UMAR, BABY BUNDLES, LOVE AND MONEY

Two nonprofits with deep connections to Myers Park United Methodist Church recently inspired support in the telling of their stories.

• UMAR welcomed 500 to its 22nd annual Friends of UMAR luncheon at Providence United Methodist Church. The agency that works with adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities raised $200,000 to support its group homes, art classes (including one at our church) and employment and enrichment opportunities. The luncheon always takes on the feel of a family reunion as UMAR clients offer their art for sale, and friends of the ministry reunite for this good cause. This year’s theme was Angels Watching Over Us. Visit www.umarinfo.com to learn more.

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• Ken Garfield

WHAT CAN HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEACH US ABOUT GETTING ALONG?

By Ken Garfield

Church members determined to talk honestly about race are turning to the Myers Park High School football team for inspiration.

A panel discussion at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, May 22, in Jubilee Hall will feature Mustangs football coach Steve Chadwick and several players talking about what it takes to forge unity from diversity. The team is made up of blacks and whites; well-to-do kids from Eastover and poor kids from Grier Heights; kids who come home to Mom and Dad and kids who come home to one or the other. How do you build a true team from that? What are the lessons for a wealthy, white church whose members profess to love their neighbor?

The community, including Myers Park area congregations, are invited to the program.

Youth Ministries is recruiting young people and parents to participate. Joining the conversation will be Charlotte magazine Executive Editor Michael Graff, whose writing inspired this program. Read his three-part series at www.charlottemagazine.com. The title frames the conversation: Mustard Green: A Season of Hope in a Segregated City.

Shocked by the Charleston church murders, a group of Myers Park United Methodist members are keeping the race conversation going. They’ve organized programs on CMS segregation/student assignment and white privilege/guilt. They heard African Americans who belong to Myers Park United Methodist speak honestly about what it’s like to be part of a nearly all-white church. Church members intrigued by Graff’s magazine series thought: These stories explore the challenge of looking beyond color and class. Surely the kids have something to teach us.

John Clarkson put it this way: “The stories on Mustangs football provides a revealing glimpse into how coaches, players and families manage the racial and economic inequities in our neighborhood high school. This upcoming program ought to provide an important step toward understanding what it takes to create true harmony.”

A Conversation On Faith

REMEMBERING PAGE CALLENDER

When Page Callender didn’t report to work baby-sitting at our church Sunday morning, April 17, we summoned the authorities.

They found her in her home not far from here.

Those at Myers Park United Methodist privileged to have known her – her fellow paid sitters, staffers and especially the parents who left their kids in her care – are reeling over her death.

Page, a Greensboro native, was 57, a big talker, always positive, always confident in her faith. She didn’t have children, other than the ones at church she treated as her own. She endured many challenges to her health. But when it came time to shower the kids with tenderness on Sunday morning or any other day, she was up to the task. Page’s sister, Rev. Karen Kuever, who used to work at our church, says Page was the family member who always remembered to send a card for every occasion. Church members Mark and Angie Murphy hired her to sit for their kids, Drew, 7, and Lilly, 4. Page gave them love and gifts – lollipops in their favorite flavors, Darth Vader pajamas at Christmas. When the Murphys would return home, Page would tell them the kids behaved like angels.

Page’s family, friends and colleagues are trying to come to terms with the loss.

Fellow baby-sitter Reid Fennell has been searching for a good home for Isabella and Reilly, Page’s two cats. Angie Murphy told Drew and Lilly that Miss Page is in heaven, telling their Papa how big his grandchildren have grown. And on Sunday mornings, parents bringing their little ones to church are looking for the sweet lady with the warm smile.

Director of Communications Ken Garfield writes about church life.

CELEBRATING OUR 2016 COLLEGE GRADUATES

Susanna Booth, daughter of John and Linda Booth, graduating cum laude from the Citadel with a B.S. degree in Forensics.

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• Jonathan Pedde, son of Richard and Deborah Pedde, graduating from Merton College, University of Oxford, where he is studying as a Rhodes Scholar for his Masters in Philosophy in Economics. He’ll work for McKinsey & Co. in Manhattan. His parents write: “We are so pleased he attends church and Bible studies faithfully. As parents, when we think about wanting the best for our kids, isn’t a good faith life part of it?”

• Avery Lauren Wood, daughter of Richard and Angela Wood, graduating cum laude from Appalachian State University with a B.S. degree in chemistry. She’ll pursue a graduate degree in forensics.

Look for more grads in the next issue. Send news to ken@mpumc.org.

SNAPSHOTS

Turn to www.myparkumc.org/transit for an update from the Staff Parish Relations Committee on Dr. Howell’s nomination to serve as a Bishop. Also online are answers to “Frequently Asked Questions,” and a brief survey offering an opportunity to weigh in on the church culture as lay leaders look to a possible pastoral transition. Printed copies of the survey and related material are also at the front desk in the Parish Life Building lobby.

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Sanctuary services 8:30, 9:45, 11:00 a.m.
Church In The Round 8:45 a.m., Jubilee Hall.
Holy Communion 9:30 a.m., Chapel.
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
In Memory

The sympathy of the ministers and members is extended to:

The Families Of...

Bill Franklin Smith, brother of Maxine Nanice and uncle of David Nanice, who died on April 11, 2016, Melissa "Puge" Callender, sister of Karen Klaever and aunt of Matt, Michael and Phillip Klaever, who died on April 17, 2016, Estatina James Youant, newborn son of Krista and Stephen Youant and grandson of Jim and Mitzi Youant, who died on April 22, 2016, Marion Blanton Gibson, wife of Paul Gibson and mother of Paul Gibson Jr. and Elizabeth Hopkins, who died on April 25, 2016

Babies


Weddings

Amanda Williams and Michael Houry, married April 23, 2016, in Lenoir, N.C. Caroline Hodgins and Bryan Ives, married April 30, 2016, at the church.

UMAR Art Auction, Too

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AN ANTHEM FOR MARGARET ANN SCHRUM

The love that Margaret Ann Schrum feels for the music of her church is captured in this story: In an ambulance, racing to the hospital. She died in 2001. A church home. And reason to sing, even in the ambulance on the way to the hospital.

YOUNG ADULTS LEADER; DUKE INTERN; STEP, JUMP, LEAP; FINANCES

• Church member Jessica Stevens has been named interim Director of Young Adults. She starts May 9, and will work 25 hours a week for the next year, fostering a meaningful environment for young adults to grow in their faith. Jessica, 28, previously worked as an immigration paralegal. She and her husband, David, have two children – Anna Lynne, 2, and Walt, three months. She succeeds Ryan Blalock, who left the church staff to become a consultant with the City of Charlotte. Jessica can be reached at 704-275-4803 or jessica@mypumc.org.

• Duke Divinity School summer intern Palmer Cantler starts May 29, contributing to the life of the congregation while experiencing varied slices of church life. Palmer, from Johnson City, Tenn., is finishing her first year at Duke Divinity School. She graduated magna cum laude from Wofford College with high honors in religion and a minor in accounting. More when she arrives, though the Cornerstone couldn’t resist sharing her reflection: “Worship is where my heart comes alive.

• The Administrative Board approved the Step Jump Leap initiative to reignite the church strategic plan in five areas: Grow In Faith, Radical Hospitality, Community Building And Partnerships, Education, and Shelter. The plan articulates a wish list ranging on the “daring scale” from Step to Leap. Among the Leaps: Build a transitional housing neighborhood where church members will live; create a church facility for children’s programs; develop a community center to foster education of youth. The plan is to communicate details to the congregation, perhaps in a video. To learn more about what’s next, reach church member Dave Lank at 704-909-8152.

• Finance Committee Chairman Dennis Soter shared first-quarter financial results with the Administrative Board: Giving totaled $1,293,000 through the first three months, short of the $1,405,000 needed to meet the church budget for the first quarter. Overall, the church currently has a net operating deficit of $31,000. That compares to a $38,000 deficit at this time in 2015. The 2016 church operating budget is $5,621,043. For more information on any aspect of the business life of the church, reach Executive Director Sarabeth Dozier at 704-295-4844 or sarabeth@mypumc.org.

GENERAL CONFERENCE STARTS MAY 10

The global United Methodist Church will gather in Portland, Ore., May 10-20 for the General Conference – a time of policy-making, worship and conducting the business of the church. Senior Pastor Dr. James C. Howell and church member Sandy Hieronymus are going as delegates representing the Western North Carolina Conference. Congregations are encouraged to support General Conference – delegates and everyone else involved – with their prayers.

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• Melissa McGill

I find myself daydreaming sermon ideas.”

Cards made for General Conference in Oregon by children at Myers Park United Methodist Church. Photo courtesy of Sandy Hieronymus.
Each issue of the Cornerstone offers a bonus page of programs, classes and other activities offering the faithful a chance to learn, serve and grow. To share news for The Life Of The Church, reach Director of Communications Ken Garfield at 704-295-4819 or ken@mpumc.org.

May 4, 2016

• **GOODNESS GRACIOUS!** The volunteer-run gift shop in the Parish Life Building, where sales support outreach, will offer its wares for sale on tables along the hallway outside the Church Library (Room 111). They’ll be set up through Friday, May 13. The shop offers plenty of Mother’s Day possibilities and bargains, including Bibles, books, cards, housewares and assorted gifts.

• **LEARN ABOUT PLANNED GIVING** Chris McLeod, who is helping educate the congregation about the importance of planned giving, will lead a program at 7:00 p.m. Monday, May 16, in Francis Chapel on *How To Make A Difference Forever: Strategies For Giving Through Your Estate*. She’ll talk about how to understand the focus and scope of the charity being considered; the type of gift, and how to make sure your intentions for that gift are honored.

• **GIVE A GIFT, HELP LIBRARY** Here’s a great gift idea for Mother’s Day (May 8) or any other time, and a way to help the Church Library: Make a donation to buy a book that’s already in the library, in Room 111 in the Parish Life Building. Instructions, prices and books on the library wish list are at the main desk in the library. Details: Linda Myers at 704-907-0864 or lsmyers@mindspring.com.

• **YOUNG ADULTS PICNIC** Young adults ages 20 to 35 are invited to a cookout at 1:00 p.m. Sunday, May 22, at Marion Diehl Park, 2219 Tyvola Road, shelter No 1. To RSVP and sign up to bring a side dish to share, reach Katherine Jones at katherinemjones2@gmail.com.

• **ADULTS PLUS!** The ministry to ages 55 and over invites all to its next gathering at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, May 18, in Room 103 of the Parish Life Building as Nara Melknonyan of Project AGAPE in Armenia talks about the ministry’s humanitarian work in the Nagorno-Karabagh region. Lunch (chicken tetrazzini) follows at noon in Jubilee Hall. For reservations by noon May 17, call 704-376-5520 (option two) or e-mail cmull@mpumc.org.

• **FREEDOM SCHOOL'S COMING** Help celebrate a decade of partnership with Freedom School by reading with student scholars, chaperoning field trips and more during the program June 16 to July 27. Reach Ellen Underwood at ecunderw@sellsouth.net.

• **SIGN UP FOR CONFIRMATION** Youth who will be rising eighth-graders in 2016-17 can sign up for Confirmation at www.mpumcyouth.org (Confirmation tab). The 65 members of the 2016 class will be confirmed at the three Sanctuary services on Sunday, May 15. Adult mentors are needed to work with youth. Reach Director of Youth Ministries Lauren Stines at lauren@mpumc.org.

• **WOMEN'S RETREAT REUNION** The women’s retreat will celebrate a decade of fellowship and fun with a 10th anniversary reunion at 7:00 p.m. Friday, May 20, in Jubilee Hall. Heavy hors d’oeuvres will be served. Guests will reminisce as well as look forward to future retreats. RSVP by May 13 to Christine Mull at 704-295-4815 or cmull@mpumc.org.

• **CAMP TEKOA WEEKEND** The annual Camp Tekoa Family Weekend in the N.C. mountains is May 20-22, offering families, friends, long-time church members and those new to the church a chance to share fun activities, worship and more. The deadline to sign up is May 10. Visit www.myersparkumc.org/children or reach Jenna Zello at jenna@mpumc.org.

• **NAPA BREAKFAST PROGRAM** Jeff Conway, owner of Napa on Providence and the Ruth’s Chris Steak Houses in Charlotte, will share his testimony at a breakfast gathering at 7:00 a.m. Wednesday, May 18, at Napa, 110 Perrin Place. A weekly Bible study meets at Napa. RSVP to Ryan Blalock at ryanblalock@gmail.com.

• **PERFORMING ARTS CAMP** *It’s Cool In The Furnace*, a performing arts camp for rising Grades 2-8, is August 15-19 at the church. Cost is $200 per student. Details: Nancy Hamff at 704-295-4831 or nancy@mpumc.org.

• **#LIVEDIFFERENTLY** #LiveDifferently fliers for May are around the church, offering outreach opportunities for the month ahead.

• **PROGRAM ON THE POPE** Dr. Howell will talk about Pope Francis at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 25, at St. Gabriel Catholic Church, 3016 Providence Road. The free talk will be in the Ministry Center. Refreshments will be served. Those planning to go should RSVP to cesposito@stgabrielchurch.org.
By Melissa McGill

On Tuesdays, I read with a cool second-grader. Nicole (not her real name) loves reading about animals, the fairy tale Rumpelstiltskin and a quirky book called Alien Dude and the attack of Wormzilla. She's smart and sassy in her purple sneakers and during our weekly reading time, her eyes light up as she surveys the spread of new book selections.

From September through April, a group of 40 readers from Myers Park United Methodist Church descended on the halls of Sedgefield Elementary School each Tuesday and Wednesday to read with 18 second- graders. It’s part of the For The Love Of Reading program. Volunteers are paired with the same student each week, so relationships are built along with reading skills. Statistics show that reading levels at the end of second grade are strong predictors for future academic success.

And so we read. We read history and biographies, fiction and chapter books. We read about Ellis Island, winters in Washington, and mice who steal candy from Ana’s birthday piñata. In January, we read about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights movement. As we read about “colored” water fountains, businesses refusing to serve black people and nonviolent protestors being hosed down in the streets, I saw these injustices anew through her eyes. “That’s not fair,” she said quietly.

It’s fun for me to see her reading skills, and her confidence, grow. My favorite days are actually the ones where she drags her feet down the hall as we go to the reading room, saying she doesn’t feel like reading today. We talk about her lunch, oh wait, she needs some water, OK, OK, now let’s start the book…Then somehow, surrounded by new books, she forgets about all that as she loses herself in the story. For the majority of our time together, Nicole reads and I listen. Then she bounces back into her classroom, talking about her favorite books that we’ve read this year and how she doesn’t want her older sister to mess up the new one she just got to read over Spring break.

Being part of this program has had an impact on my life, just as I hope it has had an impact on hers. All year, I have looked forward to these hours of reading and I miss them now that the program has ended for the school year. At least until Freedom School and the Drop Everything And Read (D.E.A.R.) program begins June 16 at Sedgefield Elementary School. Readers can also participate in For The Love Of Reading when that program resumes at Sedgefield in autumn. The program was so successful this year that the school has asked that we read with even more students next year. To find out more and sign up, reach church staffer Becky Abernethy at 704-295-4826 or becky@mpumc.org.

Melissa is Assistant Director of Communications at the church. Reach her at 704-295-4841 or melissa@mpumc.org.
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W. Scott and Pamela Gantt celebrate two graduates – Hannah Elizabeth Gantt, graduating cum laude from the University of South Carolina with a degree in public health. She plans to attend nursing school after heading to Los Angeles to further her modeling career. Kaitlyn Leigh Gantt, graduating cum laude from The Citadel with a Masters degree in Counseling. She’ll return to Charlotte and hopes to work for CMS.

Brittany Kalmbach, daughter of Ambrose and Emily Kalmbach, graduating from UNC Chapel Hill with a B.S. degree in Business Administration and a minor in Spanish. She’ll work for Wells Fargo in Charlotte as a Global Financial Institutions Financial Analyst.

Hatley McArthur, daughter of Dan and Sage McArthur, graduating from UNC Chapel Hill with a B.A. degree in Journalism.

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