

Letter from the Pastor and Congregational Update



Dear Avondale Members,

On Sunday evening, December 11, the Session, true to the Spirit of Advent and residing in an “already” but “not yet” climate, gathered for their final meeting of 2016. Gratitude was expressed to Sigrid Sacra, Rick Parler, and Sharon McCarthy for their three years of service as their term comes to conclusion. All Elders agreed that when they responded to the call to serve as a Ruling Elder, no one had any idea that they would be led in the direction the church is moving and together they confirmed the sense that God was preparing Avondale for the future. All were commended for their faithfulness to their service.

At this meeting the following three ideas received the greatest focus of time. They were:

- moving forward with next steps/goals of the Implementation Team in regards to our partnership with the Bethlehem Center;
- 2017 budget
- Worship

...an advisory team that will be known as the “ABC Team” for our Avondale-Bethlehem Center partnership....

The Implementation Team of our ministry to Bethlehem Center will soon conclude their work and hand-off the continued oversight of ministry to an advisory team that will be known as the “ABC Team” for our Avondale-Bethlehem Center partnership. This “ABC Team” is currently being formed. This advisory team will report directly to the Session, with a member of the Session and clergy serving on the team. Approving the first recommendation of the Implementation Team at the November meeting (Goal #1) the Session approved the next step (Goal #2). The Session directed the ABC Team to obtain proposals from, select, and engage an appropriate outside consultant to develop a plan for communication regarding the Avondale-Bethlehem Center partnership, at a cost not to exceed \$3,000, to be expended during 2017.

The Session approved the November 9, 2016 version of the budget for 2017, including an anticipated deficit of \$46,191, with the caveat that the

Session will continue to monitor the budget through 2017 and revise and restate the budget as necessary based on actual expenditures and revenues during 2017. (See note on Stewardship statistics and some of the joys of the faithful giving on following page.)

Difficult decisions have been made, and will possibly still need to be made, as the 2017 Session seeks to be financially responsible. At the November meeting, the Session took the radical action of cutting our giving to Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly causes by almost \$20,000. Over the past many years, Avondale has been one of the top three churches within Charlotte Presbytery supporting Presbytery mission/ministry. Our contribution for 2017 will be \$13,560, down from \$32,650 in 2016. Our largest expenditure resides within the area of Personnel/staffing and the Session has made a commitment in 2017 to an oversight of a staff which is necessary to do the mission/ministry of the church and a staff which we can afford. The hardcore reality, a reality for all faith communities, is that while giving is strong and faithful, expenses are outpacing contributions.

The changes of liturgy and location of our morning single service was a topic of discussion that will continue in January. While leaders believed that we are being drawn closer to addressing worship in the Family Life Center as not being “permanent”, it was agreed that there is a need for great prayer in determining next steps. Two advent words were clearly identified in regards to this discussion - “urgency” and “not yet”. A contradiction in terms and thought? No. Much is changing at Avondale and worship, being at the center of our life and mission, must be first and primary.

At the conclusion of the evening, your leaders concluded with song and prayer. The demands upon your church leaders over the past several years have been great and I commend the leadership for being faithful to the task. I believe that

continued next page

Letter and Update *cont.*

within a swirl of change, God can be seen and experienced. Much of our change has made us re-examine the God we know and love.

At the end of the evening, and now the end of a year, we recognize that God is faithful and far too often our understanding of God too small. Perhaps the best theology of this past Sunday was not in a room with leaders called to lead God's Church but on a stage with words sung by children. If you were present for the Children's Christmas Program, you heard them sing: "We are blessed to be a blessing to others". May we never forget this.

2016 Stewardship Giving Review

The Stewardship Ministry Team deeply appreciates those who have been faithful in pledging to the 2017 year. Although we are facing a challenging year ahead, we are confident that the larger membership will address this need and respond as able. If you're wondering how we financially contribute as the larger body of Christ in our giving, the following offers a window. For the coming 2017 year (as of 12/14/2016);

- 87 family units that have not yet pledged for 2017
- 76 family units that pledged the same amount as 2016
- 46 family units that increased their pledge for 2017
- 14 new pledges for 2017
- 23 family units that decreased their pledge for 2017

The reasons for increases, decreases and no pledges are many and varied with no one indicator. What the Stewardship Ministry Team recognizes is the need for all members to take seriously the work of Christian Stewardship and the need to further educate the larger congregation, at all ages, the importance of responding to God's grace.

Yours in Christ, *John B. Earl*



Avondale - Bethlehem Center of Charlotte Partnership

View events and details online.
<http://tinyurl.com/APC-Bethlehem>
Sign-up to volunteer, participate
and for educational opportunities
with our new ministry!

Tour of Teen Space

Sunday, January 15 at 10:40 AM
(Immediately following worship)

Implementation Team

Thank you to all who served.

Jim Branden
Trish Boyd
Kay Chelena
Paula Huffines
Mary Martin
Ginny Mitchell
Ann Sanders
Emily Zuyus
Rev. Chris Lee
Yolanda Bynum*
Jared Keaton*
Donna Smurtherman*
*from The Bethlehem
Center of Charlotte

The ABC Team (oversight
committee) forming now,
names coming in January.

Memorials & Honorariums

In memory of: Doris Flowers

Given by:

Anonymous
Aiken Class
Laura Honey
Edward & Marilyn Frenier
Townley Moon
Arnold & Terri Barefoot
Gene & Mary Smith
John & Alicia Gaul
Linda B. Haigh
Leona A. Weigle

In memory of: Bill Berryhill

Given by:

D.J. & Leslie Saleeby
Nancy & John Wagnon

In memory of: Martha and Bill Loftin

Given by: Martha Carol Loftin

In memory of: Bill Rose

Given by:

Stewart Farris
Sarah T. Chumley
Linda B. Haigh
Shirley R. McDowell
Christie & James Flowers
Transport Clearing East, Inc.

In memory of: Larry Williams

(Stephanie Tomey's father)

Given by: Linda B. Haigh

In memory of: Mary Casey

(Kelly Platt's grandmother)

Given by: Linda B. Haigh

In honor of: Jim Bowen

(In celebration of his 60th
birthday)

Given by: Anonymous

In honor of: Maddie Howard & Ava Zuyus

Given by: Linda B. Haigh



January Birthdays

1	Jennifer Matz Lorin Bookout	15	Betty Patterson Connie Love	26	Bob Gaddy Jordyn Lee
2	P.K. Kalevas	16	Billy Caldwell Evan Wood		J.T. Earl
3	Marian Stout Tony McKenzie	18	Garrett Whitesides Liam Platt	27	Holly Thomson Jennifer Oglesby
4	Palmer Horton	19	Sue Haag	28	Bill Byrd Linda Haigh
5	Jim Branden Pam Braswell	20	Becky Chavaree Deidrea Pavlin		Roger White Steve Thomas
7	Millie Patterson	23	Bill Thomas David Phillips	29	David Lindsey
8	Croft Hamilton, Jr.		Ted Todd	30	Jay Wardlaw
11	Thomas Lawson	24	Ginny Mitchell	31	Bill Thornberry Carolyn Wright
13	Karen Eakes Leslie Saleeby Marcia Halsey	25	Andrew Patterson Bonnie Howard Tom Cavanaugh		Joshua Oswald Julie McDonald
14	Juddie Finison				



Joys and Concerns

May God give comfort to these individuals and their families and friends.

Concern for Members:

Terry Brodof; Mike Cathey; Rachel Darling; Audrey Dougherty; Stewart Farris; Alex Hegenbart; Megan McCarthy; Bordie McCloskey; Martha Meunier; David Phillips; Libby Phillips; Frances Robertson; Martha Rogers; Henry Stockwell; Ellen Watson; and Al Weigle.

Concern for Family and Friends:

Barbara Aylor; Ed Ballard; Ann Boyd-Moore; Rita Braswell; Scott Braswell; Mary Cerena; Sam Favor; Carol Hatfield; Larry Hensinger; Ray Moss; Sean Nolan; Mike Page; Claire Refaey; Rev. Joseph Sefcik; Warren Snider; Hunter Stubbs; Clifton Taylor; Tom Wilkerson; and Nora Kate Williams.

Church Triumphant:

Entering into the Church Triumphant is...

- Oleen Wingate McLeod, mother of Tim McLeod (April 8, 1931 - November 28, 2016). Our sympathy is extended to Tim and his family and friends.

- George William "Bill" Rose Jr., husband of Marsha Rose (August 30, 1939 - December 13, 2016). Our sympathy is extended to Marsha and her family and friends. A service for Bill was held at Avondale on December 19.

- Courtney Carmichael of Laurinburg, NC, sister of Caroline White (November 18, 1947 - December 17, 2016). Our

sympathy is extended to Caroline and her family and friends.

- Betty McBrayer (June 7, 1927 - December 19, 2016). Our sympathy is extended to Betty's family and friends. A family only, private service for Betty was held in Avondale's Sacred Garden on December 27.

Births: Ben and Renee Miller welcomed twin sons into the world on December 8, 2016. We give thanks and share joy for Soren Carl and Oscar Curtis Miller.

Baptism: On Christmas Day 2016, the Sacrament of Baptism was given to Lucas William Ferguson, son of Travis and Mindy Ferguson.

Marriages: We celebrate with Laura and Lynn Daniel, the recent marriage of their son, Max Daniel.

We rejoice with Jim and Martha Rogers as they celebrate 71 years of marriage.

Joyful: The grandchild of Nancy and Charles, young Sam Favor, had his last chemo treatment this month.

*There are no known
January Wedding Anniversaries
among our congregation.*



Church Leadership 2017

Session Class of 2017	Session Class of 2018	Session Class of 2019
Zach Chambers Discipleship Gathering	David Hall Discipleship Gathering	John Magee *group coming January
Ann Patterson Mission Gathering	Jennifer Patterson Worship Gathering	Patti Oswald *group coming January
Lisa Miller Worf Discipleship Gathering	Cindy McKenzie Mission Gathering	Jessica Shanks *group coming January

*Discipleship group to be determined at the Session Retreat, usually held in late January.

Called to serve...

Teams	Leaders 2016/17	Leaders 2017/18
Property	Suzi Thornberry	Suzi Thornberry
Member Care	Suzanne Baillie	Betty Chambers Kelly Platt (elect)
Outreach	Nancy Bohrer	Amanda Shanks
Christian Nurture	Linda Haigh	Linda Haigh
Stewardship	Chris Swart	Chris Swart
Finance	Mike Mitchell	Fred Wilkerson
Congregational Life	Marian Stout Louise Lawson	Pending
Clerk of Session	Carol Bowen	D.J. Saleeby
Spiritual Growth	Lynn Wilkerson Harry Greyard	Lynn Wilkerson Harry Greyard
Mission	Chris Gardner Janet Harrison	Jim Bowen
Personnel	Kay Chelena	Bruce Vestal

Leadership Rolling Off

Session Class of 2016	Officers of Corporation 2016
Sharon McCarthy - Stewardship Rick Parler - Finance Sigrid Sacra - Spiritual Growth	Cindy McKenzie - President Sharon McCarthy - Vice President Lisa Worf - Secretary Ann Patterson - Treasurer



AVONDALE - BETHLEHEM CENTER PARTNERSHIP

Avondale and The Bethlehem Center of Charlotte “Out of School Time Enrichment Program” Partnership

Our new vision to partner with The Bethlehem Center of Charlotte's Out of School Time Enrichment Program is unfolding.

There are many opportunities to begin building relationships with the teens and families involved in the Out of School Time program.

Opportunities to get involved are available online.

Sign-up at: <http://tinyurl.com/APC-Bethlehem>

Members and friends are encouraged to get involved in as many opportunities as you are able.

When you sign-up online, you'll receive an email reminder 5 days prior to the date.

To read more about our new ministry, see Avondale's *November* newsletter online at:

<http://tinyurl.com/APCNov16Newsletter> or pick-up a copy.

To read about The Bethlehem Center of Charlotte visit: <http://bethlehemcenter.org>.

“Out of School Time” Dates

Ongoing

Oversight Committee
Bus Drivers needed -
Mon-Fri @ 6PM

Workshops

Bridges Out of Poverty Workshops
(dates to be determined)

Jan 7

Workday @ Avondale
(9:00am-3:00pm)

Jan 14

Help on Moving Day
(9:00am-3:00pm)

Jan 15

Tour of Teen Center
(10:40am/ immediately following worship)

Jan 15

Help on Moving Day
(1:00pm-4:00pm)

Jan 17

Welcome Teens to Avondale
First day at Avondale!
(3:30pm-3:45pm)

Jan 18

"Implicit Bias" - Awakening to Racial
Injustice Series
(6:30pm-8:00pm Offsite)

Jan 19

Chili Dinner @ Avondale
(6:00pm-7:00pm)

Jan 25

"Implicit Bias" - Presented by Race Mat-
ters for Juvenile Justice
(6:30pm-8:30pm Offsite)

*Let each of you look
not to your own
interests, but to the
interests of others.*

Philippians 2:4 (NRSV)

Avondale News

Minutes of Avondale's Congregational Meeting

On Sunday, November 20, in the Congregational Meeting, leadership shared history, goals, vision, and next steps in regards to our new ministry "to build bridges to reduce inequities". We promised to share the meeting minutes. Find them online at <http://tinyurl.com/APCConMtg11-20-16>.

Avondale-Bethlehem Center New Ministry Update

Also, if you have not yet had a chance to read the update about our new ministry in the November newsletter, find it online at <http://www.avondalepresbychurch.org/media-archive>. Dr. John Earl's cover letter outlines some details and outcomes for our next steps.

New Vision Partnership - Avondale and Bethlehem Center

Our new vision to partner with The Bethlehem Center of Charlotte's Out of School Time Enrichment Program is unfolding. There are many opportunities to begin building relationships with the teens and families involved in the Out of School Time program. Members and friends are encouraged to become involved in as many opportunities as you are able. Volunteer and educational opportunities are shared online at <http://tinyurl.com/APC-Bethlehem>. Come for the Tour of our Teen Space on January 15!

Giving Garden Transitions to A Community Garden

An exciting retool is in the works for our Giving Garden on our Avondale campus that will open it up to friends beyond our walls. We are moving to a Community Garden format in 2017.

Garden beds will be made available to church members and friends and neighbors who have an interest in gardening with a community of people. Please be thinking about how you might reach out to a non-Avondale friend or neighbor who might like to join us in fellowship, gardening, and stewardship! It is a unique and gentle way to welcome others onto our church campus. Please contact Robert Suydam or Cindy McKenzie if you would like to join in.

Member Care at Avondale

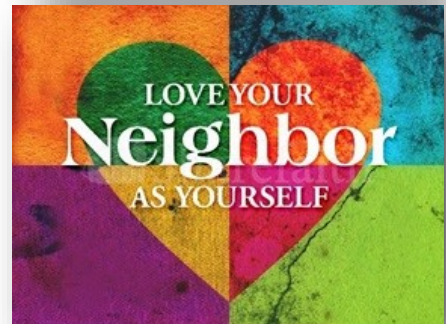
Avondale Presbyterian Church is known for the way we care for each other. In 2017, there will be many ways that you can help care for other Avondalers. Cook, talk, tasks, visit... Find more details online at <http://tinyurl.com/APCMemberCare>.

The Presbyterian Women of Avondale's Bake Sale

Thank you to all who helped make the 4th Annual Cookie/ Bake Sale a big success! The Presbyterian Women of Avondale sold every delicious morsel!

Avondale Adventures Canned Food Drive

The children did a Canned Food Drive to coincide with the theme of their musical - we are "blessed to be a blessing". Thank you to all who helped make this Advent offering of canned goods for Loaves and Fishes a huge success! 283 pounds of food was delivered to the Loaves and Fishes pantry at Holy Comforter!



Avondale News

Uptown Meal Ministry Christmas Party

Over 25 Avondalers plus volunteers from the Fletcher School participated in our party for the neighbors. Lynn Wilkerson shared the good news:

What an awesome night it was! From the fun and fellowship as we got everything ready in the Avondale kitchen, to the unloading and decorating, to the circle of friendship with our friends and the prayer led by Shorty, to the generous boxes of hats, gloves, t-shirts, to the time to mingle together, to the every bit of food that was enjoyed, to the tons of special treats donated, to the annual peanut brittle bags, to the strong arms who loaded and cleaned everything up, it was a night to remember. Thank you all for sharing your joy.

And I really stopped to wonder about the young couple who happened upon our party. They had just come to Charlotte in search of a job that didn't work out. They had been sleeping behind the building where we held the party. April is expecting a child. Did we have any blankets that they could sleep on to keep warm? Was there any room in the "inn"?

Room In The Inn (RITI)

Our RITI ministry moved to hosting neighbors for four consecutive nights in a month, instead of each Tuesday night. Can you help with Room In The Inn?

January 27-31, 2017 Leader - Robert Suydam

February 23-27, 2017 Leader - Jim McCarthy

Seeking: bus drivers, evening hosts, overnight hosts, wash linens/setup beds, and prepare meals. Sign-up online at <http://tinyurl.com/hgha74w>.

Youth Dates to Save

February 16-19 - Youth Winter Retreat

June 11-17 - Youth Mission Trip in Charleston, SC

July 11-14 - Massanetta Middle School Conference

July 23-29 - Montreat Senior High Conference

New Elders

Our new Elders, John Magee, Patti Oswald, and Jessica Shanks, will be installed on January's 2nd Sunday, January 8, 2017. Jessica will first be ordained.

New on Avondale's Website

http://www.avondalepresbychurch.org/phrase_below

Avondale Adventures [/avondaleadventures](#)

Basketball [/basketballministry](#)

CONNECT Camps [/connectcamps](#)

CYPP [/cyp](#)

Joyful Noise [/joyful-noise](#)

Vacation Bible School [/vbs](#)



Uptown Meal Ministry Christmas Party



Avondale Youth Christmas Par-



Please turn-in to the Office
any church keys you're not using!

2016 Contributions

To qualify as a 2016 contribution, payments must be received by Thursday, December 29, or dropped off at the Office on Friday, December 30 by 2:00 PM. Any questions, please contact Renita Fowler at 704-333-6194 or renita@avondalepresbychurch.org.

Bank Draft Your 2017 Pledge

Who doesn't like easy?! Make your Avondale Pledge easier and save time! Setup a bank draft to have the amount electronically routed from your bank to Avondale. [Fill-out a short form \(see page 2\)](#) and turn in to Renita Fowler. Members participating really like the convenience, especially when schedules are crazy! <http://tinyurl.com/APCBankDraftForm>



Avondale Presbyterian Church
 2821 Park Road
 Charlotte, NC 28209

Newsletter Publishing Schedule

Avondale Avenues is published monthly on the fourth Tuesday. The deadline for submitting content for the next newsletter is a week prior to publication. Send submissions to Caroline@AvondalePresbyChurch.org.



Special Offerings 2016 / Year-to-Date

(as of Monday, December 19, 2016)

One Great Hour of Sharing	\$2,014
Haiti Offering	\$2,598
Peace and Global Witness Offering	\$1,277 (25% for Sedgefield Mission)
Pentecost Offering	\$1,839 (40% for Sedgefield)
West Virginia Flood Relief	\$1,440
Ten Cents A Meal	\$4,058 (Does not include December)
Joy Gifts Offering	\$1,647
Total Year-to-Date	\$14,873