

Blacknall Missions

Community Outreach Partnerships

One of Blacknall's Missional Commitments is that "God calls all believers to mission, not just a few." As a result of that conviction our Community Outreach Committee has been working to create opportunities for members of our body to get involved with some of the local organizations that Blacknall supports.

One of the ways we have done that is through the annual Great Day of Service, when we offer a wide variety of opportunities for individuals and groups to spend a day in service with one of our local mission organizations. We also invite these organizations to come periodically and share with us in worship what God is doing and what their needs are. Blacknall supports sixteen of these local organizations.

What we have discovered is that supporting sixteen different organizations means that we have not entered into much depth of relationship with any of them. In addition, the congregation as a whole does not identify strongly with these organizations because there are too many to keep track of.

What the Community Outreach Committee (COC) has recommended is that we enter into a deeper partnership with only a few of these organizations. We did not want to cut off our relationship with any of these ministries but to identify one or two with which we would work more intentionally so that the congregation as a whole would be able to name these partners as being a significant part of our mission as a congregation.

The COC looked at our church's Missional Commitments (you can find these on the missions page of our website: <http://blacknall.org/missions>) and has developed a list of criteria that we are looking for in a local ministry partner. We are now in the process of discerning with whom we think we can develop a partnership that will enable us to grow in our discipleship and in our missional commitments. If the Session approves, we will enter into a one-year trial partnership with these partners.

Our hope is that these partnerships will grow and transform us. As our Missional Commitments say, "Mission is a pilgrimage, a journey of conversion toward deeper intimacy with Christ." We believe these partnerships have the capability of being an important part of our shared "journey of conversion." Please pray for this important aspect of God's mission for us as a congregation.

If you would like to know more about this process and what this means please contact Brian or Amanda Diekman or David Dunderdale.

In January the Session (elders):

- called for a Congregational meeting at **9:50am** on Sun. morning, **February 8** for the purpose of conveying the budget for the new year and hearing about key initiatives ongoing in the life of the congregation;
- reviewed the work of the several committees under its authority: Family Life, Worship, Children and Youth Ministries, Nominating, Finance, Prayer, Personnel, Outreach, College, Adult Discipleship and Men's and Women's Ministries;
- approved the budget for calendar year 2009;
- began a study of Dick Staub's *The Culturally Savvy Christian*, a call to engage our world with the gospel in a way that is culturally alert and rich;
- interceded for many congregants and concerns.

Church Staff

Allan Poole-Pastor

David Dunderdale-Pastor

Dave Stuntz-Music Min.

Beth Solie-
Children's Min.-Preschool

Amy Rowell-Children's Min. Elem.

Caroline Inazu-MS Youth Min.

Margaret Frothingham-
Congregational Care

Diane Beacham-Admin. Manager

Jan Smart-Assoc. Office Admin.

Dare Nicholson-Assoc. Office Admin

Terry Simpson-Facilities Manager

Andrea Bridges-Duke Div. Intern

Gannon Sims-Duke Div. Intern

Email: churchoffice@blacknall.org
Web Site: www.blacknall.org

Monthly Schedule

Sunday

8:30 AM Worship
9:30-11:15 Library Open
9:45 AM Sunday School
11:00 AM Worship
International Missions (2nd Sun)
5:00 PM Adult Education (2nd Sun.)
6:00 PM BYG Time (Youth Groups)
6:00 PM Prayers for Youth
6:30 PM Communion & Prayers (3rd Sun)
6:30 PM Prayers for Missionaries (2nd Sun)

Monday

7:00 AM Outreach Comm. (2nd Mon.)
7:00 PM Community Outreach Comm. (1st Mon.)
5:00 PM Finance Comm. (3rd Mon.)
7:30 PM Diaconate (1st & 3rd Mon.)
7:30 PM Session (2nd & 4th Mon.)
7:30 PM Family Life Comm. (1st Mon.)
8:00 PM Building & Property (1st Mon.)
8:00 PM Congregational Care (1st Mon.)
Hospitality Comm. (1st Mon)

Tuesday

7:30 PM Worship Comm. (1st Tues.)
7:30 PM Personnel Comm. (3rd Tues.)

Wednesday

6:45 AM Men's Bible Study
10:30 AM LCs (Seniors Ministry)
5:30 PM TableTalk

Thursday

9:15 AM Women's Bible Study
7:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous

Saturday

8:00 AM Prayers for Renewal
7:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous

Committee chair will notify members of time changes.

February
2009

Blacknall

Memorial Presbyterian Church



Dear Blacknall Family,

I have heard great things about Christopher Wright's *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*. I have wanted to read it for a while. I highly recommend it to you. However, it is big. It is one of those books that looks really good on the shelf but is daunting to pick up and read.

For Christmas I gave my Dad a copy and we have been reading it together — a chapter a week and then we will call each other and talk about it. It is a really good book to read with someone else.

One of the things Wright says is, "it is not so much the case that God has a mission for his church in the world but that God has a church for his mission in the world. Mission was not made for the church; the church was made for mission — God's mission."

Another way of saying that is: "God did not create a mission for Blacknall but he created Blacknall for his mission." This is good news for me and for us. Our focus is not Blacknall but on God's mission. If our focus is Blacknall then there is a lot of pressure on us as pastors and staff and officers and members to get it right in terms of our life together. But if our focus is God's mission for us then I am convinced that our life together will fall into place as we pursue God's purpose for us.

However, one of the problems with using the word "mission" is the baggage that comes with it. God's mission for Blacknall is larger than what we traditionally call "missions." It is bigger than sending and supporting missionaries. It is bigger than supporting local organizations that are doing evangelism and working for justice. It is bigger than mission trips.

I will not try to describe all of what God's mission is in this article (I will let you read the 500+ pages of Wright's book to find that — it is worth it). One simple description that is not exhaustive but is suggestive is that God's mission for us is to know him and make him known. How are we doing? How are you doing at living out both aspects of this mission?

This month we will have opportunities to think about that. On the 8th we will meet together as a congregation to talk about the "state of our communion" and what we believe God is calling us to. On the 25th we will enter into the season of Lent — a season for repentance, examination, preparation, and commitment to follow wherever Christ leads us. This month let us be thinking and talking together about how we are doing at living into the mission God has for us.

D.A.D.

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Blacknall Family Announcements



Community Concert

For the fifth year in a row, the choirs from Blacknall and the School of Science & Math will combine in a concert, and this time they have included folks from the broader community, including the Watts Hospital Neighborhood Association.

This collaborative community choir (led by Dave Stuntz), along with the string orchestra from Science & Math (directed by Scott Laird), will present a pair of concerts on **Sunday, February 8**, at **3:00pm** at the Technology Center Auditorium at NCSSM, and again at **7:00pm** at Blacknall (childcare provided). Both concerts are free and open to the public.

The concert will include music by Durufle, Britten, and a composition by a Durham School of the Arts student – and the NCSSM orchestra will perform Beethoven's Symphony #5 – fantastic! Come, enjoy, and help us celebrate community! A reception will follow the evening concert.



Congregational Meeting

Please be present for a Called Congregational Meeting to be held between worship services, **9:50am**, in the sanctuary, on **Sunday, Feb. 8**. At that time we will be hearing about the budget for 2009 and about several initiatives in our congregational life.

Children's Ministry

A **Children's Ministry Vision Team** is being formulated to set long-term goals and objectives for the ministry. The team will be composed of volunteers, parents, congregants, early childhood educators, Christian educators, and theologians. In addition to this, the team will solicit input from the congregation at large.

Our first meeting is **Sunday, February 8**. Please pray for us – that Blacknall will continue to be a place where children, volunteers, and families are built up in their faith as a result of their participation in Children's Ministries.

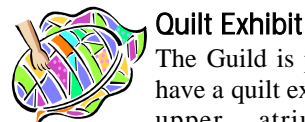
Contact Amy Rowell (arowell@blacknall.org) or Beth Solie (bsolie@blacknall.org) if you want more information.

Youth Ministry

Middle School News

We will spend this semester studying two books: *The Case for Faith* and *The Case for Christ*. Both are the student editions of the adult books written by Lee Strobel. Through these books, we will tackle topics such as the authenticity of the Scriptures, if Jesus really claimed to be the Messiah, suffering in the world, evolution, and other objections or questions about Christianity. We are excited to look more intensely at what we believe and why we believe it!

The dates for the Great Escape are **August 2-7**. More registration details will be available in the coming weeks, but please **mark your calendars!**



Quilt Exhibit

The Guild is planning to have a quilt exhibit in the upper atrium from February to mid-March. Get ready for a wonderful display of treasures from our congregation.

Season of Lent

Lenten Services will begin on Ash Wednesday, **Feb. 25, 7:00 to 7:30pm** in the sanctuary.

Blacknall Family Announcements



Library Winter Reading List

As winter weather keeps us inside more, be sure to have a good book ready to read. Whether you are looking for challenging inspiration or lighter fare, the Library has something for you!

Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense by N.T. Wright
Why do we want justice and fairness? What causes people to enter into relationships? How is it that we long for and enjoy what's beautiful? Wright makes apologetics accessible to modern seekers by explaining how each of these basic human values leads us to the mystery of God.

All Through the Night by Davis Bunn
Scarred physically and emotionally, Wayne is trying to forget his background in special-ops. But he gets his arm twisted into helping a quirky group of seniors who've been scammed out of their retirement. Breaching the con man's high-security island is just the first step in the action.

Deeper Water by Robert Whitlow
Leaving the farm and her Bible-believing family behind, Tami Taylor accepts a job with a prestigious Savannah law firm. But when the charges against Moses Jones escalate from trespassing to murder, Tami's concerned not just about her client's crime, but a company cover-up.

Never Surrender: A Soldier's Journey to the Crossroads of Faith and Freedom by Lieutenant General (Ret.) William Boykin
The commander of the Delta Force Team portrayed in the movie "Black Hawk Down" gives a gripping testimony of faith refined by the fire of unimaginable trial. Learn how General Boykin's experiences in the Special Forces shook and ultimately strengthened his trust in God.

Where Do I Go? by Neta Jackson
When Gabrielle Fairbanks meets the women of Manna House Women's Shelter, she takes the position of program director. Philip doesn't like the changes he sees in her, but things really get rough when he gives Gabby an ultimatum that threatens the work she feels called to.

I Heart Bloomberg by Melody Carson
Kendall's managed to wrangle her grandmother's house free and clear. She figures if she gets roommates to pay rent, she won't have to go to work any time soon. But they also come with extra baggage and hidden strengths.

Important Meeting of the Presbytery of New Hope

Please be praying for the upcoming meeting of our presbytery as we vote on a number of significant proposed amendments to our constitution. The meeting is **Saturday, February 21**, at Cary Presbyterian Church.

Among the proposed amendments to the constitution is the removal of specific language in our Book of Order that reflects Biblical standards for sexual ethics in the lives of those seeking office in the church.

This discussion has been going on in our denomination (and its antecedent denominations) since 1978 in various forms. This effort represents the latest attempt to circumvent the clear witness and teaching of Scripture and Christian tradition, and the elders of Blacknall cannot and will not support this amendment.

The first presbyteries to vote have defeated the amendment (which needs a majority of the presbyteries to approve) but the large majority of presbyteries have yet to vote. As of January 13, the tally of presbyteries voting is 1 for, 11 against.

If you would like to follow the voting and obtain more information about the various amendments, you might check out the following links: for the official voting tallies: <https://www.pcusa.org/generalassembly/vote08.htm>; for background information: www.pfrenewal.org and www.presbyteriancoalition.org

The gifts of God from the people of God



2009 Weekly Budget	\$22,043	YTD Budget	\$88,172
Tithes & Offerings 1/25	\$14,651	YTD Income	\$61,485
		YTD Expenses	\$57,113

Covenant Campaign Total Borrowed	\$1,100,000
Covenant Campaign Loan Balance 12/31/08	\$127,929

Substantiation Letters for 2008 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. We will mail out letters of substantiation for 2008 contributions 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 at 286-5586.

Blacknall Missions

A Ministry Opportunity

Homeless families in Durham don't just need food and shelter, they need people to encourage and support them as they try to get back on their feet. They need you! For the past ten years, Blacknall has provided hands-on support and encouragement to homeless families through Interfaith Hospitality Network. Blacknall's next IHN week is March 15 – 22. Interested? Contact Brian Averette at 919-816-6873 or at Brian.Averette@catalent.com.

Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope

This month a posse of pilgrims will begin a journey into the heart of Durham. This group of twenty-five pilgrims will be meeting in the Fellowship Hall during the Sunday School hour to learn together about the history and culture of Durham in both its pain and its hope. This will be in preparation for an intensive weekend immersion into "the heart of Durham" on March 13-15. The Pilgrimage will conclude with a Celebration Dinner in April.

We have found this metaphor of pilgrimage to be helpful. Pilgrims leave home. They depart from the comforts and security of home to see something, to receive something, to learn something. Pilgrims yearn for something more. Being a pilgrim implies a restlessness and hunger for more than what can be found at home.

This pilgrimage is about discovering that "more" that God is already doing in Durham. On this pilgrimage we are desiring to enter more deeply into our community not with the intention of fixing anything but as pilgrims to see, receive, and learn about the pain and hope that are a part of Durham.

The pilgrims will be visiting with folks from St. John's Missionary Baptist Church in Walltown, The Religious Coalition for a Non-Violent Durham, veterans of Durham's civil rights struggles, and members of Durham's Latino community. Please pray for our pilgrims and that we as a congregation might be prepared for the "more" that God has for us. If you would like more information about the Pilgrimage feel free to contact Chris Rice, Amanda Diekman, or David Dunderdale.