

Claiming a Shared Vision

An old spiritual embraces an unfolding of creation with the words:

"My Lord! What a Morning When the Stars Begin to Fall!"

The work of the Session has been one of waiting, working and watching. In 2014, the Session hired TAG with the intent of discerning where God was leading Avondale. The work with TAG has involved facing hard realities of our church and the "churchless". Trends across our nation, the PCUSA, and Avondale have presented a forecast of overcast and stormy evenings more often than days of great clarity and spectacular starburst.



Only through the work of uncovering Avondale's strengths and weaknesses were stars revealed. Our strengths are our bright stars and include the following truths: We are friendly and a community of families. We minister to families, celebrate a strong Children's Center, worship, nurture our children and youth, hold to theological diversity, have unity within our leadership and celebrate local and global outreach.

Stars are diminished by our weaknesses, which sometimes include resistance to change, a lack of community partnerships, a failure to care well for our facilities and our hesitancy to share our faith. Your Session realized that as a corporate body, we lack a clear, compelling and shared vision.

Our consultants guided us to claim a shared vision, which will allow us to preserve our values within the midst of an ever-changing culture. Your Session adopted the following vision statement at their October meeting.

As a congregation, God calls us to:

- Create close relationships to support a dynamic faith
- Not only serve our neighbors but know them personally
- Prepare the hearts of children and families to abide in Christ
- Reduce economic inequities by breaking down barriers to education
- Develop and demonstrate a sustaining faith

The above Vision Statement has evolved from prayer, guidance and discussion. It is illumination caught. Inspiration visible. Pray for your leadership as they continue to address specific and strategic ways in which the Vision Statement will become the guiding star for Avondale.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John B. Earl". The signature is written in a cursive style.

"Called to love God, love one another and serve community."

Avondale Youth: Fundraising for Peru

You may have heard that Avondale's attic sale raised \$8,800 last weekend. You might not realize that the attic sale was a fundraiser for the Senior High Youth Group's summer mission trip to Peru. In June 2016, we expect over 25 youth and adult chaperones to travel to Peru and engage in mission by working in the local seminary and hiking the Incan trail leading to Machu Picchu.

You might not know that Avondale has a history of taking high school youth to foreign countries to serve others and experience God at work in a completely new place. Every four years, high school members of the youth group are given the opportunity to travel internationally and serve others. It takes the full four years to raise money for the trip and enables each youth to go on one international trip during their high school years. Reverend Chris Lee explains: "Youth trips are where the magic happens. The teens discover that God is active and bigger than Avondale or south Charlotte." Youth are inherently self-focused. By taking them outside their comfort zones and introducing them to foreign places where the language is different, and the customs

and cultures are unfamiliar, you reduce all the day-to-day noise. Youth discover that it's a big world and God is active everywhere. They forge deep relationships with one another and develop a sustaining faith. During and at the conclusion of each trip, youth are asked where they saw the cross – where did they see Christ in action?

Though the Attic Sale was a big success, fundraising for the trip to Peru continues. The youth are organizing many ways that members can be involved including the following:

- Christmas Greenery and Poinsettia Sale – Sign up table in ARISE service and after 11am service
- Barbecue Sale
- February Dinner
- Donation Board

Please consider how you can help the youth raise money for their upcoming trip. Look for additional details in upcoming eNews. Fundraising ensures that all high school youth are able to take the trip to Peru.

Third Quarter Ending September 30, 2015 Financial Update

Fund Balances at Sept 30, 2015

Endowment	\$506,690
Facilities Fund	\$40,032
Columbarium Fund	\$34,327



A significant loss for the first nine months is typical due to the large percentage of receipts in December. Our Budgeted Loss for all of 2015 is \$16,400. Please make sure you fulfill your Pledge.



Key Life Dates Shared

In this section we celebrate key dates in the lives of the membership. If your special day(s) is not shown on a list, please call or email the Church Office (704-333-6194 or ginny@avondalepresbychurch.org) with the information. If an incorrect date is shown, be sure to let the Office know the correct information too.

Happy Birthday to the following who celebrate November Birthdays:

1	Hunter Presson Anna Blake	8	Emma Ely Beth Suydam	19	Andrew Hall
2	Charlie Shumate	9	Janet Harrison	20	Lamar Gunter
4	Vince Chelena, IV Eleanor Sloan	10	Wesley Hayes	21	Jennifer Vick Joe Pease
5	Matthew Hogston	11	Cole Hickman	22	Rachel Darling
6	Marge Hardegree Bill Halsey Lisa Miller Worf Lindsay Brassler	13	Betty Myers Mahlon Thomas Mary Hall	27	David Mitchell
7	Erin Lee	15	Connor Hipps Anders Gustafson	28	Sue Gibbs Hadlea Presson
8	Michael Harrison Dawn Parrish Ryan Patterson	16	Tina Wilson Matt Comstock	29	Viola Clontz Barbara Darling Jenny Mitchell Kristen Roach
		17	Jim Rogers Tom Stout		

October Baptism:

- 25 Evelyn Claire Hautop
Daughter of Doug and Vicki
Hautop, Sister of Reese
and Davis



November Anniversaries:

- 4 Carl and Dee Dee McDonald
6 Erik and Meredith Smith
8 George and Suzanne Baillie
15 Chris and Alice Cuvillo
17 Tony and Donna McKenzie
29 Viola Clontz

Deaths:

Our sincere sympathy is extended to:

Gloria Alexander, one of our Avondale Children's Center infant teachers. Her father, Robert Calhoun, passed away on Saturday, October 3, 2015 at his home.

May God give comfort to this family during their time of sorrow.

Session News

In their October meeting, Elders expressed gratitude for the ministry of Jane Summey Mullennix and Dale Mullennix, the Stewardship and Finance Ministry Teams for their presentation of the 2016 Narrative Budget and for all members who gave freely of their time on the Fall Work Day.

We celebrate and pray for those who, at the Congregational Meeting held on October 18, were chosen by the membership to take positions of leadership in the Congregation. For Ordination and/or Installation as Ruling Elders: David Hall, Cindy McKenzie, and Jennifer Patterson. For Leadership in chairing Ministry Teams in 2016: Marian Stout/Louise Lawson (Congregational Life), Mike Mitchell (Finance), John Callaway (Stewardship), Kay Chelena (Personnel), Suzi Thornberry (Property), Suzanne Baillie (Member Care), Nancy Bohrer (Outreach), Janet Harrison/Chris Gardner (Mission), Harry Greyard/Lynn Wilkerson/Amanda Shanks (Spiritual Growth), Linda Haigh (Christian Nurture), Will Vick/Shea Barron (Communications) and Clerk of Session, Carol Bowen.



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Joys and Concerns

Ministry of Caring to Members of Our Church:

Alice Balfe, Anne Hamilton, Dot Burke, Edna Hilton, Eleanor Ramey, Eldon Stout, Evan Wood, Frances Robertson, the Gunter family, Ida Parnell, Jim Neely, Joanne Sahlie, Libby Phillips, Mike Cathey, Molly Carver, Rachel Darling, Sharon McGinn, Susan Harrington, and the Vestal Family

Ministry of Caring to Friends of Our Church Family:

Barbara Aylor (friend of Heather Hogston)
 Bill Thornberry, Sr.
 (father of Bill Thornberry)
 David Boyd (brother of Louise Lawson)
 Fred Otten (father of Debi Medlin)
 Gayle Hackney (sister of Suzanne Baillie)
 Hunter Stubbs (friend of Branden family)
 Jeanne Deese (sister of Barbara Hill)
 Larry Hensinger
 (brother-in-law of Nadja Sefcik-Earl)

Ministry of Caring to Friends of Our Church Family (cont.):

Mary Cerena (sister-in-law of Barbara Witzel)
 Michael Morales (nephew of Debi Medlin)
 Mike Page (friend of Becky Chavaree)
 Ron Schaffield (brother of Nancy Bohrer)
 Sean Nolan (son of Marilyn Nolan)
 Susan Crocker McClure
 (friend of Jane Summey Mullennix)

Memorials

Diane Gunter:	Eugene & Kathleen Gunter
Jan Parler:	Kay DeArmon