By Jonathan Crutchfield

Liturgically based churches use the season of Advent as the beginning of the church year. Four Sundays plus their weekdays comprise a period of waiting for the coming of Christ. Join this family of faith as we eagerly prepare for the mystery incarnate. All services listed below will be held in the Sanctuary, with the exception of the December 7 and 17 events. Everyone is invited to attend.

November 30 (Sunday) at 11:00am
The Moravian Love Feast service begins our Advent journey together. A simple meal (cookies and tea) will be served; the singing of Christmas carols; a homily by the Reverend Maria Long; the sounds of children singing; the anthems sung by the Motet Singers; and the simple beauty of lit beeswax candles will usher us into the Advent season.

December 7 (Sunday) at 6:30 pm in Heaton Hall - Carols in the Round is becoming a favorite way to enjoy choral Christmas music at MPBC. The Motet Singers will sing both familiar and new Christmas anthems and will join you in singing familiar Christmas hymns, too. The Motet Singers were privileged to sing at the Biltmore House for its first 2014 Candlelight Tour. Come enjoy the sounds of Christmas with the Motet Singers. Note that no refreshments will be served this year before the concert.

December 14 (Sunday) at 11:00am - The Service of Lessons and Carols will be led by the choirs, ministers, and lay readers as the story of Jesus' birth is told through scripture and song. This service has become one of our best loved traditions at MPBC.

To a Dream Committed

“Myers Park Baptist Church is an ecumenical congregation in the Baptist tradition.”

December 2014

“ALL IN”: WE NEED YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT
It’s time to pledge the 2015 budget!

By Chris and Linda William

When we were asked to lead the Stewardship Campaign, some of our first reactions were fear and trepidation. Church stewardship campaigns are always difficult, more so in transitional years between senior ministers. And let’s face it. No one enjoys asking people for money – especially at church.

Months later, that fear has been replaced by joy and thankfulness. We have been blessed to work with a wonderfully dedicated team of people with one shared goal: securing the pledges that will enable MPBC to build a viable budget for 2015.

The campaign began in September with our DreamFest picnic, and culminated on November 23 with our Thanks-for-Giving luncheon. Both were fantastic opportunities to share fellowship and our dreams for our Church.

There’s no doubt that our Church is in a time of transition. But that’s ok. Because we’re still a family and, like any family, times of uncertainty and change can bring us together in new ways. Along with the members of the Stewardship SLG, we feel more energized than ever about what lies ahead.

And yet, our work is not done. As we write this, there are still many families who pledged the 2014 budget but have not yet responded to the campaign for 2015. That gap puts the community we all care so much about – our staff, our programs, our ability to attract a dynamic new senior minister – at risk.

We need you to join hands with us to lift up our Church for the coming year! As Charlie Elberson so eloquently put it in this year’s Stewardship video, our hopes and dreams for Myers Park Baptist are made reality only when we work together – when we are “all in.”

There are several easy ways to pledge. You can email Barry Metzger, our Church Administrator, at bmetzger@mpbconline.org, go to https://mpbconline.org/make-a-pledge, or you can drop a completed pledge card in the offering plate.

Our Covenant – the promise we all make to one another as members of this community – reads in part: “We covenant to nurture this Church as a community of faith by the dedication of our personal and material resources.” By joining this Church, you have already made an important decision to be part of this community. And that comes with certain responsibilities. Please join us in committing to the dream for 2015, and pledge today!

The Season of Advent

By Jonathan Crutchfield

Liturgically based churches use the season of Advent as the beginning of the church year. Four Sundays plus their weekdays comprise a period of waiting for the coming of Christ. Join this family of faith as we eagerly prepare for the mystery incarnate. All services listed below will be held in the Sanctuary, with the exception of the December 7 and 17 events. Everyone is invited to attend.

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...Continued on page 10
Room to Grow

By Everett Goodwin

Advent and Christmas in Washington was always a very special season: During much of Advent we enjoyed the presence of many visitors. An annual candlelight carol service made up of several downtown church choirs was always both well-attended and inspirational, although it was invariably the same evening as the annual rivalry game between the Washington Redskins and the Dallas Cowboys. (The sound technicians always established a TV in their control room – service participants made frequent visits to check on the score.)

By Christmas Congress was out of session, the city took on “a home town glow,” and for a brief moment, partisan politics was on hiatus.

I remember two scripture texts from those days, both from Luke. One text was at a dramatic moment at the beginning of the Candlelight Carol Service. The sanctuary was similar in size to MPBC with a very long center aisle and large chancel. My job was to open the service by walking down that aisle reading Luke 2:8-19, the part about the angels’ proclamation to the shepherds.

It might seem an easy job. But I was supposed to read in such a manner as to reach the line “and Mary pondered them in her heart” at just the right moment to make a left turn at the top of the chancel steps and disappear into the AV control room. And, I had to read in near total darkness. The only light was from candlelight provided by two very young acolytes. The acolytes were instructed to hang on to the sleeves of my robe and to hold their candles high enough so I could read. The thought of immolation from candles so close to my robe’s sleeves was always a distraction, but we always made it and the timing was usually perfect. I can never hear or read about Mary’s “pondering in her heart” without sentimental remembrance.

The second text came on Christmas Eve, the one in Luke 2:7 wherein it says that Mary placed the baby Jesus in the manger because there was “no place for them in the inn.” Those words, too, will always be with me. Very early on, I tended to think badly of the Innkeeper. But over the seasons of Christmas I have read that text countless times and I have changed my perspective: The Innkeeper has been unfairly judged. Rather than to say “sorry, we are full up!” he instead made room for this poor expectant couple. In a stable’s manger? Yes. Unusual? Yes. But that manger beat the alternative: it provided security and warmth where life could begin to grow.

We all need room to grow and a place to grow. You may have seen normally large animals that grow only to diminutive size because of limited space or vegetables which grow in stunted form inside a bottle. The same is true of people. We grow to the intellectual and spiritual space that our environment – or our choices – provides. But we ought not let ourselves be limited. The infant Jesus reportedly grew far beyond the restricted stable in which he was born and, far beyond the limits of his parochial childhood. We can choose more expansive for our souls.

We grow to the spiritual and intellectual space we have or that we create. We become big-hearted or parsimonious due to spiritual and environmental conditions. But we are not the helpless victims of circumstances. Beyond our predicaments and circumstances, we can enlarge our environments and make room to grow. To be a big-hearted, great-souled person is not the destiny of a privileged few. It is the outcome for anyone who chooses to expand his or her horizons and learns to see an opportunity in every circumstance.

As we approach this Christmas, it is my prayer that all of us will grow beyond the apparent limits of our lives. Settle in to read the Christmas Story. And ponder that innkeeper: He made room for Jesus’ life to grow.

December Loose Plate Offering Recipient

By Cheri Lindblom

The Loose Plate Offering for December supports the work of NC Med Assist. NC Med Assist operates a community pharmacy that provides medications, healthcare advocacy and educational support to low-income and uninsured North Carolina residents. Visit www.medassist.org, for more information.

Deacon of the Week

November 30 - December 6: Nancy Culp, 704.222.6902, neceb@yahoo.com
December 7-13: Mack Clark, 704.989.4116, dark.mack@principal.com
December 14-20: Carol Pearsall, 704.562.3100, cp.carolp@gmail.com
December 21-27: Ophelia Garmon-Brown, 704.617.1260, ogarmonbrown@yahoo.com
December 28 - January 3: Jane and Ted Lucas, 704.930.7170, tedlucas@aol.com

Holiday Closings

By Robin Coira

The Church office will close at noon on Christmas Eve, Wednesday, December 24 and will be closed December 25 and 26 in celebration of Christmas.

The Church office will close at noon on Wednesday, December 31 (the financial office will remain open until 5:00pm). The office will be closed on New Year’s Day, January 1.

New Memory Garden

By Cathryn Rivers

Plans for a memory garden outside the conference room window are displayed on an easel in Heaton Hall Foyer. This garden will join with the office entrance garden planted last fall and wrap around the building, featuring a stone walk and benches. Many people, Sunday school classes, and committees have contributed to this garden to honor or in memory of friends. For more information, please contact me at 704.334.7063.
**Milestones**
*(as of November 15, 2014)*

**DEATHS/LOVE AND SYMPATHY TO:**
- Ray Lyles and his family on the death of his wife, Harriett (Sunny) B. Lyles, of Charlotte, NC, on October 25, 2014.
- Robert Dulin and his family on the death of his sister-in-law, Celeste Ficklen Dulin, of Charlotte, NC, on October 25, 2014.
- Nancy Moore and her family on the death of her husband and Debbie Moore Clark on the death of her father, Richard T. Moore, of Charlotte, NC, on October 26, 2014.
- Marcia Bowers and her family on the death of her sister-in-law, Eleanor (Tacky) Vosburgh, of Blowing Rock, NC, on November 8, 2014.
- Jim Flanders and his family on the death of his mother, Ruby Claxton Flanders, of Swainsboro, GA, on November 5, 2014.
- Bernard Banks and his family on the death of his mother, Marvelle Banks, of Saluda, SC, on November 12, 2014.

**BIRTHS/CONGRATULATIONS TO:**
- Meg and Micah McInnis on the birth of their son, Henry Davis McInnis, on October 20, 2014
- Megan and Michael Meuse on the birth of their son, Marlon Anthony Meuse, on October 31, 2014.

**WEDDINGS/CONGRATULATIONS TO:**
- Melissa and Ricki Barley on their wedding on October 18, 2014.
- Marcy McClanahan and Cindy Clemens on their wedding on October 18, 2014.
- Rich Cauthen and Wes Kenney on their wedding on November 4, 2014.
- Mickey Sigmon on the marriage of her daughter, Debra Elizabeth Sigmon to Rebecca Serina Garber on November 9, 2014.
- David English and Scott Fippin on their wedding on November 11, 2014.

**Financial Report**
*(as of October 31, 2014)*

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**In the News:**

**Chrissy Williamson's Response to Gaston County Commissioners' Resolution**
*13 November 2014*

**RESOLUTION TITLE:**
GASTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO THE FEDERAL COURT RULING ABOLISHING THE 2012 MARRIAGE AMENDMENT TO THE NORTH CAROLINA CONSTITUTION

**In Response:**

I would like to speak to the resolution in response to the repealing of Amendment One, in the consent agenda...

First I want to say thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight. I believe the work that you do to make Gaston County a safe, just, and desirable place for people to live and raise their families is important work. I’m grateful to you for your commitment to honoring every constituent who lives within Gaston County, regardless of political party, religious affiliation or socio-economic status. This is no easy task, given the great diversity within these county lines.

My spouse and I moved to Gaston County in 2012 because of its affordability and easy access to Charlotte and Shelby, where we work. We purchased a home here and we are raising our daughter here. We also tell our friends about how much we enjoy life here, and we advocate for more folks, like ourselves, to consider living in Gaston County. We believe this is one way we can support and grow our community.

My spouse and I both have Master of Divinity degrees and I have an additional graduate degree in Theology & Ethics. He serves as a chaplain and I serve as an ordained clergy in a baptist church. I say these things not to brag, but to ensure you that we are both committed to the bible, to theological conversation and we are committed to our faith and the free practice of religion in this country. We work every day to ensure that our daughter and even her children grow up with the same religious liberties that we have enjoyed for our whole lives.

For this reason, I wish to express my concern for your use of the term "sanctity of marriage" throughout your resolution in opposition to the court ruling abolishing Amendment One.

For something to be sacred or holy is a religious distinction, which has nothing to do with the law. Nor is it the business of any elected political representative to use as a label for his or her opinion. It is not a synonym for tradition. It is a term that is used in religious communities to distinguish the things that humanity cannot violate.

Different religious communities declare different things to be sacred. In my tradition, for example, baptism and communion (among other sacraments) are sacred or sanctified; they are determined holy by our practicing community of faith that is made up of people in relationship with one another.

We have a sacred trust that is shared and that involves deep respect for difference of opinion. One of the things that we, even within our church, are not in 100% agreement upon is a definition of marriage.

We agree that all marriage is sacred.

But even in our one church, we do not have consensus of what marriage is. Some believe that marriage is between one man and one woman, meaning no divorce, no remarriage after divorce. Others believe that marriage is between one man and one woman until it doesn't work out, in which case divorce is acceptable and remarriage is possible after the divorce is finalized.

Still others believe that marriage is any sacred union between two people, regardless of sex or gender, who make a holy promise to share their lives together. Can you see the great diversity of opinion that exists within just this one faith community?

It stands to reason that if within one religious group there can be such diversity, there must be even greater diversity of opinion amongst your 206,000 constituents. For you to represent them all fairly and within the parameters of the Constitution of the...Continued on page 4
Senior Minister Search

Group Update

By Skip Gribble

The hymn “Be Thou My Vision” reminds us to call on God, to seek God’s presence whether “waking or sleeping” and for God to be our “best thought, by day or by night.” Its words provide a framework as our Senior Minister Search Group continues to seek God’s vision and guidance for our task of helping the Church call our next Senior Minister. We are interviewing some very strong, interesting and capable candidates. And we appreciate the respect and understanding that the congregation continues to show for this confidential process of mutual discernment (discernment by us and by the candidates with whom we are engaged).

As we continue to move through our work, we call on the congregation to continue in prayer and support for each member of our group. A season of change certainly is upon us—at the time of writing this article, we understand that Everett Goodwin’s last Sunday as Interim Senior Minister with our Church will be January 11 and that staff members and guest preachers will fill our pulpit and lead us in worship in the near term. As was aptly stated in the materials sent out regarding Dr. Goodwin’s departure, it is still impossible to know God’s timing regarding the call of our next Senior Minister. But we remain encouraged and excited about the prospects before us and know that God will “still be our vision” through the remainder of our work.

Library News

By Twila Compton

Sunday morning library volunteers will no longer be attending Library on a routine basis. When you are checking out books please follow the written instruction printed on the yellow signs in the Library. Be sure you put the date you are checking it out. Place the card in the wooden box after filling it out.

We remind you to please return any overdue books you have in your home to the Library at your earliest convenience. Help your librarians put these books back in circulation for other members.

NEW BOOKS:
In the Kingdom of Ice: The Grand and Terrible Polar Voyage of the USS Jeannette by Hampton Sides

One of the last unmapped areas of the globe in the late nineteenth century was the North Pole. No one knew what existed beyond the ice rim of the Arctic seas and there were many wild theories. James Gordon Bennet, Jr., the eccentric and extremely wealthy owner of The New York Herald, was keen to create a sensation on an epic scale by funding an official U.S. naval expedition. He chose as its leader a young officer, George Washington DeLong, who had gained fame for a rescue operation off the coast of Greenland.

About the Author: Hampton Sides based this story on information of unpublished correspondence and his own travels across the Siberian Arctic. It is an exciting narrative of a classic American adventure and is a real page turner. Anyone who reads this book is in for a real treat.

Killing Jesus by Bill O’Reilly & Martin Dugard
(The following review is from the fly leaf of the book.)

“The shocking events leading up to the execution of the most influential man who ever lived are detailed in this book: Nearly two thousand years after this beloved and controversial young revolutionary was brutally killed by Roman soldiers. More than 2.2 billion people attempt to follow his teachings and believe he is God.”

For a better understanding of the political times Jesus lived in and events that caused his brutal death this may be an interesting read for many people.

People who recently attended the weekend with Barbara Brown Taylor may be interested in the addition of paperback books written by her that our Library has recently acquired. Look in the paperback section on the shelves to the left as you enter the room. We also have copies of Learning to Walk in the Dark.
**Our New Members Who Joined in Absentia:**
- Allison and Alex Gnilka
- Katherine and Randall Hoose
- Joel Houston

**myMPBC Coming In January**

By Jane Huddle

myMPBC is rolling out to church members in January. So, what is myMPBC???

myMPBC is a new and exciting secured online portal for connecting with church members. You will be able to access and print member directory information, view submitted member photos, view your personal pledge and giving records and view your Church Ministry and Group information. Additionally, you will be able to view and submit changes to your personal membership information such as home address, phone number and email address. Other features will be coming later.

A new link for myMPBC will be added to the Church website at the first of the year. The link will take you to a web page where you will learn how you can create an ID for logging into myMPBC. The creation process depends on the Church having your preferred email address, so please contact Amy Jones (ajones@mpbconline.org) if you need to provide an update.

**Mobile App**

After creating your ID, you can also install and sign into the Church Life app from ACS on your smartphone or tablet. Church member directory information will then be readily available for quick viewing and usage.

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**New Member Contact Information**

To reach any of our new members, please contact Mariah Currin at mcurrin@mpbconline.org or 704.334.7232 x41. Also see the “myMPBC” article on this page for exciting news about our new online church directory coming in January.

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www.mpbconline.org
Faith Formation

December 17, 2014

TIME: Dinner begins at 5:45pm
COST: $6 adult / $3 child 12 and under / $12 immediate family max
RESERVATIONS: Register online at https://mpbconline.org/event/december-wonderful-wednesday/or contact Rainey Underwood (runderwood@mpbconline.org or 704.334.7232 x56) by noon on Monday, December 15 to reserve your meal.

CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT
6:30-7:30 in Heaton Hall
Join us for this wonderful Christmas tradition and support the work of our Children’s Ministry and Children’s Choirs.

We’re Here!

By Chrissy Williamson

On more than one occasion in the last 6 months, I have heard members of this congregation ask guest speakers about young adults and the church. Why aren’t they coming to church? Who will preserve our Church if we don’t reach the young adults? What can we do to become a more attractive Church for younger adults? Hearing these questions elicited two responses. The first is a feeling of deep gratitude for a Church that thinks about, is concerned about, and is willing to change to become more welcoming for people of a younger generation. Second, a realization that many of you haven’t had an opportunity to meet the incredible young adults who are already here!

So, to help assuage anyone with fears about young adults and this Church, I thought this might be a good opportunity to invite you to get to know the young adults who are right here among us, worshipping alongside us, attending small groups, Sunday school classes, outreach events, and enjoying times of fellowship. Did you know that there are over 150 young adults on our email list? Did you know that a Young Adult SLG was established this fall under the Ministry of Faith Formation? Currently serving on this SLG are Carolyn Mayer (who is also a member of the Chancel Choir and Motet Singers), Rich Wheeler (also serving as an usher and helping with our audio/visual team), Michelle Smith (mother of 17 month old, Hollis), and Doug Driggers (member of the Communications SLG and the LGBT SLG). The Young Adult SLG set out to pursue two goals this year (1) to establish a Sunday School class for younger adults and (2) to host monthly gatherings for young adults outside of Sunday School. Our Sunday school class and monthly gatherings average 10-15 people, and we are in the first 3 months of our (official) ministry here!

It is also important to the SLG and to the young adults here that we not only find ways to connect with our peers, but that we find ways to become involved in the broader community at Myers Park Baptist. This fall, we have gathered at DreamFest, the MPBC Habitat for Humanity build, Dilworth Grille, and the Haennis’ house to support the Carolina Panthers. The Young Adult Sunday school class is also challenging the Fifth Dimension Sunday school class to a friendly competition to see who can collect more food items for the Advent food drive.

In the future, we plan to volunteer for Room In The Inn, host a party at Freedom Park for the whole Church, and gather at the White Water Center, among other things.

All of this is to say that young adults are here! And we celebrate being a part of this vibrant community of faith. Just as you want to get to know us, we want to get to know you. So we invite you to chat with us when you see us in worship, in Heaton Hall, in the Education Building hallway upstairs before or after Sunday school, or anywhere else around this campus. We’re here and we want to be in community with you!

Advent Meditation Booklets Available!

By Chrissy Williamson

This season of Advent, you have the opportunity to journey with the whole Church by reading daily meditations written by Church members and staff. New this year in the Advent booklet, you will find works of art by Jan Richardson. Jan is an author, artist, retreat leader and ordained minister in the United Methodist Church. She specializes in liturgical art, hosting a huge online gallery from which we have chosen the cover art and selections for meditation this season.

In addition to the printed booklet that will be available at the Heaton Hall Welcome Desk, in the Narthex of the Sanctuary, and in the Church office reception area, meditations will be available online at mpbconline.org. Look for the link to the meditation blog on the home page. By following the blog, you will have the opportunity to comment on meditations, read the comments of others, and share the meditations on social media.

Join the Advent Journey, November 30-December 25.

EarthKeepers Are Dreaming of a Green Christmas

By Linda Whitesitt

As we journey through this season of Advent, EarthKeepers hopes that our choices for gift giving, scheduling our time and organizing gatherings will be grounded in consideration of our love and care for the earth. For ideas on how to have a “green” holiday season, check out the EarthKeepers bulletin board in Heaton Hall Foyer or visit this website, http://eartheasy.com/give_sustain_christmas.htm. Think about incorporating one or more of the suggestions into your preparations and celebrations. Have a life-giving and earth-saving holiday season!

Read-along with EarthKeepers

Want to find out more about Creation Care? Join EarthKeepers in reading Coming Back To Life - Practices to Reconnect Our Lives, Our
Parents Night Out: Sitters Needed!
Saturday, December 6, 4:30-8:00pm
We are still on the lookout for youth sitters for our Parents Night Out on December 6. We need 4 sitters to help make this night a success. You will get 4 service hours, dinner and I am also offering a $20 discount for our Kanuga Retreat. Sign-ups will be first come first serve (or first to serve) by e-mailing me at chughes@mpbconline.org.

Sign Up For This Year’s Christmas Eve Tableau
As in years past, our youth will be a part of one of the most meaningful and longstanding traditions of the Advent season, our Christmas Eve Tableau. We need youth for all kinds of roles. Sign up at mpbcyouth.com and click on “Tableau 2014.” Refreshments will be provided for participants.

Family Worship
Sunday, December 28
Come for a worship service that celebrates families, whatever your family may look like. This is a child-friendly service, so please bring your children and you are encouraged to dress casually. We will have a special children’s sermon and our children will assist us in worship.

Women’s Retreat
Rescheduled for January 16-18
By Chrissy Williamson
Join Pattie Butler, storyteller Janice Davin and me for a fabulous weekend this January. Together we will examine the book of Ruth and explore the theme of spiritual journey. We are still working on the details but please go ahead and save this date! If you’re interested in attending and would like updated information emailed to you as it becomes available, please contact me, cwilliamson@mpbconline.org.

Covenant Groups
By Chrissy Williamson
If you have questions about Covenant Groups, or are interested in joining a week- day or weekend Covenant Group, please email me, cwilliamson@mpbconline.org.

Anticipating New Connections
By Carol Reid
Spiritual exploration, living our faith, growing our relationships and playing together—that’s what Connections means at MPBC. We are busy creating special opportunities for you next February through April. Isn’t it fun to see what favorite groups are returning and what new ideas pop up? Gatherings include potlucks, garden adventures, decorating tips, downsizing advice, uptown tours, and book discussions; we’ll consider finding God in our everyday lives, and being part of earth care.

We expect Winter/Spring Connections to go live online and in print by Monday, January 12. Registration will be open through Wednesday, January 28. That’s a briefer registration window, so mark your calendars to allow time for deciding how you want to get connected at MPBC!!

As we wind up Fall Connections, everyone offers thanks to the facilitators who make our groups happen. New proposals are due Friday, December 5 at https://mpbconline.org or email Carol Reid at creid1@carolina.rr.com.

TTWS December News
By Belinda Guess
The Last Straw
December is a very busy and exciting month at Through-the-Week School. Our 3’s, 4’s and TK students will be visiting the sanctuary on Wednesday, December 10 to hear the story “The Last Straw” read by Children’s Minister Carrie Veal. This is a delightful story about a proud old camel who is chosen to carry the wise men’s gifts to the new baby king in Bethlehem.

Carolining
Music Minister Jonathan Crutchfield and Children’s Music Associate Deb Steiner will lead classes in a carol sing of the holiday favorites on Monday, December 15 at 9:30am in Heaton Hall. Parents and families are invited to attend this joyful and spirited event.

Holiday Closing
Through-the-Week School will be closed for the holidays, December 22 through January 2. Classes will resume on January 6 with the excitement of a new year to play, to learn!

By Chris Hughes
Parents Night Out: Sitters Needed!
Saturday, December 6, 4:30-8:00pm
We are still on the lookout for youth sitters for our Parents Night Out on December 6. We need 4 sitters to help make this night a success. You will get 4 service hours, dinner and I am also offering a $20 discount for our Kanuga Retreat. Sign-ups will be first come first serve (or first to serve) by e-mailing me at chughes@mpbconline.org.

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World by eco-philosopher Joanna Macy and Molly Young Brown. We will be studying this book for several weeks. If you would like to join in our discussions, contact: greenkat1@bellsouth.net for meeting times.
Thanksgiving is a time that compels us to look back and express gratitude for what has come and what will be. The Ministry of Outreach shares in such a sense of gratitude for the faithful outreach gifts of money and time that we have been able to put into action around Charlotte, our nation, and our world.

As you may know, the Ministry of Outreach (MOO) allocates annually the Outreach Funds in the Church budget and delivers in-kind gifts from the congregation. We partner with agencies and ministries—in Charlotte and beyond—that have a large impact in their particular area of focus and that impart systemic change. Also, our Ministry of Outreach works to mobilize our Church community to give their time and resources, and we offer an opportunity for long-term relationships with partner agencies as well as people served by such agencies.

We fund outreach partners and agencies through our Outreach budget, which is pulled from sources that include:

- A percentage of the Operating Budget (which budget is raised annually during the Stewardship Campaign);
- 100% of the Loose Plate Offerings (the loose offerings in the plate each week, which are designated for a specific recipient);
- 100% of the Rice Bowl Offerings (monthly offerings related to hunger that are designated for local hunger relief through Loaves and Fishes and international hunger relief through STOP HUNGER NOW); and
- 100% of the Five-in-One Special Offering (a special offering usually collected around May that benefits various partner agencies).

We also support partner agencies with gifts-in-kind (such as space for meetings, Service Saturdays, and clothing and food drives) and Emergent Reserve Funds. And outreach funds sometimes come from endowment monies (for example, to support Habitat for Humanity). Our funding this year reflects an exciting new partnership with Freedom School Partners and our Freedom School at Pinewood Elementary.

Through the congregation’s generous gifts of money and time, we supported more than 25 agencies and partners. The summary below gives a snapshot of our budgeted 2014 Outreach Funds. We are grateful for the congregation’s financial support of this Church’s longstanding commitment to outreach, as well as all of the time, talent and resources dedicated by the congregation to being the hands and feet of God. If you have any questions regarding our outreach efforts, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

### Overview of Outreach Giving 2014

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<tr>
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<td>Alliance of Baptists</td>
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<td>Association of Welcoming &amp; Affirming Baptists</td>
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<td>Baptist Peace Fellowship</td>
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<td><strong>RECONCILIATION OUTREACH</strong></td>
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<td>Time Out Youth</td>
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<td><strong>CRISIS OUTREACH</strong></td>
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<td>Urban Ministry Center</td>
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<td>Samaritan House</td>
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<td>YWCA-Women In Transition</td>
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<td>Charlotte Family Housing (Family Promise)</td>
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<td>STOP HUNGER NOW</td>
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<td><strong>LOCAL HUNGER OUTREACH</strong></td>
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<td>Loaves and Fishes</td>
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<td><strong>EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH</strong></td>
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<td>Freedom School-Pinewood Elementary</td>
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<td><strong>INTERNAL OUTREACH ACTION TEAMS</strong></td>
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<td>Sedgefield Middle School</td>
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<td>RAIN supply closet</td>
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<td>Room in the Inn</td>
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<td><strong>EMERGENT RESERVE FUND</strong></td>
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<td>Freedom School Reserve</td>
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<td>Loose Plate Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>$171,300</td>
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**Room In The Inn**

By Cheri Lindblom

Room In The Inn gets its name from a story in the Bible about a family coming to a small town called Bethlehem and not finding any room in the inn. We cannot go back in history 2000 years and change that story. But what we can do is create our own story by providing a Room In The Inn (RITI).

Every Saturday from December through March, MPBC participates in the RITI program. We open our doors and welcome 14 of our homeless neighbors, offering shelter, a warm meal and hospitality.

There are many different opportunities to serve with Room In The Inn, and we are confident you will be touched when serving our guests. We welcome everyone — individuals, families, church groups — to find a way to participate.

We need your help and there are many ways to serve:
- Set up and make beds
- Provide transportation to and from the center
- Prepare and serve dinner or breakfast
- Spend the night as a host
- Make sack lunches

RITI is a unique way for us to share God’s love and to serve our neighbors who are homeless. It starts with building relationships of trust and respect and believing in the power of love offered in one-to-one environments of trust and respect and believing in the power of love offered in one-to-one environments.

Volunteers can sign up:
- On the bulletin board in Heaton Hall Foyer
- By contacting one of the RITI captains: Janet Miller, Joan Hope, Judy Hart, Patrick Schober, Kevin McCarter, Todd Smith, Maribeth and Wallace Jaklik, and Van Wilson.

**Holiday Outreach at Elizabeth House**

December 14-18

By Cindy Clemens

Volunteers Needed!
Sign up now to host families at Elizabeth House, December 14-18

One of MPBC’s best outreach activities takes place this month at Elizabeth House, one of three residences operated by Charlotte Family Housing (formerly “Family Promise”). Newly homeless families live temporarily at Elizabeth House — with their own bedroom, private storage cubby and personal kitchen supplies. During the day, children go to school or childcare while parents work or attend special training.

Church volunteers can serve as overnight hosts Sunday through Thursday or provide dinner Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. The best kept secret: Overnight hosts arrive at 8:00pm and can leave after 6:30am the next morning. They have a private room with a private bath, as well as WiFi, a private TV and coffee. Serving as an overnight host saves CFH over $100 per night at each of our shelter sites, and is a critical volunteer need for our program. You can sign up on the Church website, www.mpbcinline.org/missions or email me (cclemens@charlottenc.gov).

Additionally, we are collecting essential living supplies for residents. When families enter Elizabeth House, they are provided “welcome baskets” that include basic living items like sheets, towels, pillows, serving plates/cups/utensils, pots & pans and toiletries. These NEW (not used) materials will be collected in laundry baskets outside Heaton Hall beginning in December. Let your holiday spirit grow December 14-18 as we welcome, feed, nurture and empower local families in need.

**8th Annual Oatmeal and Canned Food Drive**

Now - January 15

We are collecting all types of canned goods and non-perishables, as well as 5-lb or larger: oatmeal, flour, grits, and sugar (white or brown). Drop off locations are the Cornwell Center and Heaton Hall Foyer. Monetary donations can be made payable to MPBC (please note “Oatmeal Drive 2014/15” on the memo line) and sent to Barry Metzger at Myers Park Baptist Church, 1900 Queens Road, Charlotte, 28207. Contributions are tax deductible. Contact Bob Bishop, 980.613.2573 or bobbishopuk@gmail.com for more information. Our goal this year is 100,000 lbs.

**John Rutter’s "Gloria"**

By Deborah Moore Clark
Chair, Ministry of Worship and Music

I’ll never forget the first time I sang John Rutter’s Gloria. I was a seminary student when combined choirs of alumni and church music students presented Gloria in chapel. The mood was electric and the singing and hearing of the 17-minute piece produced a natural high like none I’ve witnessed since. In the hours following, students on campus seemed to walk on air, and the energy of the piece lingered in our hearts, on our lips, in the lightness of our steps. Every time I’ve sung it since, the experience has been exhilarating. I share this witness as a musician, but I know congregations have been moved by the worship experience the piece evokes. I trust it will be so for you when our Chancel Choir presents Gloria in worship on Sunday, December 21 at 11:00am. Instrumentation will include the phenomenal ensemble of brass and percussion of Carolina Brass in concert with our magnificent pipe organ.

_Gloria in excelsis Deo_ is Latin for Glory to...Continued on page 10

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**Outdoor Oatmeal Drive**

Now – January 15

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_Gloria in excelsis Deo_ is Latin for Glory to...Continued on page 10

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The annual text

The hymn, known as the Greater Doxology or Angelic Hymn, begins with the words the angels sang, announcing Jesus’ birth to shepherds in Luke 2:14. Later, other verses were added to the scriptural text, forming a doxology: Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. The hymn name is frequently abbreviated to Gloria in excelsis or Gloria, as in Rutter’s case. Divided into three sections, the translated text exalts a high Christology and Triune God, ascribing praise and seeking mercy. Through the centuries, the Gloria has been sung to a wide variety of melodies and scholars have catalogued over 200 compositions. Vivaldi, Saint-Saëns, Poulenc, and Handel, along with Rutter, are among the notable composers.

Start to finish, dynamic levels within the piece swell and taper, from very loud to very soft, adding contrast and variety. Overall, Rutter’s Gloria is rhythmic, upbeat and punctuated with syncopation, hemiola, staccato and accents. Yet tranquil and ethereal passages pervade the score, luring singers to voice hushed floating flutelike tones as in chant. Singers are divided into eight vocal parts, providing a rich, complex texture. Movement I’s pace is quick and vivacious. The pace slows in Movement II and opens with a motif resembling flapping of angel wings (listen for the organ). In Movement III, the pace again quickens, opening joyously, before moving into a four-tiered fugue (listen for each of four voice parts entering), and ending with a rousing Amen and Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Composer John Milford Rutter was born in London in 1945. Educated at Clare College, Cambridge, Rutter later served as director of music there from 1975-79, leading the choir to international acclaim. Rutter founded the Cambridge Singers in 1981, a choir with whom he has made many recordings of sacred choral repertoire, including his own works. Rutter resides in England and frequently conducts choirs and orchestras worldwide.

Rutter’s compositions are primarily choral, and include carols, anthems and extended works such as Gloria, Requiem and Magnificat. His music is eclectic, showing influences of French and English choral traditions of the early 20th Century, light music and American classic songwriting. Rutter has confessed that while he composes and conducts religious music, he is “not a particularly religious man, yet still deeply spiritual and inspired by the spirituality of sacred verses and prayers.” Sir David Willcocks, Rutter’s protecteur, considers his protégé Rutter “the most gifted composer of his generation.”

Forty years ago on May 5, 1974, Rutter visited the US and conducted the premiere of his cantata Gloria in Omaha, Nebraska. In the intervening years, the composition has become a much-performed favorite. The Ministry of Worship & Music of Myers Park Baptist Church has sung Rutter’s Gloria will become one of your holiday favorites.

The Season of Advent

December 17 (Wednesday) at 6:45pm in Heaton Hall - The annual Children’s Christmas Pageant will touch your heart as our children tell the Christmas story using costumes, dialogue and songs. Children will play instruments as part of the prelude music and throughout the service. This service is not just for parents and grandparents. Be transported back to your own childhood Christmas wonder through our children.

December 21 (Sunday) at 11:00am - A very special treat is in store that morning. The Chancel Choir and organ, with the Carolina Brass and percussionists from Greensboro, will present the much loved “Gloria” by John Rutter as part of the worship service. This 17 minute choral work brings the joy and beauty of music and theology together. See the article about the “Gloria” in this newsletter.

December 24 (Wednesday) at 4:00pm and 6:00pm - Two Christmas Eve Services will usher in the wonder of Christmas. The family-friendly service at 4pm will give children the experience of Christmas by creating a manger scene; singing familiar Christmas carols; engaging in an impromptu choir; hearing Dr. Goodwin read a Christmas story; and lighting candles. The 6:00pm service actually begins at 5:30pm with the Instrumental Music of Christmas. This service ushers in the magic of Christmas with the singing of familiar Christmas hymns; anthems sung by the choir; a homily by Dr. Goodwin; Communion; and the lighting of Christmas candles.

December 24 (Wednesday) at 7:15pm - The well-loved Christmas Tableau will end our evening together as our costumed MPBC youth represent the biblical characters found at the manger. Communion will be served at this holy service. Note that this service will be held from 7:15 to 8:00pm.

December 28 (Sunday) at 11:00am - This day of celebration is the first liturgical Sunday in Christmastide. We celebrate the birth of Christ as a church family with this informal, family-friendly service of worship. Familiar carols, a children’s sermon, the reading of scripture and prayers will engage both young and old as we come together to renew our desire to seek the One who became flesh and dwelt among us.

Carols in the Round

Sunday, December 7 at 6:30pm in Heaton Hall

By Jonathan Crutchfield

Our third season of Carols in the Round promises to be an eclectic program of familiar and new Christmas carols sung by the Motet Singers of MPBC. Heathen Hall will come alive with music as sometimes the Motet Singers will sing, and sometimes the congregation will sing. A circular table was specially designed for this specific concert. Candlelight will enhance the mood of Christmas as we sing in the Christmas season together. The Motet Singers were fortunate to have sung these Christmas anthems for the patrons of Biltmore House at its first Candlelight Tour in early November. We bring the same beautiful singing to Heaton Hall at MPBC. Come take your place among the sounds of Christmas.
Holiday Gifting
For a gift that's sure to be appreciated this holiday season, consider Gift Certificates. They're available for these and other Cornwall Center activities and services:
- Summer Camps
- Massage
- Personal Training
- Yoga
- Child Care
- Tutorials (Photo, Computer, Art, etc.)
- Membership
- Music Lessons (Individual, Group, Adaptive)

Learning, Technology, etc.
Howard Landers’ fine bird photography was the feature of our November meeting. A skillful practitioner, his presentation centered on Spring viewing opportunities in Florida, when plumage is most colorful. All of us, birders or not, came away enriched about both birds and photography.

This coming meeting will be our holiday event with the assignment being Your Best Photo of 2014. Send us one or two of yours. Join us and bring a small snack to share.

Our monthly galleries are on the Learning Center page of the Cornwall web site. You can also find us by searching for “Photo Connections” within Facebook. Contact me for more info about:
- PHOTO Connections w/John Bambach
  Third Wednesdays, 7-9p

For a guided tour taking you toward your familial past I know of no better tracker than Ted Lucas. If you’re going that way, try…
- FAMILY Connections
  Genealogy w/Ted Lucas
  Second Tuesdays, 6:30-8p

Lakewood Angel Tree
Tags on the tree in our lobby represent 82 children, infants to age 18, who need a Christmas gift. Please make a selection and sign out yours at the front desk. Gifts with a maximum value of $50 are to be returned, unwrapped with the tag attached, by 4:30 pm December 4. Thanks.

Happy Holidays!

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Yoga & Expressive Art Workshop is a unique confluence of mindful expressions in which you’ll be guided through basic yoga practice and guided meditation that prepares you for an expressive painting activity. No experience necessary!

Loosely based on the mandala, Sanskrit for “circle,” a sacred symbol of wholeness. It’s all designed to create a feeling of balance and wholeness while having fun as your inner spirit guides you to sponge, scrape or splatter paint on paper.

Comfortable clothing for yoga and painting is a good idea. All materials supplied.

- **Yoga & Expressive Art Workshop**
  w/Debra Toth
  Jan.3, 10a—2p, Lunch provided (Sat)

**Brand New Beginners** is a mini-series for those new to yoga as well as intermediate/advanced students who want to deepen their understanding. Tuesday classes are augmented with optional practice sessions to apply understandings on Thursday evenings. Registration is underway.

- **Brand New Beginners: Yoga Mini-Series**
  w/Jana Birenbaum, E, RYT
  Classes: Jan.6–27, 6p—7:30p (Tue’s)
  Practice (opt.): Jan.6–27, 6p—7p (Thu’s)

**Art & Design**
Studio and Gallery Coordinator, Greg Scott, is again offering art options for the gift recipients in your life, with our December Art and Crafts exhibition, featuring the work of our community artisans.

- **12 Days of Christmas**
  Dec.8–20

Now’s the time to sign up for this creative experience for your after-school artists:

- **After-School Art Focus**
  Jan.8–May.28, 4:30—6p (Thu’s)

Other classes are still underway with plenty of time to create that special gift or serving piece for your holiday gatherings

**Holiday Schedule**
We’ll be closing Tuesday, Dec.23, at 6pm, reopening Saturday, Dec. 27, at 7:30am.

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Children and Youth
Lauren Klitzsch has just the thing for your active 3-5 year-olds during post-Christmas mornings:

- **Holiday Sports Camp** (co-ed)
  Dec.29–31, 8:30a—11:30a (Wed)

We know you’re in the midst of cold weather holiday festivities and preparations but we figured you might want the heads-up on the beginning of...

- **Summer Camp Registration**
  Begins Monday, February 2nd
  www.cornwellcenter.org

NEW this year: full day options for 6-11 year olds!

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DEADLINE FOR THE JANUARY 2015 ISSUE IS 4:00PM, MONDAY, DECEMBER 15.
Max 450 words, subject to editing for space. Please email all submissions to the MPBC Communications Director, Laura Geer, at lgeer@mpbconline.org.

No Room at the Holiday Inn

Children’s Christmas Pageant
Wonderful Wednesday, December 17, 2014
6:45 pm in Heaton Hall (new location)
Dinner 5:45 - 6:30 in Heaton Hall
Reservations by Monday noon, December 15
runderwood@mpbconline.org or 704.334.7232 x56