

Remember the Giver

As a community of faith we now live on the other side of Palm Sunday, Eggapalooza, Holy Week and Easter Day. With the same promise given to the early church, we move toward Pentecost and pray for the continued guiding of Holy Spirit. We are no different than those first disciples who needed to be assured of God's guidance and presence. All of us, leaders, elders, clergy, and members seek this guidance and sing: *"I triumph still, if thou abide with me"*.

This sense of the abiding presence of the Risen Christ/Holy Spirit is promised by God. It is promised and specific to those who believe. "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate to be with you forever." (John 14: 15 - 16) The work of the Holy Spirit defines our gifts and equips us to use our gifts (*work, witness, wealth, world, and worship*) as faithful stewards. It defines and provides clarity for what is next.

Years ago Fred Craddock was provided the opportunity to preach at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City. This is a big, historical church. He was surprised, on that given Sunday, to see so many young adults attending worship. Prior to arriving he had

received a letter from one of the young adults requesting him to meet with them following the service. He agreed to do so. Around a casual lunch he gathered with some 250 and they told their story.



"If you have a gift and forget the giver, all you really have is a talent, and talent isn't everything."

Many were away from home and pursuing their dream. Some were at The Julliard School while others were part of the opera or theater. One young man described his dream saying that he was trying to form his own band. When Craddock asked what his dream had to do with being in church on any given Sunday, the young man responded:

"If you have a gift and forget the giver, all you really have is a talent, and talent isn't everything."

This is wisdom pouring from the mouth of a young adult.

Yours in Christ,

John B. Earl

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

Children in Mission

Did you know that Avondale children and their families are making a difference in the world? During Lent, our elementary-age children filled two Disaster Relief buckets with work gloves, scrub brushes, clotheslines, Lysol scrub, insect repellent, and sponges. Every year, disasters happen; this year someone will be helped by our children's gifts. Thank you children.

Also, our children have reached out to children across the sea who have been displaced from their homes, neighborhoods, and villages. Last summer during Bible Camp, in response to an urgent appeal by Church World Service, our children assembled and donated School Kits for children living in Syria. The supplies at Church World Service had decreased to just over 5,000 School Kits, against pending requests for 18,000 more. Our children decorated lightweight canvas bags and filled them with basic tools for learning: notebooks, pencils, erasers, crayons, rulers, scissors, etc. Generous donations allowed us to send 38 School Kits, one per child participating in Bible Camp.

Church World Service responds to needs of people buffeted by war, natural disaster and poverty here in the United States and around the world. Every year, our Easter offering to One Great Hour of Sharing is put to work by CWS responding to emergency and ongoing needs. Church World Service is also the sponsor of CROP Walk, an event our youth participate in each fall. To learn more, visit www.cwsglobal.org.



Update from the Personnel Ministry Team

The Personnel Ministry Team would like to provide an update on both our big-picture goals and our near-term plans. Our primary goals are to ensure that staff members' job descriptions, goals and objectives are aligned with Avondale's mission; support staff members in their quest to achieve these goals and objectives; and work with staff to identify ways to improve communications, so that the congregation at large will know what great things are being accomplished at Avondale.

To that end, we are making changes to the staff review process and how we communicate the results to others at Avondale. We are moving toward conducting all staff performance reviews at roughly the same time, rather than scattered throughout the year. This year all staff reviews were completed by the end of March. In future years, all reviews will be conducted in February. The review process now includes the development of clear, measurable goals for each staff position. Achievements and outcomes of these goals will be used during ongoing performance reviews, allowing us to move to a merit-based pay process. Upon completion of this year's reviews and goal development, the Personnel Ministry Team will share the staff goals with the Session.



Room In The Inn at Avondale – Season Review

- ◆ Number of host sites for RITI: 135 (including Avondale)
- ◆ Number of neighbors served in the Charlotte area this winter: 17,182
- ◆ Number of nights of RITI at Avondale: 19
- ◆ Number of neighbors hosted: 225
- ◆ Number of volunteer positions filled: 300+
- ◆ Number of unique volunteers: 95
- ◆ Approximate number of volunteer hours: 1,000 (including overnight host time)
- ◆ Number of suppers shared: 380
- ◆ Number of meals prepared: 870
- ◆ Number of stories shared: Countless

The Mission Ministry team expresses profound gratitude for the compassionate hearts of Avondalers and associated community groups who participated in and supported this ministry to our homeless neighbors. We thank you for providing not only food for their stomachs and a warm, dry place to sleep, but also offering fellowship and community. We hosted men, women, teenagers, elementary age kids and babies. On one special Sunday morning two neighbors joined us for ARISE.

On many evenings there were Avondalers who dropped in to sit and talk with the neighbors, a ministry of listening, learning and love. We heard stories of hardship, illness, wrong turns, but above all, hope. One homeless couple mentioned a Bible study in which they were involved. When I asked them where the Bible study group met, they pointed to their adjoining cots and said, "Right over there." Later that evening I saw them, heads together, reading from their devotional book.

First Quarter Ending March 31 Financial Update

REVENUES

Actual

\$141,914

Budget

\$137,743

EXPENSES

Actual

\$176,920

Budget

\$178,678

NET LOSS

Actual

(\$35,005)

Budget

(\$40,934)

FUND BALANCES @ March 31, 2015

Endowment	\$531,950
Facilities Fund	\$ 24,817
Columbarium Fund	\$ 32,457

New Members

Will Caldwell
 Tracie Hummel
 Stephen Hummel
 Jerry McClure
 Floyd McClung
 Brynn Stewart
 Rich Worf
 Jeff Zirkle

Eight new members joined our church on March 29 and April 12. Please refer to the May newsletter for photographs and additional information about these new members.



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Joys and Concerns

Ministry of Caring to Members of Our Church:

Alice Balfe, Anne Hamilton, Betty Parker, Bill Berryhill, Dot Burke, Edna Hilton, Emily Bearden, Eldon Stout, Family and friends of Paul Simpson, Frances Robertson, Jim Neely, the Gunter family, Libby Phillips, Louise Chambers, Molly Carver, Rachel Darling, the Vestal Family and Margaret Winchester

Ministry of Caring to Friends of Our Church Family:

Barbara Aylor (friend of Heather Hogston)
 Bob Gore (friend of Greg McKenzie)
 Buck Melton (father of Barbara Hill)
 David Boyd (brother of Louise Lawson)
 Fred Otten (father of Debi Medlin)
 Gayle Hackney (sister of Suzanne Baillie)
 Gene Hatfield (father of Ann Patterson)
 Helen Matthews (friend of Nancy Bohrer)
 Hunter Stubbs (friend of Branden family)
 Larry Hensinger
 (brother-in-law of Nadja Sefcik-Earl)

Ministry of Caring to Friends of Our Church Family:

Mary Cerena (sister-in-law of Barbara Witzel)
 Mary Katherine Reed
 (daughter of Chip & Caroline Reed)
 Mike Page (friend of Becky Chavaree)
 Russell Burson (father of Catherine Mitchell)
 Scott Braswell (son of Pam Braswell)

Entering into the Church Triumphant
Paul M. Simpson
March 8, 1930 - April 4, 2015

Our sympathy is extended to Peggy and
 and her family and friends.

Our sympathy is extended to Betty Patterson
 and Frances Robertson, whose brother,
 Lynn E. Robertson passed away on April 5, 2015.