

The Connection

Seeking to Link Person to Person And All to Christ

February/March 2017

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The Pastor's Pen

Greetings in the Name of Jesus!

At the beginning of a new year, we say to one another, "Happy New Year!" This phrase is hopeful and wishful. We really do want our friends, family, and others to be "happy." Is happiness an illusion or a real possibility? Early on in his teaching ministry, Jesus offered his friends a series of helpful guidelines, all of which could lead someone to happiness or blessedness. The Bible refers to these teachings as the Beatitudes. Take some time and read Matthew 5:1-12; these words when practiced can lead you and me into a life of contentment, satisfaction, happiness, and blessedness. At Christ Church, we often say that we are "Blessed to be a blessing." Happiness is a two-way street. It comes and it goes. God in Christ Jesus is the author of happiness. We will not find happiness apart from God.

The Lord has a lot in store for us here at Christ Church in the coming year. We will continue to grow closer to God and love people more. In the month of Febru-

ary, Brent, Suzanne, and I will be preaching a series on LOVE. We continue to be led by Pastor Daniel Pantoja as we connect with the Latino community all around us. Our children and youth ministries have a full agenda of learning, following, and sharing the Christian faith. In the spring, we will spend a month studying and reflecting on Jesus' healing ministry. We have invited Rev.



John Rice to lead our church through a weekend on wholeness and healing during May 5-7.

Before I finish these new year thoughts, I want to thank you all for sharing your resources in 2016. We completed and paid in full for the renovation of building 103 for our youth ministry (\$360,000). We also met all of our obligations in the budget of \$1,351,000. The Lord has certainly been good to us, and we regularly demonstrate our thankfulness. As we go into 2017, we have pledges of \$1,131,000; coupled with gifts from those who do not pledge, we will be able to support our budget of \$1,428,500. I praise the Lord! Please remember that these facts and figures represent ministries and people. Individual lives are being helped because of our contributions. Persons are getting closer to God because Christ Church is here. The church is not here for the purpose of ministering, but we are here to expand Jesus' works in our world. Yes, we are called to be faithful (believe), and we are called to be fruitful (do as Jesus did).

I am looking forward to sharing in the Lord's work with you in this new year. May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His face to shine upon you and give you peace!

Where will you Look for God this Winter?

Making Peace Between Science and Your Faith

Those are the words that headline Mike McHargue's website (<u>mikemchargue.com</u>), and it's what he hopes to do for the faithful and skeptics alike. He's better known as "Science Mike", the popular host of *Ask Science Mike* and co-host of *The Liturgist Podcast*. He's a leading voice on the intersection of science and faith, and his work reaches hundreds of thousands of people every month. Mike is on tour to promote his highly-anticipated new book, <u>Finding God in the Waves</u>... and he's coming to Chapel Hill.



Pastor Brent invites CUMC members and friends to see *Ask Science Mike Live* at Holy Trinity Church, 300 E. Rosemary Street, on **Sunday, February 19th at 7:30 pm**. This one-night-only special event features a live recording of *Ask Science Mike*, and the podcast will cover questions about science, faith, and life. The questions are unfiltered and the answers unrehearsed. Join us for an honest, fun, and often hilarious journey into the space between science and faith. There will be a special meet and greet with a book signing after the event. Tickets are \$15 and will sell quickly! To purchase yours, go to <u>www.eventbrite.com/e/ask-science-mike -live-chapel-hill-nc-tickets-28607660282</u>.



When I began inviting folks to gather for morning prayer last July, we had a faithful contingent. Still, I often wondered about others who had to work early & those who were on vacation. I wondered about members who'd moved from the community. I thought about friends & colleagues who, like me, were longing for a similar anchoring experience.

So I hopped on Amazon and ordered a cheap tripod & a smartphone mount. I connected my iPhone and away we went on Facebook Live. We now stream morning prayer every Wednesday on the Christ Church Facebook page (<u>www.facebook.com/cumchurch</u>), and we've since streamed other events and services, too. We live streamed our beautiful Christmas Cantata and had viewers join from Virginia, Florida, and Wisconsin. We streamed our 7:00 pm Christmas Eve service, and during

the service, I received a text message from a friend who works at the *Washington Post*. It said: "Crying my eyes out at work right now watching y'all's service." And when it snowed and iced a few Sundays ago, the 65 of us in the sanctuary were joined by over 100 more worshipping from the comfort of their homes – huddled together around laptops and iPads to join in the good work of worship.

I think we're on to something here. The Great Commission in Matthew commands us to go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19). In Acts, we're told that the Holy Spirit is with us to be witnesses of Jesus to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). Could this be a way forward - to bear witness around the world to what God is up to in our corner of creation? Could we harness the power of this technology to share the great Good News of Jesus to our sisters and brothers in Chapel Hill and far, far beyond? And what if, by watching what happens on Sunday morning, someone feels more comfortable setting foot inside our church and connecting with our community? Let's see what God will do.

So we're beginning to explore how we might broaden our streaming capabilities beyond a \$30 tripod and my iPhone. But we need your help. We need a faithful team of tech-savvy people to help vision and design and setup and broadcast, so we can continue to connect with God and one another, grow in our faith, and serve our neighbors here – and to the ends of the earth. If you're interested, email Pastor Brent at <u>blevy@christmethodist.org</u>.

Fat Tuesday, Lent, and March Madness



Special Services & Events

- Ash Wednesday, March 1 Services at 12:15, 7:00 pm
- Wednesday Lenten Meditations, 12:15 pm, weekly starting March 8
- Palm Sunday Choir Cantata, April 9, 9:45 and 11:00 am

More information on Holy Week services will be coming soon. "Fat Tuesday" goes by many names, but in Biblical times this was when all the fat in the house was used up to remember the 40 days Jesus fasted before being crucified for our salvation. During Lent we are asked to give up something. (Try cooking without the



fat, and you'll learn that things taste very different!) We fast from some of the things we enjoy during Lent so that, when Jesus is raised from the dead on Easter Sunday, all the goodness returns to our lives, both here and in Eternity, symbolically and actually!

During our Fat Tuesday celebration, we'll enjoy music provided by Christ Church members and friends. Do you sing? Play an instrument? Tickle the ivories? We'd love to have you perform a song as background entertainment. To share your musical talents, please contact me (919-929-7126 or <u>dsteinert@christmethodist.org</u>). There are others way for you to connect with CUMC's music ministry, too. Please see the article below.

Peace of Christ, Daniel Steinert

There's always room for you as Christ Church praises the Lord with music. Check out the opportunities below and try one soon.

***<u>Join with 40 other singers for the Palm Sunday Cantata on</u> <u>April 9</u>. Rehearsals are Wednesdays, 7:15-8:00pm in the Sanctuary. (Childcare provided.)

***<u>Add your voice or instrument to worship (singing, playing, or</u> <u>ringing handbells).</u> For 8:30 am service info, contact Jordan



Holoman (<u>jholoman@christmethodist.org</u>) or Daniel Steinert (<u>dsteinert@christmethodist.org</u>;919-929-7126) for 9:45 & 11 am service info.

<u>Help our neighbors in need.</u> Perform at the **Spring Benevolence Concert on Wed., April 26th. From 5:00-6:30 pm, Food Trucks will be at CUMC to provide delicious meals, and at 6:30 pm the concert begins featuring the CUMC music ministry choirs, soloists, bell ringers, and more.

***Purchase tickets for Christ Church at Carnegie Hall on June 11, 8:30 pm. Twenty-four CUMC choir members will travel to NYC in June to perform Michael Glasgow's Requiem with 200 singers and orchestra. Tickets ordered by February 22 are \$90 and will be \$125 when released to the general public. Email Daniel to place your order, and specify Parquet (orchestra level) or Tier 1 (1st balcony).



It's almost time for CUMC's first-ever March Gladness/Madness Tournament. Fill out a bracket and join in a fun way for us to raise funds for ministries & missions that are close to your heart. More info will be coming soon, so be sure to tune in

to Selection Sunday on March 12th & start planning your picks. We'll also offer opportunities to cheer on your favorite teams at Town Hall Grill & member homes. It's all great fun when missions/ministries win! Welcome

Sue & Jeff Schott



*Relocated from the Atlanta are *Now live in Briar Creek *Contact them at<u>aschott201@aol.com</u>.

New Time, New Perspectives, & New Places



Wellspring Worship, New and Improved Time!!

On Sunday February 12, the evening CUMC worship service—*Wellspring*—moved to a new time and will now be held from **6:30-7:30 pm**. We hope this time shift of 30 minutes will help decompress your Sunday nights a bit and allow for an earlier return home. If you have

not worshiped at Wellspring, we would love for you to join us! A Sunday evening service allows for folks who are away for the weekend to worship before the week begins. But for many others, this service is their regular worshipping home. We also have many visitors and friends attend who may not always be comfortable coming to a morning worship setting. It is a user-friendly service, and you are always encouraged to *Come As You Are!* There is room for everyone at the Lord's Table!

Peace of Christ, Pastor Suzanne

Been Thinking About ... Some Thoughts to Honor Black History Month

Scripture has a life of its own. It is the living, breathing Word of God. As we look back at the history of black people in America, we see evidence of how God's Spirit gave birth to the black church in the middle of times of slavery. Early on, with culture, prejudice, and injustice joining forces, few slaves were converted. But Puritan Cotton Mather and other clergymen spoke out strongly for the gospel to be preached to the slaves and for baptism to be of-



"Plantation Burial"; Antrobus, John (1837-1907)

fered. With the arrival of Methodists and Baptists, black Christianity began to erupt and spread because these traditions emphasized conversion as a *spiritual experience*.

In 1829, the South Carolina Methodist Conference appointed William Capers to lead a special department for plantation missions. This was the first official effort of its sort, and it prompted slave owners to take the Great Commission seriously. Four years later, a Presbyterian pastor, Charles Jones, was named an "apostle to the negro slaves." And although he was a slave owner himself at first, his ministry and the witness of the converted slaves changed his heart. As white Christians preached to the slaves, the converted slaves in turn witnessed further to the white Christians. Lives were changed—both black and white. God's Spirit blows where it will, then and now.

For many who study black history in America, there is not much distinction between it and the history of the black church in America. In its earliest days, the black church assembled in the midst of swamps in the evening to be able to sing, pray, and preach the Word of God with one another in freedom. These earliest of black congregations were known as "hush harbors." As we ponder the history of our black brothers and sisters in February, may we also pause to give thanks for the black church in America.

Blessings, Pastor Suzanne

To learn more, read The Inconceivable Start of African-American Christianity by Mark Galli in Christianity Today.



Youth Summer Trip Deadline is March 1

Where will you be this summer? CUMC Youth Ministry is proud to announce 3 exciting mission experiences for summer 2017. Each trip will provide students with the opportunity to serve individuals and communities while building stronger relationships with friends in an environment that's focused on growing closer to Jesus. Application & \$100 non-refundable deposit are due by March 1st. The remaining balance (if any) is due by May 1st. Contact Youth Pastor Nick Jonckowski for more information (919-260-1424 or njonckowski@christmethodist.org).

Stay in Spiritual and Physical Shape this Winter

Getting in Shape: John Wesley's Health Tips Apply Today ... Mostly (a umc.org feature by Joe Iovino)

John Wesley, one of the founders of The United Methodist Church, is known for caring for souls, but he was also passionate about keeping himself and others physically fit. A visit to his residence at Wesley's Chapel in London will find the home decorated in the way it may have looked when Wesley lived there. Items he owned and used are displayed alongside period reproductions and items that belonged to his hymn-writing brother Charles Wesley.

Exercise equipment: In the dining room, an odd-looking chair caught my attention. One of the docents, dressed in period costume, noticed me looking at this strange piece of furniture. Pressing down on the tall seat sev-



eral times to demonstrate the spring action of the bellows hidden inside, she explained it was an "exercise chair." I later learned that this "chair" was actually a reproduction chamber horse, a piece of exercise equipment from the 1700s. Sitting in the chair, one would bounce up and down, mimicking the activity of riding a horse, the 18th century equivalent of a stationary bike or treadmill. While wintering in London, John Wesley used a chamber horse to help him stay in shape for his grueling riding schedule the rest of the year. Overseeing the Methodist movement, Wesley traveled long distances on horseback well into his 80s.

While the dining room may seem like an odd place for a piece of exercise equipment, historians are certain this is where Wesley kept it. He said so in a letter written to his niece Sarah Wesley, dated August 18, 1790, when Wesley was 87: "[Y]ou should be sure to take as much exercise every day as you can bear. I wish you would desire George Whitfield [a Methodist preacher] to send you the chamber-horse out of my dining-room, which you should use half an hour at least daily." Daily exercise was advice Wesley often shared with friends to help them remain healthy.

Caring for the Body: Another object I could not identify is on display in Wesley's study. The mechanical looking device made of wood, glass and metal is an "electrical machine." Cranking the handle creates a low-level electric current many believed had healing properties. In his book, <u>Primitive Physick, or an Easy and Natural Method of Curing Most Diseases</u>, Wesley lists more than 40 ailments for which he prescribes "electrifying." It couldn't hurt, Wesley writes, "unless the shock were immoderately strong."



<u>Primitive Physick</u> was Wesley's bestselling book. It included home remedies for ailments like asthma, baldness (onions and honey), earaches, bee stings, kidney stones, vertigo, and much more. Along-

side these treatments, he offers tips on maintaining wellness through exercise, a healthy diet, & adequate sleep . . . the same things experts recommend to us today. Caring for the body was an important part of Wesley's ministry. Under his leadership, Methodist preachers & meetinghouses were known as dispensers of remedies for illnesses, especially for those who couldn't afford to see a doctor. <u>Primitive Physick</u> was their primary reference.

Wesley understood that physical and spiritual health were connected. In a letter dated October 26, 1778, he offers this advice to his friend, Alexander Knox: "Alleck, it will be a double blessing if you give yourself up to the Great Physician, that He may heal soul and body together. And unquestionably this is His design. He wants to give you both inward and outward health." Wesley taught that God cares for the health of our minds and bodies as well as our souls. The United Methodist Church continues in that tradition today.



Learn more about John Wesley by traveling to England with Pastor David Goehring

Pastor David is planning a Wesley Heritage Trip in spring, 2018. Curious? Contact him at 919-969-8820, x200 or <u>dgoehring@christmethodist.org.</u> Dates, costs, and itinerary will be shared soon. England is beautiful in the spring, & travelers will spend time in the countryside and villages.

"Though we cannot all think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt, we may. Herein all the children of God may unite, notwithstanding these smaller differences." John Wesley

GOOD WORKS-How will you Serve?



Offer Hope to Robeson County

The devastation left by Hurricane Matthew continues to affect families in Robeson County, & CUMC wants to be involved in continuing the progress that's started there. To learn more about the many ways you can help with Hurricane Matthew clean up and restoration efforts (some are physical; some are "desk" work) & to brainstorm about future "day trip" service ideas, attend the GOoD WORKS meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 22 at 12:15 pm in the coffee house of 103 Market Street (youth/young adult building). If you can't attend the meeting but still want to get involved, contact Deon Roach (919-969-8820; office@christmethodist.org).

Right now, you can help in a variety of ways:

- Join the CUMC Work Team in Robeson County from March 13-17. Serve all week or just for a day as your schedule allows. All skill levels are needed to help with tree and debris removal, muck out, and mold elimination. Help is also needed at the resource center to collect, organize, and distribute donations. CUMC's missions committee will cover the cost of hotel rooms for volunteers. Contact David Harvin (dharvin@aol.com; 919-423-6433).
- 2. Donate items to the Hurricane Matthew Medical Outreach. CUMC member Jean Davidson will take a team of UNC nursing students to Robeson and Columbus Counties during the same week the CUMC work group is serving. They'll offer health screenings to people in need. Participants will receive a health kit, and you can help by donating needed supplies. (See list below.)
- 3. Help pack health kits on March 12th,1:00 pm, in Ascension Hall. All ages are welcome to prepare the kits that will be shared at the Robeson & Columbus County Health Fairs.

A Volunteer's Story

By Julia Burns, CUMC member

Since Hurricane Matthew swept through Eastern North Carolina in October, I've participated in two mission trips led by United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) coordinator, Bryant Dodson. He organizes trips to Columbus & Robeson Counties & other ravaged areas in our conference. I've cleared trees, mucked houses and folded clothes. No job is too small because what we really offer, in addition to physical labor, is hope. Every minute I'm working, I call down the love of the Holy Spirit to bring light into dark places.

The homes I've mucked are molding. Sheet rock is cut above the water mark. Floors are pried up & placed on a rubbish pile so the house can dry, and mold is eradicated. Often, we throw treasured photos and memories on the trash heap, too. But God's covenant to his people is steadfast. "If the Lord had not been on our side, then would the torrents have overwhelmed us." Our presence as a witness to the love of Christ protects survivors from being overwhelmed.

Three communities in Lumberton were flooded when a levee gave way due to the rushing waters. These families had no flood insurance because they were NOT in a flood zone. One resident told me, "It happened so fast. The water came barreling down the street from both ends, like it was coming out of a fire hose. One minute, I was drinking coffee, watching TV. The next, the water was up past my knees. By the time I got the dogs out of the pen, it was up to my neck."

Prior to the floods, Robeson County had the highest fetal death rate, highest poverty rate, & the poorest health outcomes in the state. Now, 14,000 folks have lost "everything" and are homeless, living in hotels. They *(See "Story", p. 7)*

Health Kit & Cleaning Supplies Needed: Items can be used, but should be clean & in good condition.

**Bath, hand, and face towels **Toiletries (hotel size deodorant, shampoo, conditioner) **Toothpaste & toothbrushes **Brooms, mops, buckets, paper towels and sponges or cloths **Bleach & mold removal items (including safe "natural" alternatives like distilled white vinegar, baking soda, borax, lemon juice, castile soap, hydrogen peroxide)

GOOD WORKS-How will you Serve?

("Story", cont. from p. 6)

are awaiting FEMA's decision about rebuilding or demolishing their homes. Churches have been damaged, too. Pictured at right is Branch Street UMC. The raging waters spared only three pews; they lost their altar, furniture, hymnals and organ. They are rebuilding.

These people need our help. They need labor, prayers, supplies (especially linens & towels), money, & hope. We can give them that. Matthew 25:40 reminds us, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers & sisters of mine, you did for me." May we emulate our Savior's love.



Who is BOB? What Does He Do?

Actually, the more appropriate question is "WHAT is BOB?" BOB stands for Beyond our Borders, a joint mission project between CUMC and All Saints UMC in Morrisville. Myron Miller shares about an upcoming project to support needy children in Londrina, Brazil.

Since 2004, our congregation has provided wonderful support for the poor and needy children at the Sao Jorge childcare center in Londrina, Brazil. There are 120 preschool children and 60 school age children at the center, and their lives have been improved in many ways since we have started to provide our support. A study by the University of Londrina several years ago indicated that 43% of the children in that city were anemic. Further, the children live in shacks and barely have enough to eat. Our contributions help provide the children with a shower every day, three meals a day, and learning and recreation in a Christian environment.

Through the years, we have helped over 3,000 children, and we have developed wonderful relationships with the leadership and staff which ensures effective use of our funds. Incidentally, 100% of the funds raised go directly



to Sao Jorge. All the "overhead" is volunteer support, including the expenses of travel. In addition to ensuring that staffing and supplies can continue to meet the daily needs of the children, our funding has also enabled them to build a playground, two new classrooms, and a library and to make other improvements to the facility.

This childcare center is now considered the most outstanding creche in that city of 600,000 people, 120,000 of whom live in poverty. We ask your support of \$150 to spon-

sor one child for the year. Through the generosity of CUMC and All Saints UMC, we have raised at least \$10,000 in each of the last twelve years; let's do even better in 2017. Starting on March 19, the BOB team will begin its fundraising efforts in Ascension Hall before, between and after the services, and will continue that effort for a total of three Sundays. Please open your hearts so we may continue to make the daily lives of the poor children better and give them Christian hope for a promising future.

Turn Dresses into Dreams at CUMC

Cinderella's Closet provides formal wear to high school girls who could not otherwise attend their prom. Even more important than providing a beautiful prom dress, we are able to provide an experience like no other for these young ladies. This year, 80 high school juniors & seniors from Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools and Durham's Jordan High School will be served. Now through Sunday, March 12, donations are being accepted & may be placed on or near the clothing rack in Ascension Hall. Ladies, to do this GOoD WORK when the Closet opens at CUMC on March 17-18, go to https://signup.com/client/invitation/6775657374/1364906/false#!1364906/ false/false or contact Maggie Ivancic (919-969-8820, x201; mivancic@christmethodist.org.

Help & Hope Fundraising Dinner

The CUMC Missions Committee is now in partnership with Pregnancy Support Services (PSS), a Christian non-profit offering help & hope to women considering their choices in an unplanned pregnancy. Services are free & confidential and include pregnancy testing, limited first trimester ultrasounds, accurate education on choices, and after abortion support. PSS will hold its annual Help & Hope Fundraising Dinner at the Chapel Hill Country Club on **Thursday**, April 6 at 6:30 pm. April Christina will share her story & beautiful voice that evening. Learn more & purchase tickets at <u>pssdinner2017.eventsmart.com</u>. CHRIST CHURCH United Methodist 800 Market Street Chapel Hill, NC 27516

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Middle and High School Students! Please join us on Saturday, March 4th @ 9am at Christ Church for a two hour Service Saturday. We will be cleaning up, both inside and out, and putting down pine straw around the church property. What a great way for us to give back to Christ Church. For more information, e-mail Tony Smith: <u>smitha61@gmail.com</u>.

Transforming Lives: Overcoming Stigma in Mental Illness



- Sponsored By -Faith Connections on Mental Illness Friday, March 31, 2017

9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. **St. Thomas More** 940 Carmichael Street ◆ Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Keynote : Dr. Patrick Corrigan Fair and False Ways to Beat the Stigma of Mental Illness

- Other Program Topics -

- Stereotyping Those Living with Mental Illness
- Caregiver Burnout and Compassion Fatigue
- Fighting Discrimination: Advocacy and Mental Illness
- Race, Culture, and Mental Health Disparities
 Overcoming the Stigma of Mental Illness in Schools

Register online at <u>www.wakeahec.org.</u>

Important Dates

- Sunday, Feb. 26 U2Charist @ Wellspring, 6:30 pm, Sanctuary
- Sunday, March 5 Confirmation Sunday, 11:00 am
- March 8-29 at the Well Dr. Grant Whacker teaches "History of the Wesleyan & Methodist Traditions"; Pastors Brent & Suzanne lead "Ars Moriendi: A Discussion of Death & Dying"
- ▶ March 11—12 High School Youth Lock-in, 6 pm-9 am; 103 Market
- Sunday, March 12 Daylight Savings Time Begins
- March 25-April 2 Mission 1:27 Trip to Slobodskoy, Russia
- Saturday, April 8 Big Wesley Auction, 5-8 pm, Ascension Hall
- ► April 17-18 Church Office Closed, Easter Holiday



Starting this month, the Children's Ministry will offer a Friday night PNO once per month. Drop off children ages 4 years—5th grade in rooms 3 & 5 of 105 Market Street to enjoy pizza, popcorn, games & a movie while you enjoy time alone. Cost is \$10 for the first child & \$5 for each additional child in the same family. (Family max = \$20.) PNO dates are February 24, March 17, April 21, May 19, June 16, & July 14. Email Jane Reeb (jreeb@christmethodist.org) to reserve space today.

