

# Blackna11

Memorial Presbyterian Church



1902 Perry Street . Durham, NC 27705 . 919-286-5586 . [www.blackna11.org](http://www.blackna11.org)

July / August  
2011

## Letter from the Pastor

I was up visiting my parents not too long ago. By their house there is a family who are very active in the homeschool community. Several years ago this family converted to Judaism. We were surprised. They knew all kinds of strong Christian families. One of their sons married one of the daughters from one of these strong Christian families. There were many families testifying to them about the goodness of the gospel.

Driving by their house I wondered, "Why did they convert to Judaism? Why didn't they become Christians?" We still are in touch with them. The whole family has embraced Judaism. They have invited us to share Shabbat dinner with them on Friday nights and we have enjoyed those celebrations. They have become very serious about their new faith. One daughter has lived in a kibbutz in Israel. Another daughter majored in Judaic Studies in college.

Why did they convert to Judaism? I don't think it is because they liked the doctrine better. I really believe they were attracted to the culture of Judaism: the Shabbat, the holidays, the ancient history, and the sense of belonging to a people with a sense of identity for over 3500 years.

But don't we as Christians have an at least equally compelling culture? We have great holidays with ancient traditions (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Ascension). We too have centuries of practice of spiritual disciplines that order our lives like the Sabbath.

But our friends were not attracted to Christian culture. Maybe it was because we have been the majority in our nation and so Christian culture seems "ordinary." Or is it because we have given away our culture?

Historically, Judaism has clung to its distinctiveness in order to keep from being destroyed by the culture around it. We have spent the last couple of generations trying our best to lose our distinctiveness so as not to stand out, so that we fit in well with the culture around us. One friend said to me recently, "If you want to see Christian culture, go to a Christian bookstore." There, what we find is secular culture with Jesus pasted on top.

Our culture flows out of what we believe. Do we no longer believe in the cross? "A stumbling block for Jews and foolishness to Greeks." [1 Cor. 1:18-31] Do we no longer believe that to follow Jesus means the cross for us? Do we now believe that following Jesus will cost us nothing and we can follow Jesus and fit in fine with the world around us?

What should this culture of the cross look like? Is it more than cross necklaces and cross tattoos? Our culture is more than the cross but it certainly includes the cross. In what ways are we and should we be distinctive from those who do not know Jesus? That distinctiveness will be costly for us but it will also be an invitation to those around us.

D.A.D.

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# Blacknall Happenings

STAY UP-TO-DATE WITH WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

## Summer Sunday School and Children's Worship Volunteers Needed

— Would you consider serving our Kindergarten - Fifth graders for one or two weeks over the summer in either the 8:30, 9:45 or 11:00 service? We will provide training and support and can work around your travel schedule. If interested, contact Amy Rowell soon ([arowell@blacknall.org](mailto:arowell@blacknall.org)). Thank you!

**Remember how we began a new tradition on Communion Sundays back in the Summer of 2008?** From the July 29, 2008 bulletin: "As a way to prepare thankful hearts for worship, we ask you to bring a non-perishable food item and place it in the basket outside the sanctuary...As we feed on the body of Christ, who is God's exceedingly gracious and abundant gift, may this abundance spill forth from our lives, responding to Christ's calling to care for the 'least of these'."

This summer, our children's Sunday school classes have been packing bags of food each week to take to 14 students and their families from EK Powe elementary school right down Ninth Street from Blacknall. All of these families live in the surrounding neighborhoods. Families from Blacknall have been handling the delivery of these bags each week, with some help from the Youth Group. The families who receive this food often rely on school breakfasts and lunches to feed their children throughout the school year, and these bags are part of a weekend program run by volunteers during the school year. We want to help keep these 14 families from worrying about hunger during the summer months!

Below is a shopping list of food items that we hope to place in each bag each week. Donations of food are welcome at any time during the summer – they can be placed in the box at the entrance to the Sanctuary, or in the fourth and fifth grade boys Sunday school classroom. I would encourage you to bring your children in to this project in some creative way, to help them learn to serve others. Perhaps they could earn a bit of money to take to the store and buy food for the bags, or perhaps they could ask around your neighborhood for donations of food (with an adult of course!) for the bags. Maybe make a goal to see how much they could collect for the August 7<sup>th</sup> Communion Sunday. If you have any questions please contact Beth Solie [bsolie@blacknall.org](mailto:bsolie@blacknall.org), or 286-5586.

Each Bag contains (as it's available):

- 2/3 packets instant oatmeal
- 2 boxes (individ. size) milk
- 2 cans vegetables
- Package of rice or pasta
- 1 can of beans
- Raisins or Pudding or Jello
- Peanut Butter (28oz size) or 2/3 cans of tuna, salmon, or chicken
- Granola Bars
- 1 box (individ. size) juice
- 1 can of fruit
- 2 cans of soup
- 1 can of tomato
- Popcorn or Crackers

**Women's Wednesday Night Activities Women at Blacknall**, let's gather together this summer on Wednesday nights. Below is a wide variety of locations, and the hosting is shared by various people. No R.S.V.P. is necessary, but you are also very welcome to show up and bring a friend. We'll be meeting on **Wednesdays 7-9 pm** until **August 13**. Here are the locations for July and August:

**Wed. July 13** - Hosted by Lauren Holahan ([lauren.holahan@gmail.com](mailto:lauren.holahan@gmail.com)). Let's meet at Bull City Burger and Brewery, 107 E. Parrish St, Durham. Come to relax, have some girl time, enjoy one of downtown Durham's cool new spots.

**Wed. July 20** - Pool Party at Eno Valley Swim Club. Beth Solie will bring a big bowl of greens and you bring a salad topping or a dressing. Purchase a drink for 50 cents. It is \$2 to swim. TIME: 6:30-8:30 p.m. ADDRESS: 635 Rippling Stream Road, Durham, phone 477-9042). For more info contact Beth ([bsolie@blacknall.org](mailto:bsolie@blacknall.org)).

**Wed. July 27** - Meet at Local Yogurt... new location on 2816 Erwin Rd Ste 201(formerly Copa Vida Coffee beside the fountain). Hosted by Barb Eyster ([eyste002@mc.duke.edu](mailto:eyste002@mc.duke.edu)) and Margaret Frothingham

**Wed. August 3** - Meet at Blacknall in the Upper Atrium to hear from Stella Sieber: "Nothing but the Truth - Reflection on Ten Years: Trauma, Wisdom and Passion." In the years since her accident, Stella has become a person whom God has gifted to encourage people individually and in groups, especially those who have suffered amputations. Stella will talk with us, we'll have refreshments, and time to talk and pray together. Childcare is provided, but you need to register your children with Beth Solie by August 2.

**Wed. August 10** - Game Night at Dale Flowers' house. Feel free to bring your favorite game. Dale ([flowersdale@yahoo.com](mailto:flowersdale@yahoo.com)) has Apples to Apples, Scrabble and others. 4614 Regency Drive (Hope Valley Farms). Let's celebrate the end of summer together!

## FOCUS ON DURHAM MINISTRIES

Over the past couple months, dozens of Blacknallites have joined many other area volunteers to help build a new Habitat for Humanity home at 808 Gerard Street, in Durham's "West End" neighborhood. Jointly sponsored by the Presbyterian Coalition of Durham, the Catholic Coalition of Durham, and the Durham Community Band, the home is being built for Shanika Taylor of Durham, a single mother with three young children.

Habitat for Humanity is a Christian housing ministry that was started in 1976 in Americus, Georgia, with the audacious goal "to eliminate poverty housing from the face of the Earth". The ensuing thirty-five years may not have brought us very close to that goal, but they have left a remarkable record of hundreds of thousands of new homes built all over the world, strengthening communities and transforming lives. Each new homeowner receives a Bible at the house dedication to remind that God's Word is the sure foundation for a truly healthy & fulfilled life.

Here in Durham, Habitat has built more than two hundred fifty new homes over the last quarter century. All of those projects were built almost entirely by volunteers, and funded primarily by thirty-year 0% interest mortgages taken out by the new homeowners. One of the great things about volunteering with Habitat is the chance to meet & work with the future homeowner, and Shanika has been working on site just about every Saturday since the start of construction, along with various family members.

Building a Habitat home is an extraordinary way to experience God at work in ordinary "everyday" activities, in this case working up a healthy sweat alongside a bunch of new friends. Another thing about Habitat is that most anybody can do it: NO particular skills or tools are required to make a positive impact and have a great time (volunteers must, however, be sixteen years old at a minimum, due to insurance requirements and the presence of power tools).

Work on Shanika Taylor's new home will continue throughout the summer. Blacknall will provide volunteers for the following upcoming work days:

July 16 (Saturday morning shift; 8:15-noon; lunch provided) (8 Volunteers)

July 23 (Saturday morning shift; 8:15-noon; lunch provided) (8 Volunteers)

August 13 (Saturday morning shift; 8:15-noon; lunch provided) (8 Volunteers)

Fridays are also available for anyone who'd like to work then...

If you and/or family & friends would like to join in the fun, please contact Bo Harrison at [harrisonarch@frontier.com](mailto:harrisonarch@frontier.com) to get on the schedule, or to add your name to the contact list for regular email updates.



From the homeowner:

*My name is Shanika Taylor, and I am a 27 year old single mother of 3, my daughter Medalia (5 years old), my son Bobby Jr. (2 years old), and my baby boy Sincere (8 months old). I was born and raised in Durham, NC and still reside in Durham. I am employed with INC Research which is located in Raleigh; I've been working with them for 2 ½ years. This house means the world to me - it gives me the ability to show my kids happiness. For us to have our own home is a dream that I have dreamt for so long, and for me (along with Habitat and my wonderful sponsors) to be able to give this gift to my kids is truly a blessing from God. I am able to show them that even though I am a single mother, everything is still possible if you just put your mind to it.*

## Library News

The **Kids 2 Kids Summer Reading Program** is back in action!

Ready to read some great books this summer?

When you read, you'll be helping another kid read too!

Here's how it works:

Kids sign up in the library and read books (or listen to someone else read to them) from the Blacknall Library for 10 weeks. For every 10 books that Blacknall kids read, we'll give one book to the Reality Center, a local Durham ministry serving kids. Last year, our kids read 315 books, and we gave 32 books to the Reality Center to start a reading club.

This year, how many more can we read? 350? 400?

The Summer Reading Program runs from **NOW until August 14**.

Kids from birth through high school can participate. Stop by the library every Sunday to get your stickers for each book you've read — and watch our total grow!

*Remember:* The more books you read, the more books we'll give!

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We had a wonderful time traveling to Ancient Rome for **Vacation Bible School 2011!** 75 children made the journey June 20-24, meeting Paul and Brutus, Lucia, and others from the underground church in Rome who taught us much about the Love of God. God's Love is a Gift, God's Love Changes us, God's Love is Always with us, God's Love Saves us, and God's Love is worth Sharing. All of these Bible Points were reinforced through fun games, good food, small group Family Time, and arts and crafts in the Marketplace.

Many thanks go to the VBS Committee (Brooklynne Travis, Ashley Weinard, Erin Miller, Susan Kinghorn, Traci Hoover, Ginny Busch, Barb Eyster, Sarah Coonley, Kattie Hoppe, Anne Paulson, Beth Solie, and Amy Rowell) and to the over 100 Blacknall adult volunteers who helped to make Vacation Bible School an amazing time!

Mark your calendars for next year – **VBS 2012 will be June 25-29.**

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**MARK YOUR CALENARS!**

**Sunday nights @ 6:30pm**  
Summer Bible Study

**July 28 - August 2**  
Great Escape Trip

Visit [www.youth.blacknall.org](http://www.youth.blacknall.org) for weekly youth updates and additional info including a recap of the fun summer trip.

***Interested in being a youth leader?***

The heart of our ministry is our volunteer leaders. More than anything, our ministry is centered around teenagers hearing the Gospel from adults who care about them and are consistently in their lives. If you have a few extra hours a week and love Christ and teenagers, then being a volunteer leader may be perfect for you! This spring we will be looking to add some folks to our team of youth volunteers. If you are interested in helping out or just want to learn more about Blacknall youth ministry, please contact Brad Turnage - [bturnage@blacknall.org](mailto:bturnage@blacknall.org).

## Final Notes

**Native English speakers are needed for a summer conversation club at Duke University.** Join us Monday evenings from 5:15 to 6:15 pm at the Bryan Center (125 Science Drive) in Room B (on the top floor at back) for conversation with a multinational group of 25 to 40 visiting scholars. We already have five native speaker volunteers, but need several more due to high participant interest. Questions? Please contact Jimin Lim ([jimin.priscilla@gmail.com](mailto:jimin.priscilla@gmail.com)) or Holly Larson ([hollyklarson@yahoo.com](mailto:hollyklarson@yahoo.com)).

**Mark your calendars for July 21 at 7pm.** You won't want to miss this exciting music concert by HeartSong, a group of students from Cedarville University (Cedarville, OH) who are stopping through Durham on their summer tour. HeartSong ministries exists to communicate the livable reality of the gospel as seen through genuine worship. Youth are also encouraged to come and enjoy! These 8 team members are also in need of **host homes** for one night. Their music and mission can be found at [www.cedarville.edu/heartsong](http://www.cedarville.edu/heartsong). Contact Amy Lett or Dave Stuntz for questions or if you can provide housing.

**Sunday School Promotion Sunday for all Preschool classes (Puppies and up), Elementary Classes, and Middle School /High School will be August 28.** Watch for signs that day for where your new classrooms will be! We will have guides on hand to help you find where to go as well. If you have any questions please contact one of the Directors of Children's Ministry or the Director of Youth Ministry.

**Save the Date! 2011 Blacknall Women's Retreat October 28-30** at Valle Crucis Conference Center (near Boone, NC). More details to come. Questions? Contact Brooklynne Travis ([brooklynne\\_travis@yahoo.com](mailto:brooklynne_travis@yahoo.com), 236-3373).

### The gifts of God from the people of God...

Budget Plan:	\$634,060	Actual Expenses:	\$586,140
Tithes & Offerings:	\$592,236	Tithes & Offerings:	\$592,236
Excess or (Shortage):	(\$41,824)	Excess or (Shortage):	\$6,096

*"...And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."*  
Philippians 4:19