Our extraordinary weekend with Barbara Brown Taylor is nearly at hand, and folks, this is one you don’t want to miss. As of mid-September, the ticketed Saturday workshop was over 70% full. We are anticipating this to sell out prior to the weekend, so register today if you haven’t already. Childcare will be available (registration required). Also, you can get a foretaste of the weekend when Rev. Taylor is interviewed on Charlotte Talks on WFAE 90.7 FM on Friday October 10 at 9:00am.

So there I sat week after week, year after year, at another prominent church in Charlotte, during at least 10 years of their Stewardship appeals, and I thought: “No. Not going to give that way. I don’t want anyone to guilt me or compel us to participate.” I felt like we put enough into the collection plate each week. What compounded that feeling of almost resentment was that I didn’t feel engaged with that church. I thought ‘they’ were not including me and only wanted my financial participation. In fact, there wasn’t any real, sustained momentum during any point in my adult life when I had subscribed to, believed, and shared in systematic giving to any chosen church.

My wife Linda and I eventually left that congregation without any real resolution to what God-led methodical giving looked like. It was when we became members and were immersed in MPBC and the Dream as outlined in our Covenant that we, and really I, begin to understand and be in a safe enough place to try to consider a disciplined structure of giving.

The more I reflected on why I personally rebelled from any type of stewardship campaign, the more I realized it was my own pride and a lack of humility that kept me from approaching His throne with my thanks and meager gifts of gratitude.

Christ certainly compels us to give, just like Christ compels us to forgive. None of these actions are meant for God, but rather for us. So I hope you will, during a time of prayerful reflection, consider a regular commitment to stewardship. Your gift will not be measured or compared by another’s gifts. It simply has to be from your heart to the heart of God.

Peace be with you.

Jesus the Christ in the 21st Century Series Presents:

Reverend Barbara Brown Taylor

By Bruce Elliott

Our extraordinary weekend with Barbara Brown Taylor is nearly at hand, and folks, this is one you don’t want to miss. As of mid-September, the ticketed Saturday workshop was over 70% full. We are anticipating this to sell out prior to the weekend, so register today if you haven’t already. Childcare will be available (registration required). Also, you can get a foretaste of the weekend when Rev. Taylor is interviewed on Charlotte Talks on WFAE 90.7 FM on Friday October 10 at 9:00am.

One of the most unique and impressive offerings of our community of faith is our J21 speaker series. In recent years we have hosted the best of the best in Christian speakers—Richard Rohr, Cynthia Bourgeault, John Shelby Spong and now Barbara Brown Taylor. Rev. Taylor is a truly world class author and speaker who yet bears the humility of a true servant leader, one now at the peak of her powers and popularity.

Even more impressive is the fact that our J21 series provides us with the opportunity to experience a speaker with the kind of depth and detail that are normally found only in university or retreat settings. The J21 series allows us to be with these speakers over a 3 day period, with more opportunity to get to know the speaker and his/her work. This is a rare and marvelous gift of time and spiritual depth we give to ourselves and the wider community. See you there! (The schedule for the weekend is available on page 5 of this newsletter.)
Have Patience with God and Yourself

By Everett Goodwin

Do not fret – it leads only to evil . . . Wait for the Lord and keep to God’s way.

Psalm 37: 8, 34

Remember when making a long-distance phone call required patience, as well as deep pockets? First you had to get an operator, then the operator had to get a long distance line, and then you waited until the operator called back. Yes, I am dating myself. But it wasn’t that long ago! Today you pick up your smart phone and instantly your call goes through.

Just a few years ago I was shocked to discover that a photo to be enlarged could be done “instantly” at a local drugstore: no waiting for enlargement or development. Now I receive and send photos instantly by phone and by e-mail. Most of us use a lot of “instant” products and services and we expect increasing numbers of things to be instant: instant brewed coffee, rice pilaf, medications that provide instant relief – just for a few examples.

Now it seems that I am easily annoyed if something I want is not instantly available! You probably know what I mean and have experienced similar impatience. While I can defend the value of quick turnaround in many settings, in many ways it does me a disservice because such instant expectations magnify my impatience. Not everything can be reached by a shortcut.

For example, most people want to have a good reputation, for example. But good reputations take years to achieve and shortcuts can make them impossible. Doing the right thing for a wrong reason can expose our lack of integrity, and back-door deals are instantly exposed these days. Building character takes time and patience. Raising a child with strong faith and values takes time. You might say it takes two lifetimes: yours and the child’s.

This thing of impatience with any but instant results or solutions can dilute our faith, our commitment and our purposes in a career or life. Churches are sometimes the worst offenders in following an instant impulse. Oh, our motives can be good: we believe we have been entrusted with a sacred message of God’s love and inspired to serve others. Sometimes there truly is urgency. But often we just don’t have the patience to depend on God’s guidance.

You have seen and heard what I mean: a new church wants to make a “splash” in its community; an established church wants to achieve fast growth, or a new building, or a new program. Such expectations tempt us to get loud or bully our way into the consciousness of those whose cooperation we seek. Sometimes it works. Often it puts people off. Its achievement or success doesn’t have roots in real commitment.

Authentic faith does not lend itself to seven word slogans on Twitter. Damaged marriages can’t be healed over a long weekend with a charismatic facilitator. Church attendance will not be increased by marketing ads trumpeting how great the place is. Oh, I know that it sometimes works for awhile. But we also know that an instant medium does not provide an enduring message.

Authentic faith develops much like an authentic life develops: not in an instant, but with patience and over time. A spiritual life develops much like the ability to play the organ or the piano to produce the music we enjoy each week: it takes years of practice and commitment. Spiritual life begins in a desire to have a greater awareness of God, is nurtured in churches or communities where people challenge and encourage one another, and is brought to maturity through struggles and failures over time.

There is no such thing as “instant faith.” There is no such thing as “instant success” in churches. The growth of souls in love and faith, joy and peace, self-control and moral direction is slow work. So be patient with yourself and with others. Be skeptical of instant solutions or mass-marketed programs “guaranteed to expand your inner spirit.” Instead, enlarge your focus by caring about others and helping them when you can.

God doesn’t have instant expectations for you. But right where you are now in your life – regardless of age or circumstances – is where God can begin to build you into a person who will reflect God’s nature. God has expectations for you – but not instant ones. Be patient with yourself – and with God.

Milestones (as of September 15, 2014)

DEATHS/LOVE AND SYMPATHY TO:
• Bonnie Banks and her family on the death of her mother, Frances R. Bowen, of Tifton, GA, on August 18, 2014.
• The family of Ethlyn Joyce Boone Streetman, of Hickory, NC, on her death on August 24, 2014.
• Jason Dean and his family on the death of his grandmother, Inez Dean, of Anderson, SC, on September 9, 2014.
• John Fitch and Patty Matthews and their families on the death of their father, John (Jack) S. Fitch, of Charlotte, NC, on September 10, 2014.
• Ted Phillips and his family on the death of his uncle, Robert Phillips, of Greensboro, NC, on September 11, 2014.
• Gloria Gibson and her family on the death of her mother, Cecile Mae Henderson Shelton, of Danville, VA, on September 12, 2014.

BIRTHS/CONGRATULATIONS TO:
• Kathie and Trip Gregory on the birth of their daughter, Eva Ray Gregory, on August 20, 2014.
• Mary Ann and Christian Ciciarelli on the birth of their daughter, Evelyn Ann Ciciarelli, on August 29, 2014.

October Loose Plate Offering Recipient

By Cheri Lindblom

The loose plate offering for October supports the work of the Regional AIDS Interfaith Network (RAIN). RAIN engages the community to transform lives and promote respect and dignity for people touched by HIV through compassionate care, education and leadership development. For more information visit www.carolinarain.org.
Community Life

Fall Leadership Workshops

Wednesday nights
October 8, 15, 22
6:30-8:30pm
Cornwell Conference Center

By Joan Hope

• What type of leader are you?
• What are the secrets to effective meetings?
• How do you engage with conflict?

Leading others effectively begins with knowing yourself - take an assessment for self-awareness, learn a conflict model that starts by looking within.

Leading others requires organizational skill - discover meeting habits that make a big difference and some surprising new facts; practice decision-making skills.

• New to a leadership role in the church?
• Interested in honing your skills?

Workshops provide common practices and shared insights of leaders at MPBC. And they gather Church members to learn with and from each other.

FOR: new and returning deacons, leaders of Ministries and SLGs, teachers and interested members.

REGISTER BY OCTOBER 1 with Robin Coira at rcoira@mpbconline.org.

QUESTIONS? Contact me at joan.hope2@gmail.com or 704.488.9386.

Senior Minister Search Group Update

By Skip Gribble

The Senior Minister Search Group continues to seek God’s guidance in the important work of discerning who God is calling to be the next Senior Minister of our Church. Our candidates are at varying stages in our process. For example, we are interviewing several candidates, while we are engaging with other candidates in ways ranging from listening to sermons to having them complete our questionnaire. We are encouraged by all of your support and prayers and ask that you stay constant and faithful in supporting our Church, our group’s efforts, and the future of the dream that possessed those who founded this great Church 71 years ago. Regarding the road ahead (and borrowing from Thomas Merton), we cannot know for certain where it will end. But we are energized about all the positive things we see going on in the life and ministry of this Church and in the lives and ministries of the candidates who could serve this Church in the future.

Jewish/Christian Dialogue

October 26, 4:30-6:00, Heaton Hall

By Robin Coira

For over ten years we have partnered with Temple Beth El to present two Jewish/Christian Dialogues each year. Covering topics like Immigration Reform, Charlotte Mecklenburg School Issues, the need for understanding within the three Abrahamic Faith Traditions, our program on October 26th upholds our strong tradition of discussing important issues for people of faith.

“Healthcare For All: Can We Make It Happen?” is the topic we will address. Panelists include Wayne Goodwin, NC Insurance Commission; Dr. Jessica Schorr-Saxe, Chair of Healthcare Justice NC; and Dr. William Brandon, Professor of Political Science and Metrolina Medical Foundation Distinguished Professor of Public Policy on Health at UNCC.

This is sure to be a relevant, timely and fact-based dialogue concerning one of the most pressing issues facing our state and our nation. People of faith need to be informed in order to make informed decisions. Please join us for this important conversation.

Interfaith Trip to Israel

February 15-25, 2015

By Robin Coira

From February 15–25, 2015 members of our Church will join members of Temple Beth El for an extraordinary trip to Israel. Join us as we explore the birthplace of our two faith traditions while sharing and learning with one another. To register, stop by the Church office and pick up your registration packet. All you need to know is contained in these materials. REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 15. This is sure to be a remarkable journey—one I hope you will join.

Family Dedication

Kathryn and Mike Maltarich, along with Jack, bringing Matthew William Maltarich on September 14.

A Chapel in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre
## An Invitation to Our Guests
Please plan to join us for our:

### Fall Orientation Series

**Sunday, October 12**  
9:30-10:45am: Introductions & History of MPBC, Cornwell Center Lounge

**Tuesday, October 14**  
6:30–7:30pm: Dinner, Staff Introductions and Overview of Ministries, Cornwell Conference Center and Lounge  
Campus Tour immediately following

**Sunday, October 19**  
1:30-3:00pm: Afternoon Social, at the home of Cathryn and Jay Rivers

**Sunday, October 26**  
9:30–10:45am: Architectural Tour, meet in Chancel

**Wednesday, October 29**  
5:45-7:30pm: Wonderful Wednesday Dinner and Program, meet in Heaton Hall Foyer

**Sunday, November 2**  
9:45–10:45am: Discussion of Covenant, Commitment, and Joining, Cornwell Center Lounge

And, for those who are ready to formalize their commitment to this community of faith, we offer:

**Joining Sunday**  
**Sunday, November 9**  
9:00-10:45am: Light Breakfast and Pictures, Cornwell Center Lounge  
11:00am–Noon: New Members welcomed into Congregation during Worship  
Noon-1:00pm: Welcoming Reception, Heaton Hall

Any updates will be on the website.  
Please contact Mariah Currin at mcurrin@mpbconline.org or 704.334.7232, ext. 41 to RSVP or with any questions.

*Childcare is available for all sessions except the Afternoon Social

### October 29, 2014

#### By Chrissy Williamson

**TIME:** Dinner begins at 5:45pm  
**COST:** $6 adult / $3 child / $12 family max

**RESERVATIONS:** Please contact Rainey Underwood (runderwood@mpbconline.org or 704.334.7232 x56) by noon on Monday, October 27 to reserve your meal.

**ADULT PROGRAM:**  
(6:30-7:30pm, Location TBD)  
**Tony Abbott - The Angel Dialogues**

We are pleased to announce that Tony Abbott will be joining us for Wonderful Wednesday on October 29. Tony has a special presentation in store for us as he will be reading from his new book, *The Angel Dialogues.*  
Marla Brown, an actress from the Davidson area, will be reading the part of the angel and Katie Oates, a musician from Dilworth, will accompany the reading on guitar. Tony will return for the following two Wednesdays, November 5 and 12, to lead us through the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins who he claims is “probably the greatest religious poet in the history of England!” This series is one that you do not want to miss!

#### For the Children:
(6:30-7:30pm, Cornwell Gym)

Any article about Wonderful Wednesday in October would be remiss without a mention of our Halloween Festival. Children are encouraged to wear non-scary costumes.

#### For the Youth:
(6:30-7:30pm, Youth Hall)

There will be a Halloween Party in the Youth Hall including a costume contest.  
Join us on October 29 for an enjoyable evening for the entire family! Remember to make your meal reservations by noon on Monday, October 27.

*Childcare is available for all sessions except the Afternoon Social

### TTWS Festival of Friends

**By Robin Coira**

The annual fundraiser for our Through-the-Week School, Festival of Friends, will be held on November 8 at Myers Park Country Club. Having started 16 years ago as a gathering in people’s homes, this event has grown in popularity and success! Proceeds over the years have underwritten many capital improvements to our classrooms and playgrounds. We are deeply grateful to our TTWS for being such good stewards of our facilities and grounds. If you would like to contribute to this fundraiser, please contact Belinda Geuss at 704.377.1683.

### October Young Adult Gatherings

**By Chrissy Williamson**

**October 4**  
Habitat for Humanity Build - Sign up online at www.mpbconline.org. Click on the Habitat link on the home page.

**October 20**  
Theology Pub 6:15-7:30pm, location TBD.

### Senior Adult Fellowship

**Wednesday, October 8**

**By Chrissy Williamson**

All Senior Adults are invited to Winston-Salem on October 8. We will need to leave MPBC at 8:00am in order to make our scheduled tour of the Reynolda House, including the featured exhibit *The Art of Seating: Two Hundred Years of American Design.* After the tour, we will go to the campus of Wake Forest University and enjoy lunch in the Balcony Room (in the tower of Wait Chapel). Dean Gail O’Day, of the Divinity School, and Dr. Bill Leonard will join us for lunch. The cost for the Reynolda House tour is $12. Lunch is not included; we anticipate that the meal will cost $10 or less.
Men's Retreat Led By Dr. Bill Leonard

By Joe Aldrich

Men of the Church, it may be time for you to leave the busyness of Charlotte and spend a weekend at Black Mountain October 24-26. Time is running out to register! We will experience thought-provoking words from Bill Leonard, time to converse with Bill and other men at the retreat, free time to hike or relax, and a Theology Pub on Saturday night to talk about whatever is on your mind. Intrigued? Contact Joe Aldrich with questions (jaldrich@mpbconline.org) or Anne Clarke to register (aclarke@mpbconline.org).

Spring Connections Groups Call for Proposals

Attention Facilitators!

It’s that time again to make your proposals for Winter/Spring Connections.

WANTED:
• Do you have an idea for a Connections Group?
• Would you facilitate for us next year?

Don’t wait to be invited; submit your proposals anytime! (creid@mpbconline.org)

TO SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL:
• Go to the Faith Formation page of the Church website: (www.mpbconline.org/faith-formation)
• Click on Spring 2015 Connections Group Proposal

Deadline for submission is December 5.

EarthKeepers News

By Kate Green

EPA Citizens Climate Hearing

When did preserving our natural resources and protecting the health and safety of our citizens become such a political lightning rod? That question and more were addressed last month by more than 70 concerned citizens who spoke at the EPA’s Citizens Climate Hearing held at our Church. EarthKeepers, the Sierra Club and nine other civic groups joined together to host the informal EPA citizen hearing on its proposed Clean Power Plan, a historic measure calling for strong carbon reductions to combat the worst effects of climate disruption. Scientists, physicians, educators and citizens gave moving testimony that supported the proposed plan. All comments were recorded and will be recognized by the EPA. A special thanks to Rev. Chrissy Williamson for her warm welcome, Bob Thomason for conducting tours of our solar panels (which was on TV) and Rev. Nancy Allison, whose opening remarks called on the faith community to be good...Continued on page 6
...Continued from page 5

stewards of all life, human and non-human, and to respond to environmental issues as social justice issues.

More Work Scheduled For The Point on October 4

Feel like connecting back to nature? You don’t have to go far. Join EarthKeepers for our third workday in our beautiful natural habitat, aptly named The Point, on Saturday, October 4 from 9am-noon. There’s still ivy to pull and invasive plants to be removed and, unfortunately, always trash to pick up. Call Cathryn Rivers, 704.334.7063, to volunteer.

Youth News

By Chris Hughes

Youth Day of Service, October 4

When: 9:00am
Where: 2910 Parkway Ave.

Join us for an exciting work day at The Family Tree. We need as many volunteers as possible to help us complete the siding on our Shed-to-Studio Renovation. Youth and youth parents are invited!

Charlotte CROP Walk, October 19

When: 2:00pm
Where: Independence Park (Corner of Hawthorne Lane and E. 7th St.)

Sign up with me, chughes@mpbconline.org for this year’s CROP Walk and help stop hunger in the U.S. and abroad. The walk is open to everyone in the Church. If you cannot participate, sponsor some of our youth and contribute to this great cause!

Register Now for Fall Retreats

Find all the information and register for our Middle and High School retreats on the church website, www.mpbconline.org, by clicking on “Events” and then the “Youth Events” tab. Register early for a discounted rate!

Wonderful Wednesday Halloween Party, October 29

When: 6:30pm
Where: Youth Hall

Too old for Trick-or-Treat? Never! We will have a special youth group Halloween Party, complete with candy, snacks, costumes and a classic Halloween Movie. Prizes will be awarded for Best Costume, Most Creative Costume, and Best Costume Duo or Group.

One of the best ways to show this support is to serve in the Children’s Ministry. The time commitment is small and the reward is infinite. Here are some ways you can serve:

- Preschool Sunday School - 9:30–10:45 on Sunday mornings for 4-5 weeks at a time. Curriculum, training, and all supplies are provided.
- Elementary Sunday School - 9:30–10:45 on Sunday mornings. Lead a workshop for 3-4 weeks or serve on a shepherd team where you serve every 2-3 weeks.
- Sunday Morning Extended Session - 10:45am–noon on Sunday mornings. Our preschool ministry is booming and we would love to have extra hands helping.
- Sunday Morning Gym Time - 11:15am-noon on Sunday mornings during worship. Be present as another leader designated by me to lead the children in games.
- Special Events - Help in the planning and implementing of one-time events during the year.

To be a part of any of these essential components of your Church’s ministry to children, please contact me at cveal@mpbconline.org.

Children's Ministry News

By Carrie Veal

FAMILY DEDICATION

As we journey together as a church, one of the beautiful opportunities we have is to walk alongside families with children. And, when multiple families participate in a family dedication together it allows a special bond to take place among them.

We invite those who would like to dedicate their children to participate in one of these upcoming dates: October 12, January 11, 2015 and April 26, 2015. If you would like to participate, please contact Carrie Veal at cveal@mpbconline.org.

SERVING IN THE CHILDREN’S MINISTRY

When families stand before us to dedicate their child, we as a congregation make a covenant to stand with and journey alongside them, lending them the support of prayers and example.

HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL

Wednesday, October 29
6:30-7:30

All children are invited to come to the Cornerwell Center Gym in non-scary costumes for a time of games, crafts, and more.

PASSPORT KIDS SUMMER CAMP

Save the Dates: July 18-21

While summer 2015 may be down the road a bit, the Children’s Ministry is already making plans for summer camp. Children who will have completed third–fifth grades by next summer are invited. More information to come!
October TTWS News

By Belinda Geuss

We are off to a great start at Through-the-Week School as we celebrate our 59th year!

A Warm Welcome:
This year we welcome Susan Hughes, Karen Jones, Melissa Keane and Katie Blackwell-Martin to our staff of 30 teachers.

Celebrating Milestones:
Several of our teachers are celebrating milestones with TTWS -- Sharon Sanders has been teaching for us for 30 years, Tammy Hull and Vickie Trotter have been with us for 25 years, Michelle Clavijo has been here 15 years and Ashleigh Long and Vicki Tiller have been with us for 10 years! Congratulations to these truly dedicated teachers who make Through-the-Week School one of the best preschools in Charlotte!

In October:
• We will have optional Speech and Hearing testing for 3’s–TK students.
• Conferences will be held during school hours the weeks of October 20 and 27 for 3’s–TK parents.
• The Taradiddle Players tour will visit TTWS on October 14 performing “The Lion And The Little Red Bird.”

Festival of Friends
Our Festival of Friends committee has been busy preparing for this most important, annual fundraising event. This year’s theme is “Learning to Fly” and will be held on November 8 at Myers Park Country Club. Last year’s event raised the money to rebuild the large play structure on the older playground and made it possible for us to purchase new furniture, rugs and toys for all of our classrooms. A significant portion of funds raised is used to support our scholarship fund which enables many families to attend TTWS.

Please visit the TTWS website at www.throughtheweekpreschool.com or “like” us on Facebook to view recent pictures, announcements and newsletters.

State of the Church of our Dreams

By Tillie Tice

Jesus called his disciples to be part of his dream to create God’s Kingdom here on earth. Members of Myers Park Baptist Church are also called to create a community where God’s presence breaks through and is known. We are possessed by a dream to be a vital and vibrant part of God’s work – here in Charlotte and beyond. Every day, members of this Church go out into the world bringing comfort, joy, community, and hope to those we know and folks way outside the walls of these beautiful buildings. It’s what makes this Church worth way more than any number of dollars we can ever give. It is what allows this Church never to slow down, even in the absence of a Senior Minister. We are a lively bunch of dedicated folks.

Stop and Think

It’s not a budget we give to. It is Life in this community we are supporting. It’s a meal with a homeless mother and children in our Youth Hall or Room in the Inn; it is support of the ill, the infirm, and ones who have lost their way (friend or stranger). It is the minister in another city, fired because of openness and honesty of belief, whom we help find another job and welcome into our supportive community. It is the individual with AIDS we surround with love, food, transportation, and companionship. It is laughter and chatter as we gather to celebrate, plan, or dream. It is pain we feel sharing the ravages of age with a long-time member. It is joy we feel when a young couple welcomes a baby. It is sorrow as we connect with the spouse fatigued by care for a partner.

It is not percentage by which I consider increasing my pledge. It is kids making friends in Youth Group while building sheds in Charlotte or going together to Washington, DC to help an impoverished neighborhood. It’s little children learning that other adults are their friends helping them out in Preschool. It is watching them begin to feel safe being left by parents. It is singing together. It’s praying together. It’s exploring together concepts of faith we’ve wondered about for years. It is packing meals together. It’s sitting together weeping in times of grief and loss, fear and terror. It’s looking into the faces of young high school graduates who speak of deep gratitude for a community that taught them what matters in life.

Often a stranger finds out you are a member of Myers Park Baptist Church. “I came to your Church for Borg, (Crossan, Pagel, Bourgeault, Brian McLaren) and found out I could still connect with Church.” A Jewish friend says, “Thank You!” for providing a home where we could establish a new Temple? Or “I am so grateful” you opened doors to the community promoting dialogue between people of different faiths, different races, different sexual orientations. “This church provided me the first place where I really feel safe and accepted.”

We’ve all walked with members of this congregation, some we barely know, or others whom we’ve loved for years, experiencing pain, loss, illness or tragedy. This community reaches out. We respond. We provide professional care of ministers, and we provide member-to-member care. This community offers touch, food, cards, visits, and intentional prayer for one another. We offer these to each other, just as we offer them to people outside our membership who need attention and love. Jesus said, “Whoever welcomes me in my name one of these children, welcomes in my name one of these children, welcomes not only me but the one who sent me.” Mark 9: 37.

There are many stories of life in this congregation. These stories are our stories. As you connect to this Body of Christ, these are stories that can most deeply impact your life and your faith. These are real-life examples of the Body of Christ working every day making God’s Kingdom alive. These are realities your financial and personal gifts make happen. In this lively Church, we depend upon full support from every member. If a single member fails to support with 100% of their commitment, our potential is diminished. Run, don’t walk to make your 2015 pledge. It’s easy. Get involved. You can do it online, or with a phone call, or even by snail mail.
Financial Resources / Outreach

Knowing the Financial State of Our Flock

By Richard J. Harris,
Chair, Budget and Finance SLG

Proverbs 27:23 instructs us to “be diligent to know the state of your flocks, and attend to your herds.” There is no better way to heed this than to review Myers Park Baptist Church’s financial statements for the first eight months of 2014. Suffice it to say that things are progressing well for the year through August, and the Church’s overall financial health is well ahead of last year’s figures during the same time period.

Looking at the August statement of revenues and expenses, the Church posted year-to-date (YTD) gross revenues of $1.26MM, which is slightly below budget of $1.27MM. The primary driver of MPBC’s gross revenues comes from envelopes and pledges, totaling $1.12MM versus a budgeted figure of $1.13MM.

At the end of August, MPBC posted YTD total expenses of $1.28MM versus a budgeted figure of $1.31MM. How did this happen? Our staff and ministry heads are diligent in managing expenses and are managing their flocks “well.” So, at this point, the Church is $19.2k behind budget for the first eight months. To make a comparison, at this time last year, MPBC was running a deficit of $73.8k, or more than 3.75 times larger than this year’s deficit.

When reviewing these figures, everyone should be excited, as the summer months are historically a slower time for faith-based institutions in general. For example, we had budgeted that the deficit at this point, after tallying August numbers, would be $36.5k.

The strong overall financial health of our Church does not mean we can sit on our laurels. Quite the opposite, our pledges and offerings are more important than ever to the health of our Church. Thus, we encourage you to stay faithful in giving, and we thank you for your continued financial support of our Church.

Financial Report
(as of August 31, 2014)

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All Are Welcome at the Table

By Cheri Lindblom

The Missionary Round Table (MRT) is a little known, yet remarkable group here at MPBC. It was started by women who desired more than just fellowship. They wanted to learn more about local support agencies offering assistance to those in need. They focused on what it means to be a ”servant of God” and then put those words into action by starting Family Promise, Cereal for the City and Women in Transition Holiday Baskets, to name just a few. Deep and lasting friendships have formed. They have been through a lifetime of milestones, joyful and heartbreaking, caring and supporting each other every step of the way.

This sounds exactly like the type of relationship we all seek with each other and with God. The women of MRT were the first 20/30’s Group at MPBC. They were also the first "Dots" group (a support group for empty nesters), supporting each other as their children moved out, on or stayed home. They are a treasure and the backbone for getting outreach out there.

MRT would love to have a new generation join them. MRT is a great way to meet new friends and connect with long-time MRT members. I encourage everyone to come to the table. They meet the 2nd Monday of each month from 10:00-11:30am in the Parlor. A guest speaker will lead a brief program and coffee fellowship follows.

Drop in, bring a friend and contact Gretchen Allen, gretnet@gmail.com to get on her e-mail list.

Reflections on Outreach Sunday, September 21

By Cheri Lindblom

Just last month, the congregation gathered on a Sunday morning to discover the breath and depth of what it means to reach out. Worship was led by the members of MPBC who have been leading or serving our various Outreach Action Teams (OAT) and The Reverend Chrissy Williamson preached on the parable of the landowner and day laborers. If you were not able to join us in worship that day, I encourage you to read the sermon online. You will find it thought-provoking and challenging to wrestle with our call to serve our neighbors in need. During the service, everyone was invited to find an opportunity to serve by completing an outreach card.

So, where do we go from here? Was September 21st just an hour one Sunday when we challenged ourselves to envision what it means to labor, and that’s where it ends? Or will we take it outside the walls of the Church and find a place to serve? My hope is that your faith will lead you to move outside with action.

By now, everyone who completed an outreach card should have been contacted by a ministry team leader. You already may have served at the Soup Kitchen or helped at the Men’s Shelter Cook Out. You may be looking forward to one of the other seasonal outreach ministries, such as Room In The Inn or Family Promise. Wherever you feel called to serve, we welcome and thank you.

If you were unable to join us on the 21st, please go to the Outreach page or Events tab on the Church website where you will find opportunities to serve. If you are still waiting to hear from a leader, please contact me at clindblom@mpbconline.org.

I am looking forward to a year of Reaching Out.
Save These Dates

Welcoming Faith Community Workshop and Forum

By Scott Crowder
Youth/HIV/Homeless: Care and Justice Workshop For Progressive Churches
Saturday, November 15
10:00am-2:00pm, Heaton Hall

A lot has happened in the last few years; 19 states now allow same-sex marriage and the federal government now recognizes those marriages. Kids are coming out at younger ages, the fight against AIDS has shifted, and homeless LGBT youth are more visible than ever; LGBT teens account for a shocking 37% of homeless youth. Join MPBC’s LGBT Fellowship, Ministry of Outreach, advocacy leaders from Time Out Youth and RAIN, and local church leaders to discuss what it means to be an “affirming” congregation today. As a faith institution, what responsibility do we have and where do we stand on these social issues? This will be a facilitator led discussion.

Our facilitator will be Jake Goodman, a Jewish educator, performer, and community organizer. We are excited to welcome Jake back to MPBC. He superbly facilitated our showing of Bishop Gene Robinson’s documentary, “Love Free or Die” in 2012.

Adult Forum: Covering - The Hidden Assault on Our Civil Rights
Sunday, November 16
9:45am in Heaton Hall

How can MPBC create a more welcoming faith community? Come and join us as we hear the theory of “covering” as articulated by Kenji Yoshino, a personal narrative, and from the biblical narrative in the Book of Esther.

Everyone covers. To cover is to downplay a disfavored trait so as to blend into the mainstream. Because all of us possess stigmatized attributes, we all encounter pressure to cover in our daily lives. Given its pervasiveness, we may experience this pressure to be a simple fact of social life.

Against that conventional understanding, Kenji Yoshino argues that the demand to cover can pose a hidden threat to our civil rights. Though we have come to some consensus against penalizing people for differences based on race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, and disability, we still routinely deny equal treatment to people who refuse to downplay differences along these lines.

Since we all experience covering to a degree, we can make common cause around a new civil rights paradigm based on our desire for authenticity - a desire that brings us together rather than driving us apart.

Please plan to join us for this insightful and thought-provoking forum led by facilitator, Jake Goodman.

Exciting IT Changes Coming

By Jane Huddle
Chair, Information Technology, SLG

Have you ever wanted to look up a fellow Church member’s e-mail address or phone number and couldn’t find your Church Directory or didn’t have it with you? Wouldn’t it be nice if you had a Member Directory on your smartphone or computer? Very soon you will! A recent upgrade to the Church’s usage of ACS Technologies software will allow you to install a secure mobile application on your smartphone and gain access to Church member directory information.

If you don’t have a smartphone, you will be able to use a secure link on our Church website and have the same access plus more. Over the next year, plans are to roll out the following:

- Ability to upload a recent photograph of yourself or family for viewing
- Ability to submit personal e-mail address, home address and phone number changes online
- Ability to continue online pledging, giving, and viewing of your personal giving
- Software solution to support new member recruitment and orientation
- Software solution to support the staff and involved lay members in our pastoral care program
- Ability to self-identify talents and skills you wish to share in Church roles
- Ability to submit your interest for ministry and servant leadership group openings, small groups and other volunteer opportunities
- Enhanced small group management processes
- Enhanced event registration processes
- Ability to view events you have registered for and the groups in which you are involved
- Online access to an up-to-date Church calendar

The IT Servant Leadership Group (which is a part of the Ministry of Property and Grounds) is very excited about this roll-out. We believe these solutions will help the Church staff focus on the tasks where their skills are needed while allowing Church members to be more self-sufficient. Technology is a great enabler and the IT SLG is interested in hearing ideas you have about this.

Thank You from Men’s Shelter of Charlotte for over 25 years of service, support and fellowship!

By Amy Tribble, Director of Development

Myers Park Baptist Church has helped further the mission to end homelessness in countless ways. It takes a community to end homelessness, and we are proud to work as partners with you to accomplish this goal!
Table Talk: Alternative Worship

Sunday, October 12, 2014, Noon–1:00pm in Heaton Hall

By Deborah Moore Clark
Chair, Ministry of Worship and Music & Chair, Alternative Worship Task Force

In late spring, the Alternative Worship Task Force was enlisted and began its work to study and report on possibilities for alternative worship that would meet the needs of our congregation. All summer, the task force has been meeting regularly, interviewing clergy from churches who offer non-traditional worship, visiting other churches, and listening to your conversations with us. Your feedback is absolutely vital to our mission. What we need most is to hear from you!

The Ministry of Faith Formation and Alternative Worship Task Force of the Ministry of Music and Worship invite you to join us at the table for conversation. Together, we are hosting an event called “Table Talk,” designed to offer an opportunity for you, the members of our Church, to talk to one another. On October 12, our topic of conversation will be Alternative Worship. Do you have thoughts and ideas about alternative worship you would like to share? Are you interested in engaging in conversation with fellow Church members about creative worship experiences? What would enhance your worship experience? What would help you connect with God in worship? Is there something you long for? We want to hear and understand.

We hope you will join us for this casual conversation about possibilities for alternative worship. Facilitators from the Ministry of Faith Formation will lead the round table discussions, which will focus on several questions prepared by the task force. Please bring a snack or bag lunch and a drink and come ready to chat! Also, please contact Chrissy Williamson, cwilliamson@mpbconline.org, if you’d like to attend and need childcare.

Chancel Choir Shares A Prayer From Their 50th Anniversary Retreat

A Prayer
(Borrowed from Lloyd Ogilvie)
"That Christ Will Live and Love Through Me."

Lord, be in my mind, think your thoughts in me, be my wisdom, my knowledge, my insight. Be in my voice, free me to speak with silence or words, whatever is needed. Be in my face, my eyes, my touch, my embrace. I plan to live this day in the reality of you in me. Thank you for making it so. Amen.

This prayer was read at the last rehearsal of the 50th Anniversary of the Chancel Choir Retreat.
Best Faces Forward
September is about transition. Children return to school, orange returns to the maples, and football returns to dominance in the den and on school athletic fields as teams face off for another season.

Around here we pack up the remnants of Summer Camps, return to normal operating hours, add new activities, and prepare for the return of children to our After-School Program. To ring in the new season, we threw an Open House to showcase some of our programs, and people, and inspire you to try something new. Photos on Facebook.

As we catch our breath we figured it might be a good time to have you meet a few of our new people, these first two as part of both Group Exercise and Personal Training:

Arthur Pulley
"Fitness for me has been a lifelong passion. In the beginning it was just about sports but as I matured I saw the benefits in everyday life, for everybody."

Arthur has a personal connection to personal training. He used boxing to help him drop from his former 300+ pounds! Certified with ASCM for ten years, he’s hyper-popular as both a personal trainer and group instructor among both youth and adults in Charlotte.

Marcy Luna
"Though I played many sports I found solace in exercise without competition. Teaching fitness was natural for me and I started right after graduation."

In the sixth grade Marcy's dad enlisted her to run with him at 6am each morning, to keep him motivated. With NASM and ACE certification, and over 20 years of both personal training and Group Exercise experience, she now motivates others. Add an MS from George Washington University in Exercise Science, Nutrition, and Eating Behavior and you have a training powerhouse.

Art & Design
Explore new media and techniques from the potter’s wheel to mixed media on wood and canvas. This series continues in October and students can join in at any time. Prorate the cost with as little as a four-week minimum.

- **After-School Art Focus (ages 6-11)**
  - Sep. 18-Dec. 18, 4:30-6p (Thu’s)

Cheryl-Judd Magee
New to our Art program, Cheryl has taught a variety of media in private school for nine years. She holds a BFA in ceramics, MA in Expressive Arts and a BA in psychology. Widely exhibited in the Charlotte area she currently teaches our **Bowled Over by the Holidays** class on Monday evenings.

Children and Youth
Make plans for this Tiny version of the bouncing sport. Prorating is available for those who can only attend one day a week.

- **Tiny Tots Basketball Clinic (ages 3-5)**
  - Nov. 17-Dec. 15, Jan. 5-Feb. 2 (Mon/Wed)
  - 3:45-4:30p

Lauren Klitzsch’s team also has some new faces in the lineup. The name-impaired will appreciate them as will parents wanting the best in after-school experiences for their kids:

Kayla Blake
This former West Virginian has called NC home for 15 years, five of which have been working with children. She’s looking toward a BA in Special Education.

Learning, Technology, etc.
If, during September, you tuned in to the Sunday webcasts of services from the church, you likely noted the dramatically improved image quality and graphic titles. Details will have to wait until next month but I wanted you to know about it now so you can take a look for yourself. Much more to come.

Ted Lucas stopped by the other day to tell us about www.findagrave.com, a picture database that’s searchable by several criteria. It’s remarkably comprehensive; I was very impressed to have found the markers of several family members. If you haven’t tried his group yet, this is a typical discovery during an evening with Ted and his…

- **FAMILY Connections**
  - Genealogy w/Ted Lucas
  - Second Tuesdays, 6:30-8p

Our photo group has now established its own Facebook page for our galleries, linking regularly to the Cornwell page on that social media site. To find us you can search for “Photo Connections” within Facebook, or link to us via our September gallery (“Waiting”) on the Learning Center page of the Cornwell web site.

- **PHOTO Connections** w/John Bambach
  - Third Wednesdays, 7-9p

Danielle Glefke
Her interest in diverse learning styles, love of music and passion for helping is the heart that goes with this Queens graduate’s BA in Music Therapy. It’s a good combination for her, and for us.
DEADLINE FOR THE NOVEMBER 2014 ISSUE IS 4:00PM, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15.
Max 450 words, subject to editing for space. Please email all submissions to the MPBC Communications Director, Laura Geer, at lgeer@mpbconline.org.

Start-Up Sunday, September 7

Wonderful Wednesday, September 17
Dinner and Life-Sized Candy Land