

Snapshots

The Planned Giving Committee is working passionately to inspire the faithful to consider making planned or legacy gifts to the Wesley Foundation of the church. The Foundation contributes to the vitality of our faith home through financial support of missions and church maintenance. Look soon in *the Cornerstone* for a list of Wesley Circle members, recognizing those who have already made planned gifts. Two points worth mentioning: This initiative is for people of all ages and assets. Many of us begin to think about such matters in middle age. No. 2, gifts of all sizes are, of course, welcome. Those who come forward to participate will not be asked now to put a dollar figure on their giving. The first step is to engage the congregation to consider a planned giving commitment as our church looks ahead. Visit www.myersparkumc.org/give to watch a video about the Wesley Foundation and planned giving. Planned Giving Committee members will be visiting Sunday School classes soon to tell the story. To learn more, or to begin the process, reach Executive Director Saribeth Dozier at 704-295-4844 or saribeth@mpumc.org.

Sunday Schedule

Sanctuary Services

8:30, 9:45, 11:00 am

Church In The Round

8:45 a.m., Jubilee Hall

Holy Communion

9:30 a.m., Chapel

Sunday School

9:45 a.m.

NEWS OF MELISSA, NIC, JULIE, MIKE AND MORE

We offer our deepest gratitude as we say good-bye to three staff members, celebrate a new challenge at our church for another, and invite you to keep staffer Mike O'Neill in your prayers:

- Assistant Director of Communications **Melissa McGill** has left for an exciting opportunity: Director of Communications for the Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church. From the Conference's new office in Huntersville, she will oversee communications for more than 1,000 churches and nearly 300,000 members. Since arriving at the church in 2014, Melissa has expanded our online presence, played the lead in the website redesign, brought creative design skills to *the Cornerstone* and other print materials,
- Music Associate (and gifted organist) **Nicolas Haigh** is leaving to become Assistant Director of Music and Organist at our neighbor, Christ Episcopal Church

and produced powerful videos on several mission trips, including the recent one to Brazil. She's also been a positive presence in the community, including reading at Freedom School and Sedgefield. This new opportunity reflects her deep involvement in Methodism: She serves on the Conference's Board of Ordained Ministry and belonged to the Communications Committee. She's such a regular at Annual Conference at Lake Junaluska, she might as well have bought a second home there. A successor is being sought to help tell the stories of our church across all platforms.

- Music Associate (and gifted organist) **Nicolas Haigh** is leaving to become Assistant Director of Music and Organist at our neighbor, Christ Episcopal Church

Continued Inside...

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS: 'REMEMBER WHO IS IN CONTROL'

Blessing of the Backpacks is at 10:00 a.m. Sunday, August 26, in the Youth Building Gym as elementary students are invited to bring their backpacks and share in this prayerful gathering for the start of school. Here, church member Kristy Monk shares what this sweet church tradition means to their daughter, Emily, and entire family. Emily, who turns six on August 28, is the daughter of Mike and Kristy Monk. She's going into first grade at Socrates Academy. Her twin siblings, Aaron and Avery, just turned three.



Blessing of the Backpacks.

The Blessing of the Backpacks was a special service for us last year as our oldest daughter, Emily, prepared to enter kindergarten. We had a last-minute change in school, and in the chaos of it all, the service was a great reminder to me as a parent to relax, breathe, and remember who is in control. For Emily, it reinforced the message that God

wasn't only with her on Sundays, but that He would be with her throughout the week. An added benefit was that she could share her excitement for school with her church friends and family. We look forward to participating in the service again this year!

Passages

In Memory

Frances N. Aiken, mother of Linda Parker, grandmother of Blair Ogburn and Jordan Parker and great-grandmother of Olivia Ogburn, who died on July 21, 2018. *Thomas Earl Soyars*, brother-in-law of Diane Higgins and husband of Darlene Soyars, who died on July 22, 2018. *Richard Seugling*, father of Larissa Winner and grandfather of Seth and Alaina Winner, who died on July 28, 2018.

Weddings

Peggy Marshall and Drew Lewis, married on August 4, 2018, at the church. *Elizabeth Haase and Forrest Smith*, married on August 4, 2018, at the church. *Caitlin Patton and William Stanley*, married on August 11, 2018, at the church.

TO LAUREN STINES: YOU GO, GIRL

Blessings and best wishes to Director of Youth Ministries Lauren Stines for accomplishing a grand feat: She earned a Master of Arts in Practical Theology (with a Youth Ministry concentration) from Pfeiffer University. Lauren attended classes nights and weekends on Pfeiffer's Charlotte campus. She earned membership in the Theta Alpha Kappa Honor Society. Her final Master's project focused on *Special Needs And Confirmation*. As if all that isn't inspiring enough, she continued devoting herself to her day job – overseeing our thriving Youth Ministries, helping lead Confirmation, taking a pilgrimage to Kenya – while also being a wife to Daniel and mother to daughter Ronan, 1½. Next time you see Lauren, tell her congratulations.

Pictured right: Lauren with husband Daniel and daughter Ronan.



A PASSPORT TO LEARNING GOD IS WITH US



Caroline Damesek

Fifteen middle school youth recently traveled to Greenville, S.C., to serve with youth from other denominations in Passport Missions. Here, Caroline Damesek, 13 a rising eighth-grader at Trinity Episcopal School, shares the experience. She's the daughter of Drs. Joshua and Elizabeth Damesek.

"Passport at Furman University was an amazing experience. Each day we got up bright and early to worship and dance. Next we went to our Bible study groups, where we dove into the theme of *Enough* – God is enough, I am enough, there is enough. Afterward, we went to our mission sites. My group went to Goodwill, where we sorted books and other items. The people who work at Goodwill were patient and kind. Later we had free time and another worship service. Although we only knew each other for a week, it felt as if everyone knew each other for a lifetime. We went through so much together in a short amount of time. We learned that God will always be for us, even when we make mistakes. God created each one of us as a child of God. We learned how much of an impact little things can make on other people's lives. We learned to stand up for the voiceless. We learned that the connections you make with other people are the things you will never forget."

THESE KIDS TOOK THE URBAN PLUNGE

Making this a summer of service, 13 sixth-graders joined Youth Ministries staffers Sarah Yoss and Kevin Gustafson for the annual Urban Plunge. The youngsters worked in the gardens of Charlotte Green with church member Cissy Shull, had dinner with residents of Samaritan House (which houses those just out of the hospital), and enjoyed an ice cream social with folks from Refugee Support Services while providing backpacks and school supplies for the kids. In matters of building relationships and sharing Christ's love, you can never start too early.



Charlotte Urban Plunge, 2018.

Calendar

THURSDAY, AUGUST 16

- Ushers and greeters and those who want to join this Sunday morning ministry of hospitality are asked to attend one of two meetings – at 11:00 a.m. or 7:00 p.m. in Room 103 of the Parish Life Building. Rev. Uiyeon Kim, our new Pastor of Discipleship, will meet with the group to introduce himself and share his gratitude. The group will talk about its hopes and goals on how best to warmly welcome all who enter our church. Details: Peg Broughton at 704-295-4812 or peg@mpumc.org.
- The Men's Shelter at 1210 N. Tryon St. uptown celebrates its reopening after renovations. A drop-in and tour are 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. with remarks at 4:00 p.m. RSVP to philanthropy@MensShelterofCharlotte.org.

SUNDAYS THROUGH AUGUST 19

- Our summer series, *Faces Of Our Faith: Bold And Untold Stories*, explores the ordinary people of faith who do what they can with what they have. We will journey with the often overlooked people in our Biblical narrative and be reminded that we all play a role in God's story of redemptive love and grace.

NOW THROUGH AUGUST 28

- Help fill a bus bound for Bayonnais, Haiti, by dropping off rice and dried beans (preferably 15- to 50-pound bags available at warehouse stores, but all size bags welcome) in the collection carts in the Parish Life lobby. Donations of rice and beans will support our long-time mission partners at the OFCB school.

AUGUST 24-26

- The men's Backpacking Ministry invites men to enjoy a week-end of fellowship and fun at Gorges State Park in Transylvania County in Western North Carolina. Sign up by August 17. To learn more, email Jack Hankins at jchankins24@gmail.com.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 26

- The final concert in the recital series of the American Guild of Organists will be at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. It's free. Featured will be our Chancel Choir and organist Nicolas Haigh, with Director of Music Jimmy Jones conducting.

THURSDAYS STARTING SEPTEMBER 6

- A yoga class is 10:00 to 11:15 a.m. in Room 031 downstairs in the Snyder Building. Formerly led by Dr. Melanie Dobson, this class will be led by Diane Cevallos, founder and owner of Charlotte Family Yoga. A \$10 donation per session is recommended. Details: Parish Nurse Susan Mobley at 704-295-4836 or smobley@mpumc.org.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

- Youth in Grades 5-12 are welcome to participate in Sanctuary worship on Sunday morning as Crucifers, Acolytes and Bible Carriers. Fifth-graders serve as Bible Carriers, processing into the Sanctuary with the Bible. Youth in Grades 6-9 serve as Ac-

DR. HOWELL'S BIBLE STUDY



Dr. Howell

Dr. Howell leads a weekly Bible study on *Familiar Bible Passages: A Closer Look* on Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. in Room 108 of the Parish Life Building. No need to sign up, just come and bring a friend. Come any week you can; each week is an independent entity. On August 15, Rev. Uiyeon Kim, our Pastor of Discipleship,

leads the study, looking at *The Lord's Prayer*. On August 22, join James as he helps us explore *War And Genocide In The Bible*. Details: Dr. Howell at james@mpumc.org.

olytes, processing in with the torches and lighting the altar candles. Youth in Grades 10-12 are Crucifers, carrying the cross and leading the processional into the Sanctuary. Sixth-graders can serve as a Bible Carrier or Acolyte. Youth are asked to attend one of two training sessions in the Sanctuary: Saturday, September 8, from 10:00 a.m. to noon, or Sunday, September 16, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. A parent must accompany their son or daughter. Adults are welcome to train to serve as a Sunday morning coach. Details: Amelia Miller at cmiller5@carolina.rr.com or Katharine Willis at katharinewillis@gmail.com.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

- Registration is open for rising eighth-grade Confirmation. The class meets Sundays from 6:00 to 7:45 p.m. in Jubilee Hall starting September 9, and ends with Confirmation on May 19. Two retreats are included – September 28-30 and April 5-7. Cost is \$300 for the retreats, paid with registration. Sign up at www.mpumcyouth.org.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 & OCTOBER 1

- Children's and Youth Ministries invites all to a two-part seminar – *Kids, Brains & Screens* – from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. each evening in Jubilee Hall. The goal is to help equip parents and guardians to make healthy choices for a child's screen use, including social media, video games, smartphones and more. For child care, email jwentz@mpumc.org. Details: Amy Harriman at 704-295-4814 or aharriman@mpumc.org.

OCTOBER 24-26

- Attend a Fall Bible Study at Lake Junaluska in the N.C. mountains. Executive Pastor Nancy Watson presents *The Parables: Hearing Jesus, Imagining God*. Cost is \$190 per person for double occupancy, \$315 for single. Log into *Realm* and search *Events* to register and pay online by September 1. Details: Christine Mull at 704-295-4815 or cmull@mpumc.org.

SUMMER BELONGS TO THE YOUNG

Each summer, we are graced by the presence of the young. Their energy, their curiosity, their blossoming faith – all of it fills our campus and community. Vacation Bible School. Summer Fun Days. The Performing Arts Camp. Various mission trips near and far. The annual, beautiful Freedom School sponsored by our church at Sedgefield Middle School. By the hundreds, they come from all over town to learn and serve and have fun (and give their parents a few hours' break!). Savor these photographs (there are more online). Celebrate their pure exuberance. Appreciate that the summer is not wasted on the young, for they are drawing closer to God.
– Ken Garfield



Summer Fun Days, Freedom School and Performing Arts Camp filled the halls here at the Church and beyond.



Melissa McGill



Nicolas Haigh



Julie Wentz



Thea Polito



Mike O'Neill

NEWS OF MELISSA, NIC, JULIE, THEA, MIKE AND MORE...

Continued From Front Page...

just down Providence Road. His last Sunday with us is August 26. “We will miss Nic,” Dr. Howell shares, “but he is returning to his Anglican/Episcopal roots at Christ Church, who eagerly sought him to help their program. He has graciously shared his gifts with us and has contributed directly to the excellence of our worship. We certainly wish him well in his new role even as we look forward to the continued highest quality in our music.” A successor will be sought.

- **Thea Polito**, our Accounts Payable and Payroll Administrator, has left for a job at Aqua-Tots Swim Schools that is closer to her home. **Diana Hall** is filling in.
- A new opportunity for a staffer: **Julie Wentz** will become School Partnership and Local Outreach Coordinator. She’s joining the Missions team August 27, where she has served as Child Care Coordinator and Ministry Assistant since 2016. She taught at The Children’s Circle preschool before that. In her new role, she’ll work with our school partners, Sedgfield Middle School and Dilworth Elementary Sedgfield and Latta Campuses, the summer Freedom School program and more.

Julie shares: “As a native Charlottean and CMS graduate, I’m passionate about seeing our community and schools succeed. I’m looking forward to strengthening relationships already in place and making new ones. I plan to take classes to deepen my knowledge and skill set in child development to earn the Child Life Specialist certification. This emphasizes mental health and trauma, issues that many of our youngest friends struggle with. I’m honored to serve as the liaison between the community, schools and our church.” Want to coordinate child care at our church? Reach Director of Children’s Ministries Amy Harri-man at 704-295-4814 or aharriman@mpumc.org.

- Please keep long-time Facilities staffer **Mike O’Neill** close to heart after recent health challenges. We pray for his return, for we miss his cheerful presence around the campus, moving tables, setting up rooms for Sunday School and the like. Many of you know and appreciate him for his quick smile and upbeat greeting. Plus, who else is going to keep us abreast of Philadelphia sports news?

BACK TO SCHOOL

- The Sixth Grade Stepping Stone (Transition Sunday) is 8:45 a.m. Sunday, August 19, in Church In The Round in Jubilee Hall as rising sixth-graders transition to Youth Ministries.
- Rising kindergartners will celebrate the Kindergarten Stepping Stone during the 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary service August 19.
- The Flamingo Banquet, a kickoff party for families of youth, is 6:00 p.m. August 19 in Jubilee Hall.
- The High School Back To School Bash is 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. Saturday, August 25, off campus. Check with Youth Ministries for details.
- Kickoff Sunday for children’s Sunday School is August 26. Elementary children, bring your backpacks for Blessing Of The Backpacks. Blessing Of The Backpacks is 10:00 a.m. Sunday, August 26, in the Youth Building Gym.
- The Middle School Back To School Bash is 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. August 26 on campus.

SMALL GROUPS, PRESCHOOL, THE GARDEN

- *Disciple Fast Track, Belong* and *Companions In Christ* small groups begin after Labor Day, September 3, so now's the time to sign up. Each Sunday morning from August 19 to September 16, members of the *12:12 Ministry* will have tables in the Parish Life lobby and be available to help everyone learn how to join the group of their choice, using our new online tool, *Realm*. If you've already logged into *Realm*, use *Find A Group* to join. Questions? Reach Rev. Barbara Barden at 704-295-4813 or bbarden@mpumc.org.
- The Children's Circle church preschool – the best in town if you ask us – opens in early September for 205 children ages 1-5. The first day of school is Wednesday, September 5, for Monday/Wednesday toddlers, with several open houses planned that week for families. Some practice carpools are planned, a good reminder to all motorists to proceed with caution when school begins. Visit www.myersparkumc.org/preschool to learn more.
- A sweet note from Marci Mroz of Refugee Support Services, thanking our Garden Ministry for delivering veggies from the church garden beside the Parish Life Building for our city's newest neighbors: "Our refugee friends have really been enjoying the bonus veggies! Yesterday I let them select either two, three or four items based on how many words they knew and could read to me from a single kids' alphabet flash card. Other days, we've used the veggies as awards for those who could accurately recite their address and/or phone number, too. Who knew veggies can help refugees learn English?" To help on the garden, reach Mike Farrell at mikefarrell1950@gmail.com.



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BEAUTIFUL MUSIC, ISRAEL, CUB SCOUTS

- A sweet note from Greg Brown: "My wife Sheryl and I have been attending Myers Park United Methodist Church for over five years now and have always loved everything about the wonderful choir and music that Jimmy (Jones) and his team put together. Please share with Kevin Proffit how much we appreciate his passion and singing talents that we hear when he is with the choir and when he performs individually. I remember getting chills when Kevin sang *Through It All* several years ago. He is a real blessing, and I wanted to let him know we love his singing and dedication to the church."
- Remember, Francis Chapel is closed for renovations to make way for the new (used) organ being installed in that sacred space. *The Cornerstone* will offer updates on the progress, and when the organ will begin making beautiful music.
- Dr. Howell will lead a trip to Israel March 31 to April 11, 2019. To learn more – including itinerary, cost and deadline to sign up – visit www.myersparkumc.org. Those interested in going should email our Senior Pastor at james@mpumc.org.
- Let the church know when you or a loved one is in the hospital, has had a baby or faces an urgent need. Call 704-376-8584.
- Our church-sponsored Cub Scouts Pack No. 3 holds an open house at 6:00 p.m. Thursday, August 30, in the Scout Room, downstairs in the Youth Building. The Pack is open to boys and girls in rising Grades 1-5. Interested families can come and learn about all that the group does, including camping, hiking and service projects. To learn more, reach Doug Hulse at doug.hulse@baml.com. The Pack has 70 scouts.