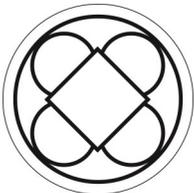


In This Issue:

- Letter from Our Pastor
- Letter from our Director of Music
- Prayer Concerns
- Angel Tree
- Appalachia Service Project
- Children's Music
- Christmas in a Barn
- Cross Mission
- Fellowship Meal
- Giving Deadline 2015
- Hunger Missions
- JOY Connection
- Membership Team
- Memorials and Honorariums
- Live Auction
- Oyster Roast
- Presbyterian Women Scholarship
- Property Box
- Relay for Life Cookie Exchange
- Session Highlights
- Spirituality Quadrant Thanks
- Stewardship
- Youth News

Thanks

- December Calendar
- Lectionary
- Worship Nursery
- Flowers
- Birthdays
- Anniversaries
- Ushers
- Lay Readers
- Acolytes
- Trinity Ringers
- Building Officers
- Time with Children
- Sunday Shepherds



A publication of
First Presbyterian Church
215 S. Third Street
PO Box 1159
Smithfield, NC 27577
919-934-0988
fpcsmithfield@nc.rr.com
www.fpcsmithfield.org

Reflections in the Water: Reaching Out

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry, and you gave me food; I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you welcomed me; I was naked, and you gave me clothing; I was sick, and you took care of me; I was in prison, and you visited me . . . Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.

—Matthew 25:34-40

It is easy to tell the poor to accept their poverty as God's will when you yourself have warm clothes and plenty of food and medical care and a roof over your head and no worry about the rent. But if you want them to believe you—try to share some of their poverty and see if you can accept it as God's will yourself!

—Thomas Merton, *Seeds of Contemplation*, 1949

Our congregation has a rich history of outreach to our community and care of its members. One unique avenue of outreach is through the Emergency Discretionary Fund. This special resource enables the pastor, in coordination with an FPCS corporation officer, to respond to our community's emergent needs. 2015's help included assistance grants this past year for housing, funeral costs, educational and disaster assistance. Approximately 90% or more of those funds have gone to families with small children. The grants, while confidential in nature, are documented by our Disbursing Treasurer, Cathy Allen. Recently I spoke with a church member, Jean Worley, a former administrator of this fund, who shared with me the special story of this community outreach of our church.

As was true for FPC and most churches, there was a time when no such fund existed. In 1982, when member Dr. W. G. Wilson died, he left as part of his estate to the church what was to become known as the Wilson Compassion Fund. The interest generated by this gift became seed money for what was originally called the Pastor's Discretionary Fund, now the Emergency Discretionary Fund. Today I work closely with local mission agencies, Community Action in particular, to target the greatest needs in our midst.

At funerals during recent months when I've shared life stories of our members, I was continually aware of the rich legacies of their past service and ministry among us. At the recent memorial for Helen Godwin, I shared the story of how she worked quietly with former pastor Joseph Lansinger to provide clothing and assistance for children in our local schools as well as those in surrounding neighborhoods. I reflected on the high level of stewardship commitment from Devon and Phyllis Pollard, also recently deceased, to support the Emergency Discretionary Fund. In this near year, we will continue to meet the myriad challenges and opportunities to serve our community's needs. In closing, I invite you to consider the continuing theological theme of community outreach shared by Dwight Dockery, our Director of Music, in this edition of the newsletter.

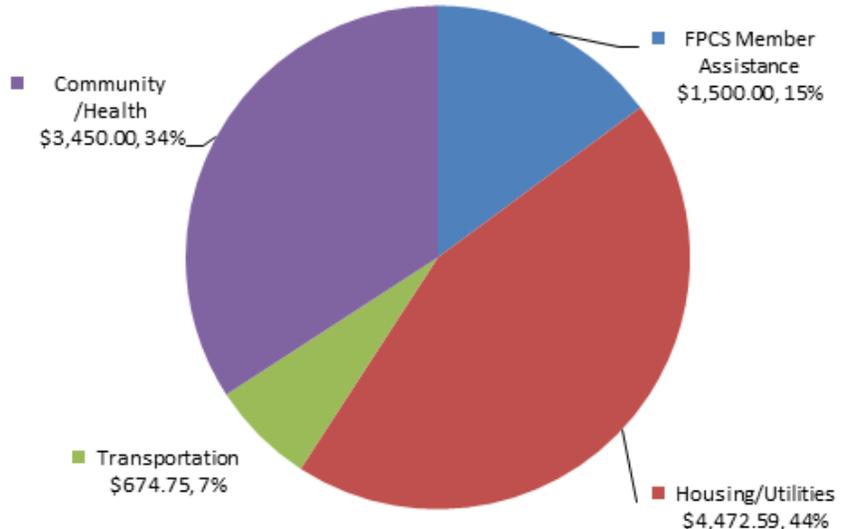
Blessing to you all in this new year.
Pastor Joe

First Presbyterian Church Emergency Discretionary Fund

January 1, 2015 – December 17, 2015

Contributions – \$8,931.74

Disbursements – \$7,305.55





Prayerful Support for

Tom Avera at Liberty Commons in Benson
Nor Bell at Barbour Court
Tom Barbour at Meadowview
Jane Bolin at Meadowview
Eula Brown at Meadowview
Bernice Johnson at Meadowview, room 105

Alice Narron at Meadowview
Shirley Williams at Meadowview
Myde Eason at Brookdale Smithfield
Hazel Whitehurst at Brookdale Smithfield
Jane Cunningham in Wilmington
Bill Leist in Colfax
Ellen Rogers in Raleigh
Martha Rogers in Richmond
Mary Alice Thomas in Charlotte
Marie Atkins
Frances Churchill
Ruth Daniel
Paul Johnson
Tom Johnson
Bill Kimball
Shannon Kimball
Charles Lee
Nancy Lee
Marie Maddox
Shelley Maddox
Mary Miller
Chap Ragland
Hank Roberson
Linda Stephenson
Nelson Vaughn
Neil Watson
Betty Welch
Ted Wells
William Wells
Hilda Worsham
Rebecca Ziady

Christian Sympathy to David Godwin and Jim Godwin on the death of their mother, **Helen Wall Godwin**, on November 29, 2015; to **Gene and Mary Miller** on the death of Mary's sister, Jane Mapel, on December 10, 2015; to **Rebecca and Phil Ziady** on the death of Phil's brother, Alvin Douglas Brantley, Sr., on December 18, 2015; and to **Peter and Linda Russell** on the death of Linda's sister, Berniece Townsend, on December 20, 2015.



Honorarium for Ann Ragland
Memorials for Helen Godwin,
Helen and J.E. Godwin, Roy Hooks,
Mary Hauser, Charlie James, Eddie

Perkinson, Clem and Mikki Sharek, Mabel Surles, Shirley and J.B. Wooten, Mabel and JB Surles, George and Lo Aldhizer

Donors: Tom Roberts, Frank and Lisa Deans, Anne O. Nicholes, Elaine Wood, Jo James, Beth Daniel, Billy Duncan, Tommy and Camille Boone, Dot Ellmore, John and Margaret Causey, John and Maxine McFadyen, Margaret C. Larmore, Gayle Godwin, Tom Roberts



Nancy Lee for once again heading up decorations for Advent and Christmas, and for her helpers, **Camille Boone, Judy Daniels, Billy Duncan, Dot Ellmore, Ann Huckenbeck, Rich Huckenbeck, Etta Maret, Thad McCrae,**

Maxine McFadyen, Benny Pope, Hank Roberson, and Hubert Schmidt.

Joseph Hester, Judy Miller, and Hank Roberson for hosting and decorating for the Front Desk Volunteer Luncheon.

Lacy Bailey for keeping the Children's Worship Bags stocked and up-to-date.

Cathy Allen for writing memorial acknowledgments while Diane Dockery was away.

The Presbyterian Women for purchasing three new coffee urns for the kitchen.



of December Session

- Approved reaffirming \$1.4 million as the goal for the Phase II Capital Campaign and stated that communication with the congregation will include the following information: the amount needed to retire the mortgage with accrued interest and any residual amount received would accrue to the Property Reserve Fund.
- Approved a Called Congregational Meeting to elect a deacon to fill the unexpired term of Chap Ragland and to review the pastor's Terms of Call which were approved on December 20, 2015.
- Approved a fundraiser to sell hand-painted Christmas ornaments with proceeds going to the Building Fund.
- Approved New Officer Training for Thursday evenings in January.
- Approved an Officer Training Retreat for Saturday, January 30, 2016, the examination of officers at a called meeting on Sunday, January 31, 2016, and Ordination and Installation Sunday for January 31, 2016.
- Approved vacation leave for the pastor from December 28 -31, 2015.
- Received and approved an internal audit conducted by Tony Lester and Chris Roberts.
- Approved the 2016 Budget.
- Session continues to work with Dr. Art Ross on the Unified Annual Budget and Capital Campaign.

If you have items you wish to have brought before Session, please contact an elder or the clerk.

—Debbie Jacobs

Christmas in a Barn 2015



Angel Tree Wishes Granted First Day!

The Mission Outreach Quadrant would like to thank the congregation for its overwhelming support of the Smithfield Rescue Mission Angel Tree this year. Our partnership with the Smithfield Rescue Mission for our Christmas supportive giving program included gifts and clothing for children as well as much needed general supplies for the mission. The tree went up in the fellowship hall in time for the Silent Auction on November 22, and virtually all the cards were taken that morning! The numerous gifts, supplies and gift cards were very much appreciated and brightened the holidays for many.

Thank you for sharing the love of Christ during this holiday season with your generous gifts.

—Greg and Joyce Knoll



Children's Music Program Booming!

Camille Boone wants to let everyone know how much joy she is receiving from singing with our little ones! On Mondays she has nine attending Music for the Young Child, and on Tuesdays she has five. She would love to have a few more two-, three-, and four-year-olds. Please spread the word.

Camille is also singing with the children each Sunday morning with the help of Sandy Perkinson and Kathy Rice and various other adults. The children are learning many of our traditional Christian songs as well as the songs we sang for this year's Christmas In A Barn.

You may remember that Kathy and Camille are singing and playing bells with the children/youth during the Sunday School hour on the fourth Sunday. They love sharing their love of God and their love of music with these children.

Attention College Students

Each year the Presbyterian Women give scholarships to deserving college students. Applications must be mailed after January 1, 2016, and before March 1, 2016. Applicants must live in the Presbytery and be a member of a church in the Presbytery. For information or for an application, please contact Judy Johnson.

—Judy Johnson

Cookie Exchange — Sweet Success!

Our Cookie Walk was a big success! We earned \$925.00 for the American Cancer Society. Thanks to all the participants! Special thanks to Joy Worsham, Betsy Olive, Becky Peele, Judy Schmidt, Pam and Benny Pope, Dot Ellmore, Jane Bolin, and Ethan Smith for ALL their hard work to make this event happen! Thanks to Santa too!! Keep an eye out for news about our Survivor Sunday and Chili Lunch in early March!

—Martha Taylor, Captain
FPC Relay for Life Team 37



January JOY

Join us at our first JOY Connection gathering for 2016 on January 7 at noon. We will welcome the New Year with a delicious meal followed by entertainment by the JoCo Golden Girls. Resolve to come and be a part of this special time.

Be sure to sign the sheet at the reception desk or call the church at 919-934-0988 to reserve a space. As always, you are welcome to bring a dessert to share with others if you would like.

We are looking forward to seeing you on the 7th.

—Ann Ragland

Hunger Missions

And don't forget to do good and to and share with those in need. These are the sacrifices that please God.

—Hebrews 13:16

Many foods of our ancients are considered super foods today. Frequently mentioned in the Bible, they would have been staples in the times of early Christians. Perhaps you would guess these, but here are some interesting facts about their super powers.

Wheat: This grain, which is found in everything from bread to pasta to cakes, is healthier when it is refined as little as possible. Whole-wheat products contain 30 percent of your recommended daily fiber intake and high levels of manganese and magnesium. A diet rich in whole grains like wheat is thought to increase your energy level and lower your risk of type-two diabetes and gallstones.

Barley: Another whole grain high in fiber, barley is used in breads, cereals, and soups. When eaten regularly barley is good for intestinal health, can lower cholesterol, reduce your risk of colon cancer and type-2 diabetes if eaten regularly. Barley also contains trace amounts of copper, which have been shown to help reduce the symptoms of arthritis.

Grapes: Everyone knows that grape juice and red wine are tasty—but

healthhttps://s-media-cache-ak0.pinning.com/236x/3c/09/07/3c0907613a9b292fb2004663b8a67667.jpg
y? Grapes contain nutritional compounds called flavonoids, which are believed to reduce your risk of blood clots and protect your body from damage by the "free radicals" found in LDL, or "bad," cholesterol. Rich in antioxidants, grapes may provide protection against cardiovascular disease, particularly in women.

Figs: These sweet fruits are high in potassium, a mineral that helps control blood pressure, dietary fiber which may help you lose weight, and calcium which can help preserve bone density. Fig leaves made into an extract are thought to help lower insulin levels in diabetics.

Pomegranate: These strange-looking seed fruits are rich in antioxidants, which prevent LDL cholesterol from doing its damage, helps prevent blood clots, and may also help reduce the risk of breast cancer and lessen the symptoms of arthritis.

Olive Oil: Olives, and the extra-virgin oil contain many of the antioxidants that may protect against the oxidation of LDL cholesterol compounds, are high in monounsaturated fatty acids which are called "the healing fats" because they lower the effects of "bad" cholesterol while raising "good" cholesterol levels and are high in vitamin E, olive oil also is thought to protect against colon cancer, and it is helpful in fighting gastritis and other stomach ailments.

Honey: Raw honey is packed with antioxidants, and is considered to be an anti-viral, anti-bacterial, and anti-fungal substance. Honey is considered to have tumor-fighting properties and may help prevent colon cancer. Honey is the healthiest sweetener for type-2 diabetics. Honey also may have wound-healing and muscle-regenerating properties.

As we prepare each month to support our Hunger Missions, our contributions of food are Super Foods in and of themselves, as they offer nutrition and comfort to those less fortunate. We should be mindful that what we give is not only filling but wholesome. Thank you for your super dedication through continued wonderful support of our Hunger Missions: Yes We Can, Pennies For Hunger, and the Smithfield Rescue Mission.

For more information to go <http://www.beliefnet.com/Wellness/Health/2009/05/Super-Foods-of-the-Bible.aspx?b=1&p=8>

—Tom Barwick



Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.

—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Property Box



Using the Dishwasher

When you use the dishwasher, please make sure your turn it off when you are finished. Otherwise, it continues to heat water until someone discovers it has been left on.

When you finish using the dishwasher, please make sure you remove the racks and put them away, and that you clean the food trap. The food trap is in the bottom of the dishwasher and is visible once you remove the racks.

Thanks you!
Your Property Team

**First Presbyterian Church
Operating Results: January – November 2015
Actual vs. Budgeted**

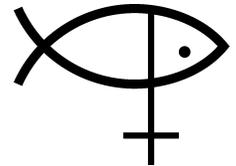
	Jan – Nov 2015 Actual	Jan – Nov 2015 Budget
Revenue		
General Offering	237,752.22	241,175.00
Disbursements		
Education Quadrant	2,659.69	3,574.14
Mission Outreach Quadrant	10,583.11	14,220.14
Spirituality Quadrant	131,281.94	146,922.05
Stewardship Quadrant	92,867.51	99,034.21
Total Disbursements	<u>237,392.25</u>	<u>263,751.29</u>
Net Income/(Deficit)	359.97	(22,576.29)



Did You Recently Make a Stock Donation to the Church???
Two stock gifts have been received. We do not know who to credit.
Please contact Shirley Sharek or Beth Daniel.



In order to be included in your 2015 Giving Statement, gifts to the church must be in the church office by noon, December 31.



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

JANUARY 2016

**NON-PROFIT STD MAIL
USPOSTAGE
SMITHFIELD, NC 27577
PERMIT #93**

**First Presbyterian Church
PO Box 1159
Smithfield, NC 27577**

Christmas in a Barn 2016 — Outstanding!

There are so many folks who made Christmas in a Barn another big success! First we must thank the Langdon family for hosting us once again. Next our appreciation goes to all the actors who played angels, shepherds, wise men, one wise woman, Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus. They all looked great!

We also thank the children for singing and Camille Boone for teaching them the songs. Another shout out goes to the volunteers who made sure everyone was in costume.

Keeping with tradition, Ragged Company blessed us with their music. For the first time, Sandy Perkinson served as our narrator. We thank them. And Joseph Hester was there lending moral support.

We also thank the bakers who provided delicious refreshments, and to Nichole Booker for the hot chocolate. Of course Evans Horne and his crew were there to set up and take down the tents and tables.

And we can't forget to thank all them members and friends who came out for the event.

It takes many hands to make Christmas in a Barn a reality each year. We hope we haven't left out anyone!

If any of this sounds like something you would like to participate in next Christmas, please contact Ruth Bell or Julie Duncan.

—Ruth Bell



Greetings from the Director of Music:

As I write this, we are still wrapped up in the anticipation of the Advent season. Christmas has not yet come again, and on Friday, December 18, I still have much to do. I'm hoping to get it all accomplished, but with the many demands that lead up to Christmas, it's always a photo finish!

But I step out of that pandemonium for just a moment to share with you a text to consider as we continue to celebrate the Christmas season. I first encountered this text set to music at a performance Shelley and I were doing this December. It comes from Howard Thurman (1899-1981), an African American theologian who worked at Howard University and later Boston University. He was a civil rights leader in the 1960s, and this poem comes from his 1973 book *The Mood of Christmas & Other Celebrations*.



When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among the people,
To make music in the heart.

Many things strike me about this powerful, but challenging text. I will only delve into a couple of aspects of it, though.

When I read this, I'm struck by the challenge to *get up and do something*. Our society makes such a spectacle of politicians and religious leaders doing good, charitable deeds on holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas; this inspires others. I'm not complaining that folks are encouraged to do this, but I love that this text is saying that the work continues – perhaps it even intensifies – after we take down our decorations and sing our “alleluias.” What's more, doing this work going forward is a good thing.

I'm sure many people are familiar (either personally or via the media) with the concept of post-Christmas/post-holiday depression. A quick Google search will fill you in, if you're not, but it's essentially a funk that sets in after all the merriment has ended. One of the great things about this text is that it gives us *more* – MUCH more – to consider and to work toward. Christmas, after all, is the *beginning* of the Christian/liturgical year, not the end (as it is on our calendars). So Christians should not allow themselves to sit long enough to be plagued with such a funk.

But there's another important note, I feel. (Pardon me for being technical for a moment, but, if you re-read the poem, you'll see the two halves of the text (When . . . , when . . . , when . . . /to . . . to . . . to . . .) have a sort of reflective symmetry to them. Thurman starts the poem with the grandest ideas and brings them to more “regular” or smaller-scale ideas (angels, then stars, then kings and princes, then shepherds). On the flip side, he is expanding the elements/ideas of the work that must be done (find the lost, then heal the broken, then feed the hungry, then release the prisoner, then rebuild nations, and so on). There is, then, an implied intimacy attached to the pivot point: Christmas itself.

Perhaps you're wondering why I, as the Director of Music, am writing all of this. Well, it gets to my final point. Given the structure of this poem, notice the final line: “to make music in the heart.” Is music in the heart a grander idea, then, than bringing peace to the people?

I believe that Thurman was saying two things about this. First, making music in one's heart comes *after* we've achieved all of our other goals. We must first take care of our world and our fellow man, and it is only after we do this work for God that we will find the fulfillment that brings music truly into our hearts.

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, this *is* the grandest of all of the work. This is surely *because* the work of God is not light – just turn on the news if you don't believe me; there's much to be done. Making music in our hearts, however, is different from having a song in our heads. If you're like me, you have a song in your head most of the time, but a song *living in your heart* so rarely. Sure – music touches us, comforts us, challenges us, inspires us; it is a powerful force that it can affect us in so many ways and is consequently one of the *most human* things we can do. Perhaps that's just it, though. When we've helped our fellow man – done God's work – we become so connected as a human race that the music will have no choice but to reside in our hearts as we reach a higher level of being.

So I challenge you this Christmas season and throughout the year: find the lost, heal the broken, feed the hungry, release the prisoner, rebuild the nations, work to bring peace among the people, and, when you have done that work for God, I feel certain that you will find music in your heart. How could you not?

Peace to you,
Dwight

Spirituality Quadrant Says Thanks

Thanks to all of the volunteers who helped to decorate our church for Christmas. Special thanks to Nancy Lee and Judy Daniels who coordinated the decorating and gathering the worker bees!

Thank you to Nancy Lee, Joy Worsham, Kathy Rice and the Handbell Choir for a special Service of Remembrance. The music was exceptional and the decorations gorgeous. Their hard work is appreciated.

Thank you to Ruth Bell, Julie Duncan, Brandy Holzshu, and Evans Horne for coordinating Christmas in a Barn. Thank you to all of the volunteers who helped with set up, directing, or clean up. The children sang beautifully and we had more children than I have ever seen. We had a great crowd, great weather, and yummy food! Thanks to all for their hard work. Thanks to the Langdons for allowing us to use their farm for the event, too!

—Pam Pope

I believe that appreciation is a holy thing — that when we look for what's best in a person we happen to be with at the moment, we're doing what God does all the time. So in loving and appreciating our neighbor, we're participating in something sacred.

—Fred Rogers

Spirituality
Quadrant

Fostering Youth's Dedication to Service

Since I have been on staff our youth have shown enthusiasm for service projects, mission projects, and fund raising events. They have wonderful attitudes and are a joy to work with. Their enthusiasm comes from the loving support they have received from the congregation and their parents.

I have heard over and over again how important our youth program is, and I agree. Our youth are being prepared to serve this community, this congregation, and the world at large.

Thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm as we all partner to support our youth and prepare them for all of their future endeavors.

—Linda Crowder

Upcoming Youth Events:

January: Oyster Roast

January 22, 2016!

Tickets for this annual event will be on sale soon!

Watch for coming announcements.



March:
Cross Mission-Urban Plunge
Myers Park Presbyterian Church, Charlotte.
March 4-6, 2016.

April: Live Auction:



It is time to take a look in the attic, garage, and your closets. Make or build one-of-a-kind items to donate. Some of you have shared some wonderful ideas and tips. This will be unique and fun!

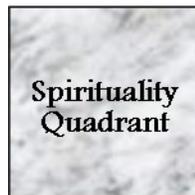
If you have items that may need to be picked up and donated, such as furniture or other heavy or cumbersome items, we will gladly arrange to get them and store them at the church.

Other donations might include tickets to a sports event or a weekend at the beach or mountains. Let us know!



Happy New Year

Happy New Year from the Youth!



Thank You from Membership Team

First Presbyterian Church has been welcoming and mentoring visitors, new members, and long-time members this past year. We have gained new members and have opened our doors to numerous others through the JOY Connection luncheons, AA, Smithfield Rescue Mission programs, Yes We Can, Pennies for Hunger, Vacation Bible School, the Fifth of July picnic, Trunk or Treat, and many other activities that welcome and support our community. We have gained nine new wonderful members, and we hope this lays the groundwork for even more involvement in the coming year.

—Judy and Hubert Schmidt

Appalachia Service Project

There is only one slot remaining!!

We have one slot to fill to complete our team for the Appalachia Service Project. We will be participating from July 24-30 in either West Virginia or Southwestern Virginia. The participant cost is \$325 as well as travel expenses. If you would like to participate in this spiritually enriching project, please contact Pam Pope at 919-938-9237 or

thepopes@nc.rr.com.

—Pam Pope

January Fellowship Meal

Mark your calendars! January 11 at 6:00 p.m., First Presbyterian will host the Rev. Jeff Spainhour, Associate Pastor, Triangle Presbyterian Church, Durham, and director of the nonprofit Staff of Hope, a charity instrumental in assisting East African communities with the acquisition of wells and fresh water. This effort connects closely with the work being done in Malawi by the Rev. Jim McGill who is supported by our church. This should be an interesting evening for all ages; we encourage everyone to come out and enjoy fellowship, good food, and an inspirational story.



The Mission Outreach Quadrant will supply the meat and beverages. We are asking congregation members to bring side dishes and desserts.

We look forward to seeing you on January 11.

—Ann Huckenbeck



Holiness is not something we do or attain; it is the communication of the divine life, the inbreathing of the divine nature, the power of the divine presence resting on us.

—Andrew Murray

Mission Outreach Quadrant