



REACHING OUT IN LOVE  
BECAUSE OF THE ONE WE LOVE

# Mulberry Messenger

December, 2011

Volume 1

Issue 6

Mulberry  
Presbyterian  
Church

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## Statement of Purpose

*God's purpose for Mulberry Presbyterian Church is to love God through sharing the unconditional love of Christ by serving, loving, teaching, and praying for ALL people.*

## Christmas Is About... By Rev. Chris Carrasco

*Christmas is about* God breaking into human history in a way never done before.

*Christmas is about* God doing a new thing in our midst.

*Christmas is about* love coming down to earth.

*Christmas is about* Jesus knocking on the door of our inn, asking if there's any room in our hearts.

*Christmas is about* God offering an extreme makeover of our lives.

*Christmas is about* interrupting our plans, our parties, our cards, our shopping to marvel at a child born 2,000 years ago.

*Christmas is about* children who love to tell the birth story, and sing carols, and lead God's people in worship.

*Christmas is about* evening services, Christ's body broken, Christ's light multiplied and carried out into the world.

*Christmas is about* you and me and God and love and faith and hope and peace.

*Christmas: it's about time.*

## Mulberry Christmas Schedule

**December 18:** Children and Youth Advent Program during worship

**December 18, 6:00 p.m.** Christmas Cantata "Mary, Did You Know?"

**December 24, 5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.** Christmas Eve Communion and Candlelight Services

**December 25, 10:00 a.m.** Christmas Sunday School Celebration  
11:00 a.m. Worship

## Well Done, Good and Faithful Servants!

By Rev. Chris Carrasco



Our Capital Campaign to renovate the sanctuary was a huge undertaking for a church with an average of 70 in attendance. Needing to create a safe environment for worship participants, accessibility to the office for our older or disabled members, and an upgraded sound system with media capabilities to enhance our worship and website presence, this project was a necessity for Mulberry at this time.

Our goal for this project was \$50,000. With the sacrificial giving of many members along with the great support of our family and friends outside the church, we came very close to our goal. The current grand total is over \$41,634.60.

Well done, good and faithful servants! I applaud each of you who participated and contributed to this project.

We do have a little way to go, so if anyone is looking to make a charitable donation before the end of the year or have yet to turn your donation and/or pledge in for the Capital Campaign, we will still gladly accept your contributions. Just make sure your check or pledge card is marked "Capital Campaign" somewhere in the memo.

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, THANK YOU for your love of Mulberry, your commitment to this church, and your faith in a God who "makes all things possible."

## And A Special Thank You from Pete Slobodzinski

October proved to be a very interesting month for me. Along with the usual snap in the air and the leaves taking on their most beautiful colors, I faced some soul-searching challenges to my health. Then in November, I was diagnosed with five heart blockages. During my pre-op, I was able to witness an ultrasound of my heart. Seeing the miraculous working cross-section of my heart - small enough to fit in the palm of my hand - really changed me. I realized all of the ways I could have lived a better life - a more Godly life. God got my attention, all right! I am so very glad that He is always watching over me, listening and forgiving.

On October 9, 2011, God brought to Mulberry a group of individuals who also have miraculous hearts - ones that use music to bring people together in ways that benefit others. Ken Fuquay, Earleen Hicks, and Heidi Dove performed a musical concert in my honor and they were fabulous! They brought comfort to my soul and helped me as I began to redefine the priorities of my life. I am deeply grateful for the generosity of all who have shared their time, talents, and concern to help me in this time of need.

I continue to battle Multiple Myeloma, and am awaiting results to see how well the treatment is working. I am working harder than ever to keep God at the front of all I do, and I know that He is watching over me. Please keep me and my family in your prayers, and continue to pray for one another, as I do.



## A Prayer of Submission

Lord, I am willing

to receive what You give, to lack what You withhold, to relinquish what You take, to suffer what You inflict, to be what You require. Amen.

## November Session Highlights

**Listening to God** - As the Christ Candle was lit, Glenda Brown led us in devotion and prayer then Rev. Chris read Number 13:25-14:10 reflecting on the Israelites' time of transition in the wilderness.

**Listening to Others** Glenda shared his faith journey and we prayed for the church and various members who are hurting or in need.

### Listening to God's Will

**Pastor's Report:** She will be gone on continuing education from December 27 to January 2.

**Treasurer's Report:** Year to date we are in the red by \$3,522.

- Communion was set for December 4 (seated) and December 24 at 5:00 and 11:00 (intinction).
- Our pledges for the 2012 budget have fallen short by \$20,000 compared to last year.
- The Capital Campaign has raised \$41,643.60 and the task force will bring recommended bids and financing options to next Session meeting.
- A general discussion regarding the decrease in attendance was held. Concern was expressed as well as questions raised about how to reach out and get new members.

### Going Out Into the World -

We ended holding hands in prayer by Glenda and will meet again on December 18 at 8:00 AM.

## Coordinators' Corner

### Discipleship

#### Mike Hood, Coordinator

In the next few articles for *The Messenger*, I will be featuring one of the Sunday school classes. This month it is the Fellowship class taught by Bill Thomason. Bill has been associated with this class and many of the people in it for close to fifty years. The curriculum is very simple. The class selects a book of the Bible and proceeds through the text verse by verse until the book is completed. Currently the class is studying Acts and has gotten to the point where the focus in the narrative shifts from Peter to Paul's conversion and his work among the gentiles. Bill noted that Acts is an important document because it provides a critical link between the Gospels and Paul's letters. In addition to a close reading of the Bible during the Sunday school hour, the class supports charitable causes such as Second Harvest and Share the Warmth, and contributes a memorial when a member of the congregation passes away. Bill also sends out a monthly newsletter to those associated with the class.

#### Special Announcement!

The Children and Youth of Mulberry will present an Advent program as part of the morning worship service on Sunday, December 18.



#### Evangelism Coordinator, Mark Zagar

As this year comes to a close, we are already working on and planning activities for evangelism for next year.

What are your ideas? Please come up and talk with me about them. So far we are thinking about Mulberry t-shirts, sweatshirts, bumper stickers, and evangelism cards to get our name out there. We'll continue our popular events of the Easter Egg Hunt, July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade, and Trunk or Treat, but maybe add a few events with a Thomasboro Carnival, community worship service, neighborhood invites, and outreach to the surrounding youth. The possibilities are endless. Pray for Mulberry and our evangelism efforts for next year.

### Congregational Care

#### Barbara Campbell, Coordinator

During November, we made nine calls and five home visits concerning medical needs within our congregation. Please be sure to let us know of any medical needs so that we can respond!



As the Christmas season approaches, let's all remember those who are less fortunate. A happy smile, a warm hello, or even a hug can make someone's day might brighter!

### Service

#### Bev Sadler, Coordinator

We are currently well under way in getting prepared to be a host church for The Room in the Inn ministry this winter. Mulberry begins hosting



this program on December 8, continuing the second and fourth Thursday evenings in the months of December through March. Please prayerfully consider how you will help with the Room in the Inn here at Mulberry by either donating your time, items needed for our neighbors, or both! A collection bin and sign up sheet are available in the narthex.

December also marks the time for the annual PC(USA) Joy Gift Offering. Please see the inserts in each Sunday's bulletin and use the envelopes available in the church pews for your offering.

### Hospitality

#### Linda Sadler, Coordinator

We are still welcoming visitors to the Hospitality Room at Mulberry. The Christmas season is here, so let's invite others to share the birth of Jesus with us. Remember Romans 15:7, "...accept each other just as Christ has accepted you..."

Advent began on November 27. This year all of our Advent readers consist of three generations, illustrating that God is in Mulberry's past, present, and future.

Remember the two sermons about the Eunuch and how God accepts us just as we are. Let's accept others just like they are and share the Good News with them!

Wishing all of you a wonderful Christmas and don't forget to invite a friend to church!

## News and Notes

Deepest sympathy is extended to Mark Zagar in the death of his mother Fay Sykes Zagar on November 9, 2011. Please keep Mark, Linda and the Zagar family and friends in your prayers.

Deepest sympathy is also extended to Linda Gaskey in the death of her father Howard Gaskey.

**Calling all knitters, those who crochet, and anyone interested:** Mulberry's knitting group, The Knit Wits, meet at 10:00 a.m. on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month and we would love to have you join us! There are lots of fun activities, even if you don't knit. Contact Glenda Brown for details.

**You are invited to a free presentation of Handel's "Messiah"** by the Charlotte Music Club on December 4 at 3:00 p.m. at First United Methodist Church. Our own Phil and Marilyn Egel will be singing with the choir! First UMC is located at 501 N. Tryon Street, with free parking available in the garage on 9<sup>th</sup> Street. A love offering will be accepted.

**Mulberry's Room in the Inn Ministry** begins December 8 and continues on the second and fourth Thursday of every month through March. Donations are still needed and can be dropped off in the narthex. A schedule for volunteer opportunities is also available in the narthex.

On Sunday, December 18th at 6:00 pm **the Mulberry Singers will present the cantata "Mary, Did You Know?"** The Celebration Ringers will also be performing that evening. Refreshments will follow in the Britt Stokes Fellowship Hall. Please make plans to attend this special event.



Sonny Brown; Linda Gaskey and the Cochran family ; Mark and Linda Zagar; Margaret Harkey; Kim Wells; Virginia McKnight; Hope Cochran; Tim Guy; Curtis Johnson; Lynda Springs; Anna Price; Linda Guy; Ivy and Xander Guy; Lois Andrews; Juanita Holt; Pete Slobodzinski.

<i>December Birthdays</i>	
1 Riley Sage Guy	19 JoAnn Biggers
3 Xander Guy, Tracey Calhoun	22 Lisa Falkner, Mack Cochran
4 Caress Simpson	26 Linda Champion
14 Patsy Caudle	31 Betty Stephenson
18 Phil Egel	

## *Time and Talents*

### USHERS

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday -Jeff Whitley, Jack Guy, Lillian Williamson, Vance Schrum

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday -Earl Springs, Nelio Carrasco, Denise Thompson

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday - Mack Cochran, Sonny Brown, Brenda Hendricks, Linda Sadler

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday - Ashley Barnette, Gloria Vereen

### CHURCH LOCK-UP

Jeff Whitley

Earl Springs

Mack Cochran

Ashley Barnette

### CHILDREN'S WORSHIP

12/4: Nelio Carrasco

12/11: Jana Barnette

12/18: Christmas Program

### CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Jana Barnette

Denise Thompson

Patsy Caudle

### NURSERY

Bev Sadler and Kayla Sadler

Mack and Hope Cochran

Henry and Linda Sadler

