, Youth Hall Wing
9:45 Adult Faith Formation, Education Building and Cornwell Center
10:15 Chancel Choir Warm-Up, Sanctuary
11:00 Worship in the Sanctuary
12:00 New Member Reception, Heaton Hall
12:15 Ministry of Faith Formation, Room 256
2:00 Children’s Pageant Rehearsal, Shalom Hall
4:00 Dress Rehearsal, Carols In the Round, Heaton Hall
5:00 Youth Choir Rehearsal, Berry Hall
6:00 Youth Supper and Fellowship, Youth Hall
6:30 Carols In the Round, Heaton Hall

TODAY IS JOINING SUNDAY. Please plan to stay for the New Member Reception immediately following worship and offer a personal welcome to the newest among us.

CAROLS IN THE ROUND - Christmas comes early to Charlotte with our annual “Carols in the Round” by the Motet Singers. Please plan to join us tonight at 6:30pm in Heaton Hall for an hour of beautiful Christmas carols sung by candlelight. Familiar Christmas hymns will be sung by everyone as we usher in the joy of the season. We hope you will come and bring your friends and family to this free concert.

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY - OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

OUR NEXT WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY WILL BE DECEMBER 16:
• TIME: Dinner begins at 5:45pm; program begin at 6:45pm and end at 7:30pm.
• COST: $6 adult / $3 child 12 and under / $22 immediate family max.
• MENU: Parmesan crusted chicken breast (chicken tenders for children under 12), cranberry apple compote, sauteed green beans, salad bar, followed by cookies and hot cider in Shalom Hall.
• RESERVATIONS: must be received by noon on Monday prior to each Wonderful Wednesday by contacting Rainey Underwood at runderwood@mpbconline.org or 704.334.7232 x56 or register/pay online at https://mpbconline.org/event/wonderful-wednesday-december-16/
• PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS: Old Fashioned Christmas Festival.

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY KITCHEN VOLUNTEERS NEEDED one Tuesday each month, from 3:00-5:00pm, to help prep for the salad bar, which is always a big hit. We also need volunteers one Wednesday each month from 4:30-6:30pm to help with the preparation and clean-up of the evening meal. Please join us for this important ministry at MPBC. Contact Barry Metzger at 704.334.7232 x16 or bmetzger@mpbconline.org.

FAITH FORMATION

ADVENT BOOKLETS are available through December 24. This year's booklet consists of stories of hope, peace, joy and love (the weekly themes of the season) submitted by members of our faith community. You are invited to pick up a printed copy of the booklet in Heaton Hall Foyer, the Narthex, Church Office Reception Area or the Cornwall Center Lobby OR follow the Advent Blog on the Church website. Daily entries from the blog will also be posted on the Church Facebook page. Journey with us this season of Advent!
CONNECTIONS PROPOSALS FOR WINTER/SPRING - Do you have a great idea for a small group? Are you willing to host a potluck meal? Let us know about your idea or your willingness to host (any kind of small group) by completing the proposal form available online (www.mpbconline.org) before December 31. Questions? Contact Pam Johnson, Connections SLG Chair, pbjrhj@gmail.com.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES
STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN 2016 - It is not too late to make a pledge toward our 2016 budget. Turn in your pledge card today or go to www.mpbconline.org and click on Next to make your pledge.

OUTREACH
9TH ANNUAL OATMEAL AND CANNED FOOD DRIVE - now through January 15. We are collecting all types of canned goods and non-perishables, as well as 5-lbs or larger of: oatmeal, flour, grits, and sugar (white or brown). Drop-off locations are The Cornwell Center and Heaton Hall Foyer. Monetary donations to MPBC (please note “Oatmeal Drive 2015/16). Details: Bob Bishop, 980.613.2573 or bobbishopuk@gmail.com.

ROOM IN THE INN (RITI) began last night and continues through the end of March. We open our doors on Saturday evenings and provide shelter for our neighbors who are homeless. We need your help. Please volunteer to: be an overnight host, provide a meal, or drive the church van. You may sign up on our website, www.mpbconline.org, or on the bulletin board in Heaton Hall Foyer. Would you like to be more involved in RITI? Consider being a RITI Captain by helping coordinate one (or more) weekends for our RITI ministry. Contact Cheri Lindblom for details, clindblom@mpbconline.org.

FAMILY PROMISE AT ELIZABETH HOUSE (715 Hawthorne Lane), December 13-17. The families living in transition from homelessness to secure housing need you. Serving opportunities include: Overnight Hosts (Sunday-Thursday) and Dinner Providers (Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday). Cindy Clemens continues to serve as our faithful leader. You may contact her at cclemens@charlottenc.gov for more information. Sign up on the Church website, www.mpbconline.org.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC
LESSONS AND CAROLS - On Sunday, December 13 at 11:00am we celebrate Advent through our annual Service of Lessons and Carols. Bible stories leading to the birth of Jesus will be read by lay readers; anthems will be sung by all our choirs; and the congregation will sing Christmas carols. It is a beautiful and moving worship service. Bring family and friends with you.

YOUTH CHOIR WILL GO CHRISTMAS CAROLING AT SOUTHMINSTER, Sunday afternoon, December 13. We will depart from the Church staff lot at 3:30pm, carol and visit with residents from 4:00-5:00pm and return to the Church by 5:30pm so you can attend the youth Christmas parties.

MUSIC TOGETHER® REGISTRATION FOR WINTER SESSION is now open for all interested families. Classes are available on Mondays at 4:00 and 5:15pm beginning January 11 and running for 8 weeks excluding MLK Monday. You can register and pay online at https://mpbconline.org/music-together/.

THE CORNWELL CENTER
SANTA IS COMING to the Cornwell Center on Wednesday, December 9, 4:00-6:00pm in the Cornwell Lounge. Professional photos with Santa are $10. While you are there, visit Santa’s Workshop in the Art Studio to create the perfect gift or holiday decoration.

GIVE THE GIFT OF WELLNESS: TRANSFORM120 - Transform your life in 120 days. Commit to getting healthier by participating in a structured, fitness/wellness-focused package/program. This package includes personalized fitness, nutrition, breathing/deep stretch, massage, health coaching, expert support, peer support, and accountability. Jump start your health transformation at The Cornwell Center. Or give the gift that keeps on giving – the gift of wellness.
WIN-WIN, REFER A FRIEND - One month free for you and a friend. Do you know someone who might love and appreciate the Cornwell Center as much as you do? When they become members now through December 31, you will both gain a free one month membership. Grab a few invitation cards at our Welcome Desk, or check www.cornwellcenter.org for more details.

LOOKING AHEAD
December 13: THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT; THE FESTIVAL OF ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS
8:30  Charlotte Community of Mindfulness Meditation Group, Room 27
9:00  Youth Choir Rehearsal, Berry Hall
9:00  Children’s Choirs Warm-up, Sanctuary
9:45  Children’s Faith Formation, Preschool and Elementary Wings
9:45  Youth Faith Formation, Youth Hall Wing
9:45  Adult Faith Formation, Education Building and Cornwell Center
9:50  Chancel Choir Warm-Up, Sanctuary
11:00 Worship in the Sanctuary
12:00 Coffee Fellowship/Guest Welcome
3:30  Youth Choir Caroling at Southminster
6:00  Youth Christmas Parties
THE MYERS PARK BAPTIST CHURCH COVENANT

We, the members of the Myers Park Baptist Church, are a people on a journey of faith. By God’s grace we are experiencing God’s love through Jesus Christ and in the community of the faithful. We are discovering in this experience our freedom to become new creatures and our responsibility to be faithful stewards of our lives and of this world.

We will be open to all new light, strengthened by God and each other in our faith. We will sustain a critical examination of Scripture, belief and ritual as interpreters of God’s active presence in the world. We will accept controversy as a reality of life together and an opportunity for growth toward maturity. We covenant to be a community of God’s new creation and affirm that we are open to all and closed to none.

We covenant to nurture this church as a community of faith and as an instrument for reconciliation in this world: by worship, by Christian education, by the dedication of our personal and material resources and by all the other ways we express the significance of our lives with God and one another.

We covenant together to be priests celebrating God’s presence in community and in the world, believing we are participants in God’s kingdom on earth.

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1900 Queens Road • Charlotte, North Carolina 28207-2582
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MINISTERS

As priests to one another, all members of the congregation are ministers. Some are called out for particular places of service:

THE REVEREND MR. JOSEPH D. ALDRICH, Associate Minister
SHARON BREMER, Director of Stewardship
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