

March  
2010

# Blacknall

## Memorial Presbyterian Church



Dear Blacknall family,

As I write we have already entered into the season in the life of the church known as Lent. Not having grown up in a church tradition that followed the church calendar, when I first heard of this particular season, I wondered why there was such a time called “Lent.” When I later discovered that these weeks were to be a time for repentance and reflection on the nature of my life in Christ, it made perfect sense. “Lent” equals “dross” equals that stuff we need to be rid of. I thought I had it figured. Silly.

Lent actually finds its etymological roots in the old English word “lencten,” which simply means “lengthening”; it refers to the lengthening days as spring approaches. In the early days of the church the season served as a penitential time of fasting and spiritual reflection through the use of certain disciplines. By 325AD the church had established the forty days (excluding Sundays) prior to the Easter celebration as the “official” season, following Jesus’ example of forty days in the wilderness.

Joel 2 provides us with helpful guidance for the season. In the face of Israel’s rebellion, amid the threat of judgment, God nevertheless issues a gracious invitation to his people. “Rend your hearts, not your garments,” says the prophet. I take that to mean that formal acts of repentance are of little value without an accompanying heartfelt change of allegiances in the heart, the seat of the will. We are to follow Jesus’ example who, even in the face of temptation in the wilderness and the prospect of suffering in the garden found the strength to utter “not my will, but Thine, o Lord.”

Our culture finds these words to be odd, at best. As a result, we are ill disposed to the prophet’s call. Two features dominate the moral landscape of the world we inhabit: a fear of authority and a flight from truth, both masquerading as the pursuit of individual freedoms. We nurture a certain detachment and cynicism, afraid of what will be asked of us by telemarketers who interrupt our evening meals, or by church staff asking for our assistance in ministering to others. Our first inclination is to stall, to deflect, and we then buffer ourselves by answering machines and caller ID. We choose what calls to return and when. Is it any wonder that we cast a skeptical eye when anything or anyone asks – much less requires – anything of us? Even God? How can a culture, a people, a heart, overcome its defensiveness and venture to receive, in openness and trust, from God?

Jesus, in his humanity, walked before us, and lives in us to escort us into God’s life. If he found it necessary to spend time to reorient his priorities, can we do less?

TS Eliot, an adult convert to Christian faith, spelled out one of the challenges we face in his poem, *Ash Wednesday*. “Where shall the Word be found? Where shall the Word resound? Not here. There is not enough silence.... Teach us to care and not to care. Teach us to sit still.” Eliot, writing in 1930 from pastoral England, could not have imagined the pace and shallowness of life in our day. How shall we heed the prophet Joel’s call if we cannot first follow Eliot’s advice?

Yours, for a blessed Lent,

Allan

## Blacknall Family Announcements

### Congregational Meeting Sunday, March 7, 9:50am

Please be present for a called congregational meeting that will be held between worship services in the sanctuary. At that time we will be hearing about the budget for 2010.

### New Member Classes Begin Sunday, March 7, 5pm

Interested in inquiring about life and membership at Blacknall? Our next Inquirer’s Class begins Sunday, March 7, 5pm in the Parlor. Please call the church office at **286-5586** if you are planning to come so we can have materials and childcare available for you. Come get to know more about Blacknall, and let us get to know you! We are glad you are here.

### Election of Officers March 14, 8:30 & 11am

The election of elders and deacons for the Class of 2012 will be held **March 14 during both services**. The candidates for elder are: Rick Every, Price French, Donna Mutter, Sherbie Skeen, and Karl Umble. The candidates for deacon are: Andrea Bridges, Shelly Epps, Mark Hayes, Kevin Tonn, and Miles Travis. You will be asked to vote for five for each office.

### Crop Walk Sunday, March 21, 2:30pm

Come walk with us! Please mark your calendars and plan to join Blacknall’s team for the 36th Annual Durham CROP Walk on Sunday, March 21, at 2:30pm. Funds from the Walk benefit local and international organizations dedicated to fighting hunger.

For more information about walking or sponsoring a walker, please contact Leah Masselink at 641-7077 or [lmasselink@gmail.com](mailto:lmasselink@gmail.com), or stop by the sign up table in the lower atrium on **March 7 or 14**.

### SPECIAL FOR PALM SUNDAY March 28, 7:00pm

We will use a special piece of music to provide the framework for our worship on Palm Sunday. John Rutter, the most prominent Christian classical composer of the past 30 years, wrote a setting of the requiem (a funeral mass) a little over 20 years ago.

In addition to the choir and soprano solo, the accompaniment will be beautiful: organ, timpani, cello, harp, oboe, flute, and glockenspiel. (If you don’t know what a glockenspiel is, you will want to come to find out!) The Blacknall Choir will be joined by the Triangle Youth Chorus (grades 6-12), directed by Carol Wooten.

Historically, a requiem mass was used both to plead for the “requiem eternam” (eternal rest) of the deceased, and to frighten (with threats of judgment) the living back into the arms of the church. In the piece we will use, Rutter presents a different perspective. The pleading for rest has been transformed into an assurance of it. Instead of frightening the living, they are beckoned with the words of Jesus, “I am the resurrection and the life.”

With the addition of scripture readings and congregational songs, this would be a great opportunity to invite a friend, knowing they will be exposed to the message of Christ’s sacrifice and the hope that comes from it – an eternal hope.

For additional information, please contact Dave Stuntz at the church.

## Lenten & Easter Season Schedule

*\*Childcare is provided for each service.*

Wednesday evening worship services will continue through March 24, 7-7:30pm.

### Palm Sunday, Rutter Requiem March 28, 7pm

*(see details on previous page)*

### Maundy Thursday April 1, 7pm

We will welcome once again our friends from Mt. Level Baptist Church for a combined service of worship here at Blacknall. Mt. Level will provide the preaching and they will “bring the music” – and how! Reception following the service.

### Good Friday April 2, 7pm

We will gather in the sanctuary at for a time of quiet, hearing the Passion narrative, and increasing darkness. This is a powerful time of coming face-to-face with the events of that day, when the Lamb of God took upon Himself the sins of the world.

### Easter Sunrise Service April 4, 6am at Mt Level

Blacknall will return Mt. Level’s visit by celebrating the Resurrection in their sanctuary at 316 Hebron Road on Easter Sunday. Blacknall will provide the music leadership and the preaching. Maps will be available in the foyer and upper atrium.

### Easter Worship Services Sunday, April 4, 8:30 & 11am

Come and celebrate the Resurrection!

### Easter Reception Sunday, April 4, 9:45am

There will be a reception between services for high schoolers and adults in the fellowship hall. Children’s Sunday School will meet as usual.

## Join the Circle of Support

Last spring Caleb and Nisrene Pineo bought a house in Durham with Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) in mind. The Pineo’s dream was that one of the homeless families connected to IHN could eventually become a tenant. After a year of remodeling, the house is almost ready to be home for a family.

As part of Blacknall’s local ministry partnerships, a Circle of Support is now forming to befriend and encourage the IHN family who will live in the Pineo house beginning this April. Support team members will help the family stay on track and be available for mentoring and life-skills coaching, as well as other needs that may arise during their residency at the house. A variety of skills and personalities are needed for this one-year commitment.

Circle of Support training will take place in mid-March. For more information and to get involved, contact Nisrene at [nisrenepineo@yahoo.com](mailto:nisrenepineo@yahoo.com) or Brian Averette at [brian.averette@yahoo.com](mailto:brian.averette@yahoo.com).

## Our Library – Good Reads for Lent and Easter

As Lent points the way toward Easter, you may see more opportunities to share the gospel with friends, neighbors and co-workers. If you want to be encouraged and equipped to share your faith, consider one of these books. And don't forget the Alpha groups that are meeting this season to explore who Jesus is and what faith in Him means.

*Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense* by N.T. Wright

*The Case for Christ* by Lee Strobel

*Beyond Opinion: Living the Faith We Defend* by Ravi Zacharias

*Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis

*The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism* by Timothy Keller

*Know What You Believe* by Paul E. Little

*Who Moved the Stone?* by Frank Morison

*Evidence That Demands a Verdict* by Josh McDowell

*The End of Reason: A Response to the New Atheists* by Ravi Zacharias

*The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was and Is* by N.T. Wright

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

2010 weekly Budget	\$21,925	YTD Budget	\$197,325
Tithes & Offerings 2/28/10	\$18,620	YTD Income	\$147,236
		YTD Expenses	\$189,479

## Contributions to Blacknall

*Please remember to write separate checks for the offering and Covenant Campaign.* Funds are kept in separate banks.

## Substantiation Letters

**Blacknall Substantiation Letters for 2009 Offering Gifts and Covenant Campaign Pledges and Gifts** – Blacknall is required by the IRS to keep a record of any single gift of \$250 or more.

Letters of substantiation for 2009 contributions were mailed in mid-February. If you contributed to the Covenant Campaign, you will receive two letters: one for the operating budget and one for the Covenant Campaign. These letters are only for your records; they do not need to be sent to the IRS as an attachment to your tax papers. For gifts less than \$250, your cancelled checks are sufficient documentation.

Please notify Diane Beacham as soon as possible if one of your letters is incorrect, by calling the church office (286-5586).

### The Blacknall Guild invites you to participate in hosting two events:

Mt. Level will join us for our Maundy Thursday evening service and reception **April 1**. There will be a time of fellowship between services Easter Sunday, **April 4**.

Volunteers are needed to bring food, set up, service, and clean up. Sign up in the lower atrium March 14 and 21.

### Sermon Texts

3/07	I Cor. 13
3/14	1 Cor. 14:1-25
3/21	1 Cor. 14:26-40
3/28	Palm Sunday
4/04	Easter: 1 Cor. 15
4/11	1 Cor. 16:1-9
4/18	1 Cor. 16:10-24

## Blacknall Missions

### Alpha Update

Six months ago, our elders decided that we should try to explore the possibility of running an Alpha course again. The thought was to invite people to participate and to see if the Holy Spirit would raise up people within the congregation who would be willing to help make it happen. We sent out the invitation and approximately 15-20 people responded. That team thought we should run the course again, inviting people to meet in homes. All fall, that team met and planned and recruited other congregation members to help with hosting and meals and all of the other organizational details. The thought was to offer the course and see if the Holy Spirit would raise up friends, neighbors, and classmates of people in our congregation who would be interested in being a part of the course.

We lined up five families willing to host guests. We made the invitations and waited to see who might respond. During these first six to seven weeks we have had approximately 35 guests respond to those invitations. We have had dozens of our members volunteering as leaders, helpers, servers, clean-up crew, and cooks. We have had countless others who have been part of the prayer support for the course.

Most importantly, we have had the Word of God, the Good News of Jesus Christ, sown into the hearts and minds of our neighbors and friends. We do not know what the harvest will be. All we know is that the Holy Spirit raised up a team to make this happen. The Holy Spirit raised up people who responded to our invitations to “come and see.” Now, we wait to see what the Holy Spirit will do with that which He has planted in the hearts of our friends.

Please continue to pray for Alpha. We will be continuing to meet through March 24. There are 35 people who will be on the Alpha Weekend Getaway February 26-27. Pray that we might be able to witness what the Holy Spirit will do in the lives of our friends. And let us not forget to thank God for working in our midst.

## SAVE THE DATE for the Great Day of Service (GDOS)

### Saturday, May 1, 8:30 to 1pm

Blacknall's GDOS is one day out of the year when we join together in service to our brothers and sisters in Christ around Durham. Blacknallites spread out over the city to engage in humble acts of service – cleaning, raking, painting, and organizing. The GDOS reminds us and those we serve that the church is called to be a servant, following after our servant-Lord.

### How you can get involved:

**Propose a new project.** We are doing a new thing this year: *Anyone* in the congregation can propose a project for the GDOS! If you volunteer with an organization, and you think that a group of Blacknall folks could be of service, you can propose and lead a group! Submit the name of the organization, a brief description of the type of work to be done, and an acceptable range of volunteers. Send your proposed project to Amanda at [Amanda.Diekman@gmail.com](mailto:Amanda.Diekman@gmail.com) or call (919) 943-6506. We would love to hear your ideas.

**Be a project leader.** You can lead a team to one of the organizations that we financially support. Being a team leader means you will be the contact person for the organization and your team on the morning of the GDOS. You will also oversee the project! We need about 10 people as team leaders. Email Amanda (above) to sign up as a team leader.

**Be a volunteer.** In the past we have had over 100 volunteers. We'd like to have more this year! So save the date and talk to your family, roommate, small group, and Sunday school class about signing up together. We'll have family-friendly projects for families with kids (even elementary age); we'll have projects for groups to sign up together; and we'll have plenty of ways to meet new people in the church!

**Sign up to SERVE in late March in the lower atrium.**

## Monthly Calendar

### Sunday

- 8:30 & 11:00 AM Worship
- 9:30-11:15 Library Open
- 9:45 AM Sunday School
- 3:00 PM Women's Bible Study (Beth Moore)
- 5:00 PM International Missions (1<sup>st</sup> Sun even months)
- 6:00 PM BYG Time (Youth Group)
- 6:30 PM Communion & Prayers (3<sup>rd</sup> Sun)
- Prayers/ Missionaries (1<sup>st</sup> Sun)

### Monday

- 7:00 AM Outreach Comm. (2<sup>nd</sup> Mon)
- 12:00 PM International Wives Cooking Class
- 7:00 PM Community Outreach Comm. (1<sup>st</sup> Mon)
- 5:00 PM Finance Comm. (3<sup>rd</sup> Mon)
- 7:30 PM Diaconate (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Mon)
- Session (2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Mon)
- Family Life Comm. (1<sup>st</sup> Mon)
- 8:00 PM Building & Property (1<sup>st</sup> Mon)
- Congregational Care (1<sup>st</sup> Mon)
- Hospitality Comm. (1<sup>st</sup> Mon)

### Tuesday

- 7:30 PM Worship Comm. (1<sup>st</sup> Tues)
- 7:30 PM Personnel Comm. (3<sup>rd</sup> Tues)

### Wednesday

- 6:45 AM Men's Bible Study
- 10:30 AM LCs (Seniors Ministry)
- 7:45 PM Choir
- 7:30 PM Cornerstone (Senior High Bible Study)

### Thursday

- 8:00 AM Prayers for Renewal
- 9:15 AM Women's Bible Study
- 7:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous (Community Room)

### Saturday

- 7:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous (Community Room)

## Church Staff

- Allan Poole - Pastor
- David Dunderdale - Pastor
- Dave Stuntz - Music Ministry
- Amy Rowell - Children's Ministry - Elementary
- Beth Solie - Children's Ministry - Preschool
- Brad Turnage - Director Youth Ministries
- Caroline Inazu - Middle School Youth Ministry
- Margaret Frothingham - Congregational Care
- Mike Sardi - Office and Facilities Manager
- Diane Beacham - Finance
- Dare Nicholson - Associate Office Admin.
- Jan Smart - Associate Office Admin.
- Evan Cate - Duke Divinity Intern
- Amanda Leahy - Duke Divinity Intern
- David Sittser - Duke Divinity Intern

Email: [churchoffice@blacknall.org](mailto:churchoffice@blacknall.org)  
Web Site: [www.blacknall.org](http://www.blacknall.org)  
Phone: 919-286-5586