



Mulberry Presbyterian Church
 Phone/Fax (704) 392-1030
 Email: mulberrypc@bellsouth.net
www.mulberrypc.com



**July 20th
 Presbytery of Charlotte
 Meeting at Mulberry**

On July 20, Mulberry has the honor and privilege of hosting the Charlotte Presbytery Meeting. Over 200 people are expected to attend. We really need to do some heavy spring cleaning to get ready for our guests. We need volunteers to help! Not only do we want our regular Session delegates at the meeting, but we would also like to encourage others in the congregation to attend. It is most interesting to observe how the Presbytery conducts its meetings. There will be light refreshments (we have to eat!). Registration starts at 3:00 p.m. and the meeting runs from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Let's show Charlotte Presbytery how proud we are of Mulberry by attending the meeting. See you there!

- Linda Sadler

Or Current Resident

Mulberry Presbyterian Church
 5600 Tuckaseegee Road
 Charlotte, NC 28208

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 CHARLOTTE, N.C.
 PERMIT NO. 1896

Mulberry Messenger

June 2010

The Gospel of Jesus Christ Will Always Remain the Same!

Rev. Warren Lesane, Associate Pastor for Church Development

A number of people have been asking how the missional church is different from the kind of church we've been used to. Much of the difference comes from the fact that the culture we live in has changed, and thus, the relationship between the church and the culture has changed. As the church tries to reach and impact a different kind of culture, this necessitates that we become a different kind of church. The comparisons that follow will give greater insight.

Christendom Church and Culture

1. Church and culture worked together supporting each other and sharing similar values
2. The church ministers from the mainland or center society
3. Built on the attractional model (build it and they will come)
4. Pastors were trained on how to lead people once they joined the church
5. Most growth happened biologically or by transfer of membership
6. A lot of evangelism was done with those who stopped attending church and following Christ
7. Evangelism had a lot to do with apologetics - logical support for faith
8. Evangelism and social justice were often separate; believing in one didn't mean belief in the other
9. America was believed to be a Christian nation - mission was done from east to west
10. Strategic planning and 5 year goals were useful because of slow, continuous change

Missional Church and Culture

1. A shift toward separation of church and state where culture is apathetic/agnostic toward church
2. The church has been pushed to the society sideline or margins of society
3. Attractional model no longer works; the masses aren't looking for a church- the church must go and do
4. Most people don't go to church- pastors/leaders must be trained to engage people in their communities and workplace
5. Little biological growth; evangelism requires diversity and difference
6. Old style of evangelism won't work - people aren't following Christ in the first place
7. Evangelism is more about hospitality and service
8. Evangelism and social justice are brought back together
9. Realization that we do not live in a Christian nation - mission is done from everywhere to everywhere
10. Because of rapid, discontinuous change, church must use just-in-time planning

What hasn't changed and what will never change are the central truths of the Gospel. The church of Jesus Christ will always be founded on the inspiration of the scriptures. The Bible will always be a revelation of God to us. We will always follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, who will lead us into all truth. We will always be focused on others, particularly the poor, the homeless, and the outcast. Our God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. But every time we enter a new culture, we must learn new ways to communicate these eternal truths to that culture. Even though we have not physically moved to a new culture, the society around us has changed so much, that we might as well have. Some of our ways of being the church will change. The Gospel of Jesus Christ will always remain the same.

"Building Healthy Churches" Class Begins July 1



What is a healthy church? Why do some congregations grow exponentially and others are in steep decline? Why are some churches exerting tremendous energy and resources, but having no measurable forward movement? How does a church become a healthy, vibrant, growing church? How do we make disciples for Jesus following the Great Commission? How do we at Mulberry become the most effective, faithful church we can be for Christ in the 21st century?

All of these questions and more will be our topic during our next series of "Building Healthy Churches." This ten week class led by Chris Carrasco is a DVD presentation by Paul Borden, a national church consultant, author, and leader in the field. Half of our time will be spent watching the video and half will be spent discussing and applying these teachings to our church. This is a wonderful companion to the Transformation Program we are involved in this year. Our class will begin Thursday, July 1 through Thursday, September 1. Two identical classes will be offered, one from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and the other from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Please make an effort to come, learn, and discuss the future of Mulberry Presbyterian Church.

May Session Highlights

1. Sonny Brown was our Session liturgist sharing a prayer, devotion, and faith journey with us as we gathered to read scripture and pray.
2. Chris will be attending a Multi-Cultural Conference in Chicago May 24-29. She also reported that she will start teaching a class on Thursdays called "Building Healthy Churches" starting July 1.
3. The next leadership school is on June 26 at Albemarle Pres. from 9:30 – 3:00. Entire congregation is urged to go.
4. Presbytery Commissioners reported on the last Presbytery meeting where Mulberry and the nine other transformation churches were commissioned.
5. Communion was set for June 27.
6. A grant application was approved to build a new website for the church and have it hosted for one year. Linda Schrum is writing the grant.

Transformation Thoughts by Barbara Campbell & Henry Sadler

The Session last year began discussing the Pilot-Cluster Project that we are now involved in, along with nine other churches in our Presbytery. The purpose of this project is to take time (one year) to objectively study our Church and our communities and discern what needs and opportunities exist and suggest ways we can make changes that will address and meet more of these needs. All the other churches are going through the same process as Mulberry. In an effort to begin to "know our community," Chris scheduled our April 28th Session meeting at the Cracker Barrel Restaurant. Her intent was to have us experience part of our community and observe the people and try to imagine what needs they might have. There were some questions about the meeting place and the noise initially was a problem, but the purpose for us being there was realized as we ended our time there in small groups noticing and discussing what we observed.

Each group was asked: Who is our community? What might their needs be? How might MPC meet some of these needs? What might the Good News of Jesus Christ mean to these people? Some observations and comments were: needs of travelers, maybe from out of town but here on a regular basis; nearby hotels with similar travelers; employees who may live nearby; employees, mostly female, who may have needs; possibly a Bible study during the week for travelers with transportation provided; aid and comfort for stranded airport travelers; flyers offering services for customers; one waitress was very friendly and talked freely with us - has eight children and is raising them alone, greatest need expressed was single parenthood, Barbara invited her to come to worship with us - she was aware of Mulberry and her children have attended events here; maybe an adult class on parenting; our need to conform to the needs of those around us; we are called to share the message of Jesus with everyone we can; we need to look for common bonds; community needs caring people; the community has really changed in past years; families are less traditional; community has many single mother households; there are hurting and lonely people in our community.



The trip to Cracker Barrel introduced us to just part of our community, but it began to open our eyes to just what our community is. Since then, Reachout has hosted a Hot Dog cook-out on the lawn and invited parts of our community. We met a lot of people, made some friends, shared a meal with them and registered a number for Vacation Bible School. It will be interesting and exciting as we continue to explore and discern just what God wants us to be doing as part of our mission here at Mulberry. The worry we had about change is being replaced by the excitement we feel about what MPC's responsibilities might be. Make a friend, be a friend, bring that friend to Christ.

Be looking for more information to come, and please attend some of the Transformation Schools that will be offered. They are actually very enjoyable. We urge everyone to consider change in a positive way. Romans 8:28 reads, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him." And remember, "Love isn't love until it is given away." Thank you.