

THIS SUMMER, YOUTH ARE STAYING WIRED

Who says church slows down during summer? Director of Youth Ministry Elizabeth Frazier reports on these meaningful days...

While some other youth ministries take the summer off, Myers Park United Methodist continues ministering with passion. Last summer, Youth Ministry Associate Matt Watts and I made lasting relationships with youth through mission trips plus weekly fellowship and local mission opportunities. This summer, with Youth Ministry interns Blake Ruble and Patrick Craig, we are determined to do the same. We have a WIRED summer planned: Youth are encouraged to **Witness** to the world, **Invest** in the city, **Revere** God in worship, **Encounter** fellowship and **Develop** relationships. We are devoted to beating the “I’m bored” summer syndrome – and hope that youth who have completed Grades 6-12 will stop

by Room 171 in the Youth Building on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. for summer fellowship called Wacky Wednesday. It runs through August 12.

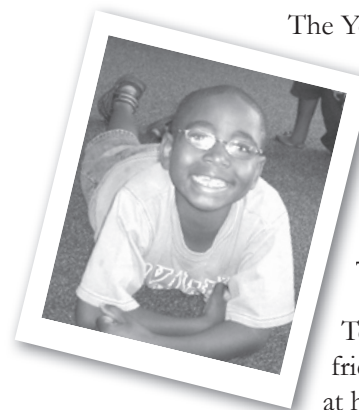


Youth at work in West Virginia.

Freedom School Begins

A RIGHTEOUS LEGACY, A LOFTY MISSION

Freedom School is more than the squeals of South Tryon children playing and learning. The Freedom School that Myers Park United Methodist Church hosts is a link to the past – a thread that runs all the way back to 1964, when the first Freedom Schools began fighting for equality and children.



Jabriel, 8.

The Youth Building has opened its doors to 65 children ages 5-15 for a third summer. Weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. through July 31, students are sharing breakfast, a Harambee rally (Swahili for “All pulling together”), reading, swimming and field trips. The children are encouraged at each step to affirm their heritage, guided by a half-dozen young teachers and dozens of church volunteers. To help, contact Debby Wagner at 704-537-9821 or debby.wagner9@gmail.com.

Terrell Maness, 11, says Freedom School is a place to make new friends, learn new lessons and beat the boredom of hanging out at home. Courtney Armstrong, teaching at Myers Park’s Freedom School for the second time, says it offers children a chance to flourish in a structure designed to “to show them they can do it.”

Knowing the history, and knowing that this is part of a national movement, brings a deeper meaning to the cause.

Freedom Schools began in Mississippi during the Civil Rights Era and the long, hot summer of 1964. More than 3,000 African American students attended 40-plus schools – part of the

Continued Inside...

A CONVERSATION ON FAITH *by Ken Garfield*



Payback is sweet.

When Ann Dunlap was confined to her bed for 2½ months, waiting for Silas to be born, she found herself awash in love from Myers Park United Methodist Church: Visits, prayers, calls, casseroles. “One for almost every day of the week,” she recalled.

Ann was so moved by this outpouring – before she had even joined the church – that she made this promise: As soon as Silas arrives and she’s back on her feet, she is going to volunteer every chance she gets. That is how little Silas became, at seven weeks of age, the youngest child at Vacation Bible School. Born April 23, he had no choice. His mama signed up to watch the infants while the bigger kids played and prayed at Camp E.D.G.E.

“It’s a blast,” Ann told me as she bonded with the babies.

Vacation Bible School is over (check out the precious photos inside *the Cornerstone*), but I think we’re going to be seeing a lot of Ann. She is grateful to the church for its kindness, and determined to show that same

kindness to others through our church. But there’s more to this than one woman’s deep appreciation. Ann, 33, wants the rest of the world to know what she has learned from personal experience: That the church can and should embrace everyone. She is bi-racial, the product of an Italian mom and an African American dad with some other roots thrown in for richness. No one at Myers Park stopped to check

who she is or where she comes from before putting their arms around her, Ann explained. They just wrapped her in God’s love.

Now it’s her turn – not just to repay our church with her volunteerism, but to help all houses and people of faith understand that to love in God’s name is to love everyone in God’s name.

She’s not kidding either: “I need to get some business cards and hand them out for Myers Park United Methodist Church.”




Ann and Silas.

HOMECOMINGS, AND BABIES

Debby Wagner tells *the Cornerstone*, “Thanks to the entire congregation for their prayers that led to the safe return of my nephew, Jamison Knight, from Afghanistan. He is busy getting acquainted with his daughter, who was born while he was away, and all is well. Praise God!” Marsha Bradley delights in telling us, “My brother, Aaron Bradley, has returned from his second tour in Iraq – thank you for the inclusion in the newsletter and the prayers!! He now is a daddy, too, which is very exciting. He was able to be here for the last little bit of the pregnancy, and the delivery in early June. I’ve attached a picture of Aaron, Marie and little Nicolas. (They do look a little rough, but this was ‘going home’ day after 6 days in the hospital).” The church continues asking prayers for all servicemen and women in harm’s way, including those connected to the congregation: Joe Cline, David Kirkpatrick, Lynne Platt and Nathan



Densford. To share news and updates of a loved one, contact Media and Publications Specialist Elaine Dickson at Elaine@mpumc.org.



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SNAPSHOTS

We hope you embrace the new look of *the Cornerstone*. We streamlined the design (don’t you love the stained glass?), enhanced the graphic elements and switched to a whiter shade of paper, the better to display photographs. Our mission is not just to deepen your appreciation of the church newsletter. It’s to deepen your love of the church. Please tell us what you think.

While you’re noticing new things, we hope you’re admiring the colorful photos of missions and ministries going up on the once-bare walls of the Parish Life Building.

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Sanctuary Services
8:30, 9:45, 11:00 a.m.

Church in the Round
8:45 a.m., Jubilee Hall.

Holy Communion
9:30 a.m., Chapel.

Sunday School
9:45 a.m.

In Memory

The sympathy of the ministers and members is extended to:

Our Members...

Robert Gregg Sanders Sr., husband of Frances Sanders, father of Gregg Sanders and grandfather of Robert Sanders and Jessica Sanders, who died on June 12, 2009. Harlan L. Creech Jr., father of Tim Creech, who died on June 16, 2009. Susan Elizabeth Gray, wife of Rick Gray, who died on June 19, 2009. Louise Helen Rixon, mother of Kathy Ouellette, who died on June 20, 2009. Robert Lee Douglas, husband of Sue Douglas, who died on June 21, 2009. Ryan Duane Puckett, husband of Jenny Puckett, father of Sloane Puckett, brother-in-law of Brad Bostick and Kimberly Bostick and uncle of

Kerrington Bostick and Camden Bostick, who died on June 23, 2009.

The Families Of...

Hildegard Weiler, mother of Susan Slaughter, who died on May 29, 2009. Boyd Errol Claypool, brother-in-law of Shebra Claypool, who died on May 30, 2009. Francis Pearce Steele, daughter of Phil and Mary Anne Pearce, who died on May 29, 2009. Matthew Alvin Edwards Jr., father of Arnold Edwards and grandfather of Sydney Cartiff, who died on June 8, 2009. Kurt William Schmal, brother of Jodie White and uncle of Chris White and Megan White, who died on June 4, 2009.

Babies

James Burford Holloway, son of Susan and Jim Holloway, born on May 15,

2009. Megan Alexis Cipriani, daughter of Kelly and Jason Cipriani, born on June 6, 2009. Brayden David Franke, son of Jacquie and David Franke, born on June 15, 2009. Adam Barefoot Brookshire, son of Blake and Tim Brookshire, born on June 23, 2009.

Newly Wed

Congratulations to Lindsay Robinson and Christopher Stanley, who were married on May 30, 2009; Shannon Holberton and Lance Townsend, who were married on June 6; Tara Elzer and John Hackney, who were married on June 13, 2009; Kathryn Erickson and John Thach, who were married on June 20; and Whitney Collins and Joshua Otto, who were married on June 20.

GRADS SHARE THEIR GOOD NEWS

Caps, gowns and congratulations:

Charles and Julia Trice e-mailed to share that their granddaughter, Laura Donaldson, graduated cum laude from Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash., and plans to enter graduate school in San Francisco to study graphic design.

Rick and Sandra Magee shared that their son, Jack, graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration (“with distinction,” they proudly report) and plans to attend UNC-Chapel Hill law school.

Barbara Thompson e-mailed *the Cornerstone* to report that her daughter, Layne Thompson Garner, graduated from Queens University of Charlotte with a Masters degree in Teaching. She’ll be teaching kindergarten at Beverly Woods Elementary, where she taught third grade this past school year.

Mitzi Yount reported that their son, Stephen Daniel Yount, received a Master of Science degree in Social Work from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

Bob Clark shared: Their daughter, Meredith Clark, graduated cum laude from Appalachian State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Health Promotion and a minor in Food and Nutrition. She’ll enter UNC Charlotte in August to pursue a Masters in Public Health.

Sarah Howell, daughter of Dr. James C. and Lisa Howell, graduated from Duke University with a double major in Religion and Medieval and Renaissance Studies. She’ll start at Duke Divinity School in August in the Master of Divinity program.

Susan Orsbon reported that her son, David Orsbon, graduated from Davidson College with honors in English and high honors in Religion. She spoke for all the loved ones in e-mailing, “Just wanted to share my joy!”

To share news of your college and grad school graduate, e-mail Director of Communications Ken Garfield at ken@mpumc.org. Also welcome: Details – name, school and contact information – for those starting college in the Fall.

Year Through The Bible



Myers Park United Methodist Church 2009

EXPLORING PROPHETS

Year Through The Bible takes the congregation through the books of the Bible covering law, history, poetry, prophecy, Gospels and letters. Now through August 16: Prophets. Details: www.mpumc.org or Rev. George Ragsdale at 704-295-4840 or george@mpumc.org.

The church moves to **monthly Bible study** for the summer. A program at 7:00 p.m. Monday, July 6, in Jubilee Hall will focus on *The Old Testament and Modern Prophets* – an exploration of the prophetic word using drama and multimedia. There is no program Thursday, July 9. Child care for ages 8 and under is available by e-mailing Kristen@mpumc.org. Duke Divinity School Professor Emeritus James “Mickey” Eford will speak at 7:00 p.m. Monday, August 3, with a video of the talk shared at 11:00 a.m. Thursday, August 6, in Room 106.

Summer Sunday School at 9:45 a.m. through August 16 in Jubilee Hall offers an alternative for some and an option for many who may not be part of a regular class: An intergenerational study of Old Testament Prophets. During the series, specific classes for third grade through high school will not be offered. Instead, each week, people of all ages will explore together a new prophet through video lessons from Dr. Howell (available on YouTube through www.mpumc.org), speakers, mission moments, and music and visual presentations.

Disciple Bible Study

LEADERS SOUGHT TO HELP ‘TURN OUR HEADS AND NOTICE GOD’

As Disciple Bible Study mobilizes for 2009-10, the call is going out for leaders – facilitators to guide participants through the discovery of God’s Word.

A leadership training luncheon will be from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, July 18, at which prospective facilitators can meet veterans of the lay-led ministry. Details: Rev. Barbara Barden at 704-295-4813 or bbarden@mpumc.org.

Disciple Bible Study is a nondenominational program that has touched more than 1.5 million people over 20-plus years. It has become a cornerstone of Myers Park, where more than 800 people have finished one or more courses. Disciple classes meet weekly for small-group discussion and a video segment sharing scholars’ insights. Disciple classes have become part of the fabric of life at Myers Park, with students reading and studying at home, gathering often at church for a meal before class, then gathering for a class

filled with fellowship, learning and questions.

Church member Jamie Rodway, who has led some 16 classes over seven years, reflects:

“Disciple is the invitation to turn our heads ever so slightly and notice God. Maybe it’s noticing Him for the first time or maybe it’s the continuation of an ever-growing bond. Disciple just makes it a bit easier. It says this is a way that you as an individual and we collectively as a group can proceed along the journey of faith. That’s transformation...”

“What I’ve learned as a leader is how little I know as a student of the Bible. My transformation has been to try to put away my arrogance and become open to the words of the class and, more importantly, to the Word itself. I’ve grown comfortable with the fact that my role isn’t that of a teacher – although at times I wish it was and at times my classes wish it was. At first that was a scary thought, but now I know that I approach the class correctly, I’m nothing more than a student who starts the DVD and hands out the outlines. The presence of God as the Holy Spirit is absolutely with us every week. There has yet to be a class that has let me down. I learn every time.”

‘THIS JOURNEY OF WIDOWHOOD’

The Cornerstone asked Irilla Varnadore to update the congregation on *Sisters of Ruth*, the support group for widows she started in February. She lost her husband, Jim, nearly three years ago. *The Sisters of Ruth* meets from 10:30 a.m. to noon the first Wednesday of each month in Room 103 of the Parish Life Building. Details: Parish Nurse Susan Mobley at 704-295-4836 or smobley@mpumc.org.

I think we are doing very well. We have nine on our roster and in our regular meetings, we have anywhere from four to eight widows each month. In April, we had lunch together. A few weeks ago, four of us went on a day trip to see the gentleman who does topiaries in his

home in Bishopville, S.C. He has three acres that are just magnificent. We have other things planned for the

{ *in their own words* }

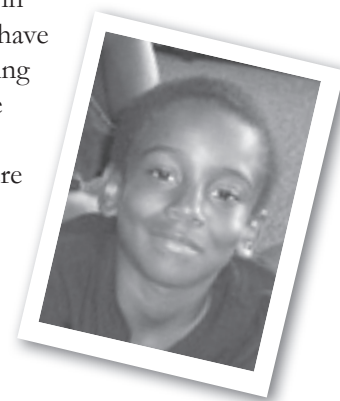
future. We are bonding in what I think will be a long and lasting friendship, for we are all on this same journey to find a different way of life while still being who we have been – wives, mothers, grandmothers. We are adding a hopefully new persona, that of strong and courageous women who have grown closer to God. We are making new friends – friends who share the loneliness and pain that this journey of widowhood takes us on.

A RICH LEGACY, A LOFTY MISSION

Continued From Front Page...

movement to end political displacement by engaging black youth in the life and future of their communities.

Forty-five years later, Freedom Schools march on under the Children’s Defense Fund in Washington, D.C. The times have changed, but the goal of raising up good children remains the same. And just as it was way back when in Mississippi, there are many Freedom Schools but one cause: The Freedom School at Myers Park is one of 135 in 80 cities across America. The 70 children learning here are among the 8,486 children learning similar lessons in schools from Greenville (Miss.) to Las Vegas.



Mekhi, 7.

Signs in the Youth Building articulate the Freedom School values: I can make a difference. Family. Community. Country. Education. Hope.

These signs are at Myers Park United Methodist Church in 2009. But the significance of Freedom School is that they could just as easily be on display at this summer’s school in San Francisco. Or at a Mississippi church in 1964, when children first began to understand that “they can do it.”

ON THE WEB (At www.mpumc.org)...



- What happened at Annual Conference?
- How do we support local ministries?
- Remembering Harlan L. Creech Jr.
- Sisters of Christ takes off.

Myers Park United Methodist Church

Mission Statement:

We are the body of Christ, growing in faith and serving others.

Each issue of the Cornerstone offers a bonus page of programs, classes and other activities offering the faithful a chance to learn, serve and grow. To share news for The Life Of The Church, reach Director of Communications Ken Garfield at 704-295-4819 or ken@mpumc.org.



SUPPORT IN HARD TIMES

The Career Connection job support group holds a small-group discussion at 7:00 p.m. Mondays through August 3 in Room 108 of the Parish Life Building on Parker J. Palmer's book, *Let Your Life Speak – Listening for the Voice of Vocation*. To register: Christine Mull at 704-295-4815 or cmull@mpumc.org.

The job support group also gathers at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, July 1, in Room 108 of the Parish Life Building as Ollie Chandhok of *Charlotte Business Journal* shares strategies for using print publications in job-hunting. At 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, July 15, in Room 108, Parish Nurse Susan Mobley shares ways to cope with stress and anxiety. Rev. George Ragsdale is sharing news of job opportunities, as well as offers from people with skills and services to share. He'll circulate the news to the Career Connection e-mail message group, and to others who seek him out. Contact him at george@mpumc.org. The bulletin board in Room 108 is available to post job openings and skills and services, and for scanning during church hours.

- **TRINITY'S TABLE SEEKS SWEETS** Cakes, cookies and other desserts are needed for Trinity's Table, the free community lunch at noon each Thursday at South Tryon Community Church, 2516 S. Tryon St. Contact Joy Poe at 704-343-0628 or joyfulpoe@aol.com.
- **COMPUTER, SCIENCE HELP NEEDED** Those proficient in computers are needed to help set up a computer and satellite lab for missionaries Herbert and Mary Zigbuo in Gbarnga, Liberia. A science teacher is also needed to set up a science lab. It's all part of a mission trip to Liberia September 20 to October 1. Details: Allen Smith at 704-831-4620 or asmith@worldofgod.org.
- **ADULTS PLUS! RETREAT NOVEMBER 19-21** Adults Plus! for 55 and over will travel to Lake Junaluska for a retreat November 19-21 as Mark Edwards presents *What The New Testament Tells Us About Jesus*. A \$50 deposit is due with registration by August 2. Details: Christine Mull at 704-295-4815 or cmull@mpumc.org.
- **CLASS ON BAPTISM** Rev. Shane Page will lead a monthly class on the meaning of baptism for parents and others interested in the sacrament. Held the last Sunday of each month at 9:45 a.m. in the Bride's Room (Room 133) in the Snyder Building, it debuts July 26.
- **MEETING SPECIAL NEEDS** A weekly Bible study class Sundays at 5:00 p.m. in the Youth Building for ages 16 and up with learning disabilities begins August 9. Also, a ministry starting in the Fall seeks volunteers to serve as buddies to children and youth with learning disabilities. Volunteers of all ages will help their buddies go over Sunday School lessons and generally make the Sunday School experience more rewarding. Details: Rev. Shane Page at 704-295-4823 or shane@mpumc.org.
- **YOUNG ADULTS STUDY GOD'S WILL** Dr. Howell's *The Will of God – Answering the Hard Questions* is being explored by young adults from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Wednesdays from July 1-29. To register: Jennifer@mpumc.org.
- **WOMEN'S CHOIR WANTS YOU** The Women's Choir welcomes women for summer fellowship, including concerts and lunches. Rehearsals begin at 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday, September 14. Details: Jan Helms at 704-295-4810 or jhelms@mpumc.org.
- **SUMMER SINGING FOR THE YOUNG** Young people from sixth grade through college can join the Summer College/Youth Ensemble rehearsing Wednesdays from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in Francis Chapel. The group will sing in worship throughout the summer. Details: Allyson Ware at 704-295-4831 or aware@mpumc.org.
- **THE GAMES PEOPLE PLAY** Game Night at South Tryon Community Church at 2516 S. Tryon St. is from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Friday, July 17, offering games and pizza with friends from the Southside and Brookhill communities. No RSVP is needed. Details: Rev. George Ragsdale at 704-295-4840 or george@mpumc.org.
- **ANSWERING THE CALL** Church members serving as ambassadors for *Answering Our Call* can answer questions about the strategic plan. Look for their *Ask Me About Answering Our Call* badges. Updates on the plan are at www.mpumc.org.
- **READINGS ON FAITH** The reading rack across from Goodness Gracious! offers The Upper Room devotional guide, brochures on the Billy Graham Library and more.
- **YOGA STARTS JULY 6** Vicky Smith will teach Hatha Yoga Mondays from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. July 6 to August 24 in the fitness room across from the Youth Building gym. Cost and details: 704-574-0782 or waxhawyogini@yahoo.com.

We celebrate Vacation Bible School by sharing a few of the faces that reflect the joy of youth, though there were a few tears to dry in the child care wing. The numbers were impressive: Camp E.D.G.E. (Experience + Discover God Everywhere) drew 330 children. There were 90 adult and youth volunteers to teach and guide them. Thanks to them! The offering from the four-day extravaganza – kids clutching their dollars – brought in more than \$2,000 for the Jubilee Children’s Center in Nairobi, Kenya. A thousand and one lifelong lessons were learned about God, love, service and how to make burritos for our needy neighbors. It was sweet. Sweetest of all were all those precious faces.



Ian, 2. And Margaret Carter.



Jayden, 6.



From left: Jerelle, 5, and Bryan, 5.



Ann, 6.



John, 7.

