

Mulberry Messenger

April 2011

New Life in Christ by Rev. Chris Carrasco

Easter is one of the high points of the Christian Year. It is a testimony that out of death and pain God brings new life, hope, and resurrection. We celebrate what God has done for us in Jesus Christ, put our trust in him, and rejoice that “nothing is impossible with God.” With spring just around the corner, flowers are blooming, birds are singing, and the world awakes from its winter slumber. What a great time to recognize new life at Mulberry Presbyterian Church!

New Life is found in some of the new initiatives we are starting at Mulberry. We will have a new website up and running in April or May. That website will have audio podcasts of the sermons, Messengers and calendars, a donate button through PayPal, a blog written by your pastor, and lots of pictures. We are also updating our Facebook page more frequently and invite you to be a friend. Even Rev. Chris has entered the Facebook world with her own page. Feel free to “friend” her also.

New Life is found in our Hospitality efforts on Sunday mornings. Beginning in April, we will have visitor folders, a trained Greeters Team to provide a personal welcome to newcomers, a bulletin board in the narthex to highlight all the exciting activity at this church, a new brochure about Mulberry, children’s worship bags, and the creation of a Visitor Reception after church in the alcove behind the sound system. All of this is an effort to make a connection with our visitors.

New Life is found in Session’s Task Force for Safety and Accessibility, who are working hard to come up with some new ideas about how to make the front of the sanctuary a safer place for all of us. Session will pray and hear these ideas in the upcoming months and keep the congregation updated on their progress.

New Life is found in our expanded Evangelism efforts as the Easter Egg Hunt approaches on Saturday, April 23. Last year we had almost 100 children and lots of parents attend the event. This is one of our biggest outreach efforts and lots of hands and help are needed. Please contact Mark Zagar if you can help. We are also working on a Community Prayer Service, outreach to the youth, and several other ideas to let people know about Mulberry.

Easter is a time of New Life in Christ as we move into spring and the new life that is awakening in nature. New Life is awakening too at Mulberry. As we celebrate Easter and the new life God offers us in Jesus Christ, let us be open to the New Life God is creating here and now in this church. In Christ we are a New Creation! Thanks be to God.

From the Session at Mulberry: "But One Hour"

Prayer is a Foundational Belief of the Christian Church and indeed for Mulberry. Each member of our Session has pledged to spend one hour during our Prayer Vigil beginning at 7:00 am on Saturday, April 23, and ending at Sunrise on Easter morning. You are encouraged to join us as we await the celebration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some have described their hour there as one of the most meaningful and spiritually uplifting of the Christian year. There is just something special about spending an hour in silence before the Lord. The serenity of the Sanctuary and the importance of the event we celebrate just might combine to bless you in a very special way. Only you and God will know the full impact of this event and you may find it difficult to put into words. Please join us. What if it will truly be a blessing? What have you got to lose? “*But one hour*” out of a year of 8,760 hours.

March Session Highlights

Listening to God

As the Christ Candle was lit, Mike Hood led us in devotion and prayer then Rev. Chris read from Mark 10:35-45 and reflected on servant leadership.

Listening to Others

Mike shared his faith journey and we prayed for the church and various members who are hurting or in need.

Listening to God

- Treasurer reported we received a onetime pledge that will cover most of the 2011 budget deficit.
- Communion was set for Maundy Thursday April 21 and May 1.
- Permission was given for Julie Constantini to have a car wash on church premises with a youth event following.
- A discrepancy of \$732.56 will be sent to Presbytery to make up for unpaid pledge from last year.
- In communicating our new Mulberry covenant, Session decided to have a congregational gathering with food on May 1 to discuss it, celebrate the adoption of it on May 15 and continue with our 24 hour Easter Vigil.
- A new logo is being created for Mulberry of a tree with the motto “Reaching Out in Love... Because of the One We Love.”

Going Out Into the World

We ended holding hands in prayer with Mike, ready to meet again on April 17 at 6:00 PM.

Resource Ministry by Vance Schrum Our pine needle sale was a great success! We sold a total of 3,592 bales. Thanks to all the hard work that made this so successful. There are still a few bags of pecans for sale by the Men of the Church. See Earl Springs for orders. As most of you know, a large tree recently fell in the cemetery due to heavy rain, damaging a fence belonging to our neighbor. Thanks to the very hard work of Mark Zagar, that tree has now been chopped up into logs and is ready for removal. Once the wood has been removed the fence will be repaired.



Congregational Care Ministry by Barbara Campbell Thank you so much to those who have visited and taken food to our members. Our monthly free blood pressure check was done on February 28. In the future, blood pressure checks will be done at the Young at Heart meetings. If you have an immediate need or blood pressure issue, please let Helen Marks or myself know. Special thanks to Annette Pearson for being in touch through cards and phone calls with members that have been absent for several Sundays. Everyone is asked to please continue to pray for our members with special needs. Going that extra mile for someone in need can mean as much to you as it does to them! We are a very caring congregation - let's keep it that way!

Discipleship Ministry by Mike Hood **Jesus** lived with the awareness that God is doing something, right here, right now, and anybody can be a part of it. He encouraged his listeners to search, to question, to wrestle with the implications of what he was saying and doing. He inspired, challenged, provoked, comforted, and invited people to be open to God's work in this world. Wherever he went, whatever he did, Jesus started discussions about what matters most because, for Jesus, God is always inviting us to open our eyes and join in. The Faith Chat Sunday school class is inviting you to open your eyes and join in. The class, which is taught by Hank Sadler and Vance Schrum, begins at 9:45 a.m. in the room above the Pastor's office. There is a time of sharing, followed by a ten to fifteen minute video at 10:00 am. The remainder of the class is devoted to discussing the video from the perspective of Jesus. Come search, question, and join the discussion.



Hospitality Ministry by Linda Sadler We are excited to announce a new visitor's reception area in the back of our sanctuary! Many thanks to Dave Carpenter. We are also planning to offer a visitor's folder containing information about the church, a greeting team to welcome visitors and a new children's worship activity bag. We hope this will help us connect with our visitors and encourage them to return. If you would like to assist with Hospitality please let me know. We can all do our part in welcoming visitors. Remember Romans 12:13: "Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality" (NIV).

Service Ministry by Bev Sadler Mulberry is committed to helping those in need. Thank you to everyone who contributes to our many outreach programs, particularly the enhanced "Ten Cents a Meal" offering on the fourth Sunday of each month, as we continue to address the growing need to feed the hungry in our community.



"Out of Chaos, Hope" Recovery efforts continue in Japan following the March 11 tsunami and earthquake. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is responding through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) and our ecumenical and mission partners. **WHAT YOU CAN DO: GIVE**—designate your financial gift by indicating 'DR000117' on your check to help with relief efforts in Japan, or contribute to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering on

Easter. **ACT**—Make Gift of the Heart hygiene kits to replenish the supply being sent to Japan from the region. **PRAY**—Join with others in lifting up the people of Japan and those providing aid. **LEARN MORE** at www.pcusa.org/pda.

Cub Scouts Pack 77 would like to thank Mulberry Presbyterian for the generous use of your church and participation in our Annual Attic Sale on March 19. A total of \$440 was raised to benefit the scouts!

Special thanks to all who contributed to the Ash Wednesday offering. A total of \$1049.00 was provided to the Agape Fund!



Drop in Baby 'Diaper' Shower
 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. April 3
 Mulberry Presbyterian Fellowship Hall
 Honoring Elise Collins and Ben Green
 (Jane Guy's son)
 Hosted by Friends of Jane Guy



Suggested items for the baby girl are pampers, baby wipes, lotion, etc.

The Knit Wits enjoyed a special visit to Levine & Dickson Hospice House on Friday March 11, where they were invited to enjoy refreshments and share project information with other local knitting groups. Mulberry is blessed to host such a talented and generous ministry!



Over 400,000 Americans wake up each morning with the unpredictability of multiple sclerosis. This disease brings uncertainty to those living with it and stops people from moving. The National MS Society is here to make sure it doesn't. Together, we can turn the uncertainty into hope.

On April 16, the National MS Society is hosting its annual Walk MS here in Charlotte. Registration is free (with fundraising for the walk encouraged) and begins at 9:00 a.m. at Symphony Park in Southpark. Step out against a chronic illness affecting 400,000 Americans -- 8,000 of whom live in the Carolinas. Walk 2-4 miles to raise money and awareness to help people with multiple sclerosis (MS), an unpredictable disease affecting the nervous system for which there is no cure. Strollers and leashed pets welcome. Last year's event drew 1,500 participants and raised \$205,000.

<http://events.charlotteobserver.com/charlotte-nc/events/show>

Palm Sunday

April 17, 11:00 a.m.

Procession of Palms to commemorate Jesus' triumphant return to Jerusalem

Maundy Thursday

April 21, 7:00 p.m.

Commemorating the Last Supper as first shared in the Upper Room

Prayer Vigil

"But One Hour"

April 23, 7:00 a.m.

Easter Egg Hunt

April 23, 10:00 a.m.

Easter Sunrise Service

April 24, 7:00 a.m.

Celebration of Christ's Resurrection at dawn's first light

Easter Breakfast

Immediately following the Sunrise Service

Easter Worship Service

April 24, 11:00 a.m.

He is Risen!



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