



Family News

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A Servant Community: Actively Faithful, Faithfully Active
St. John's Baptist Church • 300 Hawthorne Lane • Charlotte, North Carolina

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THE CHICAGO CUBS AND DISCIPLESHIP

If you are a **Chicago Cubs** fan, you go to Cubs baseball games for something other than winning. After all, they have not won the World Series since 1908.

And, if you are a follower of Jesus, you pursue **ethics** for something other than being on the winning side. After all, taking up a cause on behalf of the poor, the outsider, the voiceless, the disempowered or the oppressed does not usually make you a winner.

This week, we enter the season of **Lent**. As days lengthen (lencten), darkness diminishes between now and Easter Sunday. We will experience more **light**. During Lent, we allow the light of God, as revealed in Jesus, to shine more brightly in and through our lives. Wherever the light of God increases, spiritual and ethical darkness diminish.

Discipleship is not a matter of winning. Discipleship is a matter of faithfulness. Just as Cubs fans are faithful; followers of Jesus are faithful to a vision of God's Kingdom revealed in the humble servant from Nazareth. Being faithful is not synonymous with winning. Ethical issues provide pathways into the light of God. So, please allow me to connect you with three pathways into God's light:

- *Homelessness in Charlotte:* St. John's is already involved with addressing the needs of the homeless in numerous ways. Other creative initiatives are being proposed for the Elizabeth community. Explore how you can be engaged.
- *Amendment One:* A referendum to amend the North Carolina Constitution is creating angst among many Baptists. The wording relates to marriage. There is a gathering to become better informed on the implications of this issue at Myers Park Baptist Church on Saturday, February 25th, from 8:30 to 1:00 p.m. This gathering is sponsored by The Alliance of Baptists, The Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, The Human Rights Campaign and others.
- *Hunger in North Carolina:* We address hunger through a variety of initiatives and partnerships. Almost 20% of all North Carolinians and near 30% of children in our state face food insecurity. This means they must choose between food or medicine, groceries or gas, dinner or heating their homes.

As we approach spring training, Cubs fans set their visions with, "Maybe this year!" And, as we enter this season of Lent, disciples of Jesus set their visions on the light of Jesus, the Christ of God's Kingdom. Ethical issues provide pathways into the light of God. Wherever the light of God increases, spiritual and ethical darkness diminish.

Who knows? Possibly our involvement in the visions of God's Kingdom will offer redemption and transformation in the lives of many people. And, maybe the Cubs will win the World Series. Of course, discipleship is not a matter of winning. Discipleship is a matter of faithfulness!

Shalom,
Dennis W. Foust, PhD
Senior Minister

ST. JOHN'S AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Founding members of St. John's were fortunate in launching the church in the boom time of the 1920s. They were able to build a beautiful and functional sanctuary, and to see the congregation grow in numbers in that first decade. They were able to call a capable new minister, Dr. Chauncey Durden, to replace the Rev. Joseph Gaines who had helped lead them in their formative years. Dr. Durden, however, had hardly had time to unpack when the global economy shattered any complacency the congregation might have felt. Dr. Durden had preached his first sermon on April 7, 1929, and the stock market crash took place in October of that year.

The Great Depression that followed presented a challenge during the decade of the 1930s that tested the church and helped shape its future. The financial burden the church undertook for its beginning was said to be large in proportion to the size of the congregation. When the depression hit, a \$10,000 note was due and other notes with interest totaling \$20,000 were hovering over the church as the new decade unfolded in 1930. That first crisis was overcome when Dr. C. N. Peeler presented a gift of \$10,000 with the challenge that a like amount be raised from the congregation. The faithful membership met that challenge.

Yet, the depression continued and deepened to the point that bills were coming due without cash on hand, and salaries were going unpaid. The church discovered a solution with the adoption in 1935 of the Belmont Tithing Plan, created by a small church in Virginia. As a result, 325 members of St. John's accepted a plan of contributing ten percent of their gross income for a period of thirteen weeks. After the thirteen weeks ended, the church found itself in a much sounder financial condition. Church Historian Richard Young wrote, "The spirit of St. John's was manifested and the response from the membership was so great that not only was the debt paid in full but \$3,000 additional was spent for the redecoration of the church from current funds." Roberts Lasater, who served as associate minister, wrote that Bea Livermon told him she and her husband parked their car for three months to be able to contribute to the church. Many members of the church felt so blessed that they continued tithing in upcoming years, relieving the financial stress on the church. More than 100 continued to tithe after the immediate crisis was resolved.

Despite the financial crises of the 1930s, membership grew to 1,164 by 1940. The Sunday School grew along with the overall congregation, passing a total of 904. In 1940.

Meantime, the population of Charlotte by 1940 passed the 100,000 mark, considered a significant milestone. Fortunately, Charlotte's economic growth did not come to a complete halt as it did in many places during the depression. Houses were built even during the slowdown.

The Great Depression called for sacrifices on many levels, but members of St. John's were so dedicated to their faith that they put the church at the top of their commitments, setting the stage for a healthy church in the decades to come.

Ken Sanford

Budget Receipts

Sunday, February 19: \$11,713

January Financial Information

Received: \$74,553
Budgeted: \$67,000
Expended: \$72,988
Surplus: \$1,565

Calendar

February 26-March 3

Sunday, February 26

9:15..... Sunday School
10:30..... Worship
11:30..... Habitat Trip Leaders
5:00..... Youth Activities
6:30..... Youth Parents' Meeting

Monday, February 27

12:00..... Faith Journey Book Study

Tuesday, February 28

11:00..... Terrific Tuesday Book Club

Wednesday, February 29

11:00..... Women's Bible Study
12:00..Lenten Lunch-St. Martin's Episcopal
5:30..... Children's Choirs
5:45..... Family Night Dinner
6:45..... Small Groups

Thursday, March 1

10:00..... SJBC Needleworkers
7:30..... Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Friday, March 2

9:30..... Craft Class
6:00..... Room in the Inn

Saturday, March 3

Recent Illnesses

Presbyterian: Sharon Williams
Presbyterian Matthews: Emily Batts
CMC Mercy: Clarence Eden
Home: Elizabeth Laney, J. C. Lyons,
Helen Johnson, Margaret Almond,
Worth Jarrett, Corson Hicks,
Genks Gantt, Mans McLeod,
Barbara Hall

Sunday, February 26

First Sunday in Lent

Proclaimer: Dennis Foust

Sermon: "COMMITMENT: Jesus
Came to be Baptized"

Matthew 3:13-4:11; Matthew 22:34-40

Deacons: Ken Smith, Carter Sorrell,
Jackie Southwell, Rod Spence, Todd
Stillerman, Nancy Wilson, Jane Winn,
Alice Wirz, David Allen, Stephen Allred

Ushers: Leonard & Linda Balentine,
Bobbie Hinson, Margaret Almond

Tellers: Marvin Carter, Paul Lloyd

Raise a Song IV Children's Choir Retreat April 13 & 14 Camp Caraway

Cost is \$50 per person (due by
Wednesday, March 7)



February Food Drive for Loaves & Fishes

Barrels have been placed in the gym
and Broach foyers for your
contributions of peanut butter, canned
soups, meat and fruit, 100% fruit
juices, other non-perishable items,
paper and plastic bags, and egg
cartons. Funds are also needed to
purchase perishable items (make
check payable to St. John's with
"Loaves & Fishes" in the memo line).

Easter Outfits for A Child's Place



New or gently used
outfits and new socks
and underwear for boys
and girls ages 5-10 are
being collected for A Child's Place.
A rack for donations has been
placed in the gym foyer. (Drive
ends March 25).

Ash Wednesday Service



6:30 pm
February 22nd
Chapel

Sunday, March 11



Pancake Breakfast!

9:00-9:45 am - Broach Hall
(Breakfast is free but please make
your reservation by emailing or calling
the church office - 704.333.5428.)

Followed by

Intergenerational Sunday
School - 9:45-10:15 am

and

Worship - 10:30 am
Sanctuary

Youth & Men's Basketball Schedules

Results of February 18 Games:

12 & U Boys: Won!
14 & Under Girls: Won!
16 & Under Boys: Lost
18 & Under Boys: Lost
18 & Under Girls: Won!

February 25 Tournament Schedule:

10 & U Boys: 9:30-St. Stephens
12 & U Boys: 10:00-Avondale Pres.
14 & U Boys: To be announced
14 & U Girls: 11:45-Covenant
18 & Under Girls: 11:00-New Birth

Men's Games (at Providence Baptist):

Tues., Feb. 28, 7:00 pm vs St. John's
Episcopal

Volunteers Needed

Hospitality Task Force

Would you be interested in serving as
a hospitality resource person for
church events? To volunteer or for
more information, please call Peggy in
the church office.

Parents of Youth or the Young at Heart

The Youth Choir is in need of
organizational support (roll keeping,
coordination, & etc.). The choir
rehearses on Sunday evenings
through May. While the work is mainly
behind-the-scenes, your presence at
the rehearsals is needed. Interested
and available?

Warren@stjohnsbaptistchurch.org

Terrific Tuesday Book Club

February 28, 11:00 am - Church Library

Book for February: *Unfinished Business*
by Lee Kravitz. Book for March:
Unbroken by Laura Hildebran

YOUTH NEWS

Youth will be on their regular Sunday
night schedule this Sunday, February
26th, with recreation at 5:00 pm, choir
at 5:30 pm, and dinner at 6:15 pm.
There will be a parents' meeting and
small group meetings at 6:30 pm.

Family Night

"Where the church comes to be family"

Family Night Menus

Serving time: 5:45-6:15 pm

Feb. 22: Breakfast Supper prepared by the
men of the church

Feb. 29: Ham, baked potato, salad,
biscuits, dessert

Meal reservations and cancellations are accepted
in the church office until 2:00 pm each Monday.
Adults: \$7; children 10 and under: \$4; family
maximum: \$25.

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Warren Howell, Minister for Worship and Music
Martha Kearse, Associate Minister
Maureen Howell, Organist
Peggy Harrison, Administrative Assistant
Elaine Johnson, Financial Secretary
Steve Taylor, Building Superintendent
Viorica Secere, Custodian
Lydia Olmsted, Weekday School Director