

Marching Together to the Beat of Different Drummers

Last month I took a couple days off work and headed to Asheville for a mini vacation. Thanks to Mark File’s wonderful Web site, I had picked out in advance a downtown restaurant where I wanted to eat dinner that Friday night. The restaurant happened to be across the street from Pritchard Park, where a community drumming circle performs every Friday evening. When I arrived at the restaurant at 6:30, I could already hear drums beating across the street. So as soon as I finished my meal, I headed for the park to see what was going on.

Here was the scene: In a small outdoor amphitheater sat row after row of people pounding on all kinds of drums and other percussion instruments. Djembes. Bongos. 55-gallon drums. Cowbells. One guy was tapping a beer bottle with a stick. Another man was thumping an empty 5-gallon water cooler bottle. A young woman had a tambourine.

The musicians were as varied as the instruments. A number of young people looked like they just left the 1969 Woodstock music festival. Several older men wore wrinkled, baggy clothes. Sitting beside them on the amphitheater steps were middle-aged housewives, clean-cut teens, children, and even a farmer in overalls. The crowd of listeners was equally diverse—local residents and tourists like me, back-to-the-earth environmentalists, artists, business professionals, parents with kids in strollers, retirees. Crammed in a park less than half the size of Greensboro’s Center City Park, this cross section of society had gathered to play, dance, and listen.

Each drum song spontaneously evolved. One person would start pounding a beat and everyone else would join in with their own version of it—no one in rhythm with anyone else. If there were 30 or 40 drummers there, they were beating 30 or 40 different cadences. But after a minute or so of the performers drumming out of sync, the drumbeats evolved until everyone was striking their instrument in rhythm with the others. For 10 or 15 minutes, everyone pounded away together. Even if I had been deaf, I could have participated because the sound waves were so strong they vibrated in my body. Eventually, a man in the center of the amphitheater would hold up and shake a very large African rattle, which was the cue to end. The entire crowd then let out a cheer, as drummers mopped their faces with towels and drank from water bottles. A few minutes later, someone would start pounding out a different beat, and the process started all over again—a cacophony of sound that eventually melted into a single cadence.

I stood there for quite a while that night, mesmerized not only by the drumming but by the scene as well. I couldn’t help but wonder what drew this wildly diverse group of people together every Friday night. What do the participants get out of it?

As I started thinking about what I would say today, I considered some possible answers to my questions. We humans are social animals. We long to belong. We crave attention, acceptance, and connection. But you know what? I think deep connections are hard to find these days. Despite all the technology at our fingertips that helps us communicate—cell phones, email, Facebook, Twitter—relating to other humans at a deep, personal level is a challenge for us in the 21st century. The drumming circle in Asheville must give its participants a connection through the bond of the beat.

A small group of believers in first-century Jerusalem developed a connection to each other. Actually, they established something even better. Not just a common goal or purpose, but a common life. They forged a community.

Some of their experiences are described in the book of Acts. Acts essentially is volume 2 of the Gospel of Luke, which is one of my favorite books in the Bible. Luke’s Gospel spotlights many people who for a variety of reasons have been excluded or ignored in their society: women, non-Greeks, the poor, the sick. Not only does Luke–Acts focus on people who have been marginalized, it explores the problems related to their

exclusion and how people of faith should respond. Almost 2,000 years later, these issues remain troublesome in our society, making Luke–Acts still relevant.

Here is the scene at the beginning of Acts: Jesus has been resurrected, spent some time with his disciples, and has now ascended to heaven. The next major event is Pentecost. In Jerusalem the small band of Jesus’s followers, numbering about 120, receives the Spirit of God and immediately begins speaking in languages other than their native tongue. I imagine it sounded like the beginning of an Asheville drumming circle song. About 3,000 new believers are added to the First Church of Jerusalem that day and are baptized.

At the end of chapter 2, Luke gives us a summary statement, a snapshot, of what life is like for this new congregation after Pentecost. We see that it doesn’t take them long to find a rhythm together.

One, they are learning together. The 12 apostles—the original 11 plus Judas’s replacement, Matthias—instruct the church every day on what Jesus said, the messianic passages from the Old Testament, and Spirit-inspired lessons of their own. With so many new believers in the church, you can understand why this teaching was vital. The group is finding its beat intellectually.

Two, they have fellowship together. Here the Greek word “koinonia” is used, meaning a “common union” with the Lord and with one another. It’s impossible to exaggerate the importance of koinonia, or fellowship, here in Acts. The Christians in Jerusalem were not united merely by a common purpose or a shared function. Their kinship with Christ meant they had a kinship with all who are in Christ. These believers experienced the deepest level of community through Jesus. This was a new experience for the converts. They find their emotional beat.

The third and fourth aspects of their life are part of this koinonia.

Three, they have meals together in each other’s homes. Biblical scholars don’t know if this meant they had a regular daily meal together, they shared a fellowship meal or love feast, or they had communion, the Lord’s Supper. Perhaps they were doing all 3 in one meal. Whatever it was, it cared for each person’s physical needs. They were finding a beat that nurtures their bodies.

Four, they are praying together. Perhaps this was a reference to set times when they united in prayer. It could also have meant that they attended regular prayer times together in the temple. Wherever and whenever they prayed, the group developed its spiritual beat.

Education, fellowship, a shared meal, prayer. These are the key elements of the First Church of Jerusalem’s common life. Do these activities remind you of anything? They are the components of a typical Christian worship service. The similarity between the lifestyle of the first church and our typical worship service is significant. When we worship, we aren’t escaping from life outside this building; we are modeling a daily lifestyle that we need to take with us when we leave.

Luke doesn’t give many more details about these 4 activities—he’s painting a picture in broad brush strokes. The text does go on to say that the members of the First Church of Jerusalem pooled their resources to meet each other’s needs, and that overall they were joyful and praised God. A sense of awe permeated their lives together. Miracles occurred. The church grew. This was a time of high-voltage Christianity, when the beat of their faith, the throb of the Spirit in their lives, was so strong that it probably felt like sound waves vibrating their bodies.

Honestly, to me it all sounds too good to be true. Was this the perfect church? The once-and-never-again ideal group of believers? Biblical scholars think Luke paints an idyllic picture that probably wasn’t realistic. And in fact, if you keep reading in Acts, failure and controversy soon erupt in the young church. We’ve just read how the First Church members had all things in common, and barely 2 chapters later, we learn about

a man and his wife who are struck dead for cheating on their commitments. Perfect, these folks were not.

Scholars believe Luke was instead trying to show that when these believers received God’s Spirit, it created a community that provided what we humans so long for: unity, joy, peace, praise of God. And the joy experienced by this group was magnetic. As the primitive rhythms of the Asheville drumming circle drew me and others to the park that night, so the presence of God’s powerful Spirit in the lives of these first believers attracted many other converts.

The scene in Acts then shifts to Peter and John who are making their daily trek to the temple for prayer. Sitting at the door to the temple is a lame beggar, and he asks Peter and John for a handout. The apostles do not have community funds at their personal disposal; they don’t have any money. What they do have is a cure. Like Jesus, the apostles can heal. And as Peter speaks the words of healing, he grabs the crippled man by the hand and pulls him up to his feet. The lame man is healed. Now he can go anywhere. It would have been natural for him to run home to his wife or to his extended family, to show them what had just happened. Instead, he heads into the temple with Peter and John, dancing to the beat of his own inner drummer, praising God.

Whenever Jesus healed someone, the result always was that the healing restored not only physical health, it also restored vital relationships and full participation in the community. The same point is made here with Peter’s healing of the lame man. Luke’s language symbolizes what is happening—Peter pulling up the man to his feet is a metaphor for the man rising to a new life. Because the lame man has been healed, he can now participate fully in Jewish life. He’ll be able to work to support his family. He’ll be able to visit family and friends. He’ll be able to carry his children. Most important, he’ll be able practice his faith like every other Jewish man by walking unaided into the temple, the center of Jewish life. This man has regained his entire life.

What message do we get from this passage? What kind of beat does it sound for our lives? Many moments of Jesus’s teaching speak of the importance of community. Jesus said, “Where two or more are gathered, there I am in the midst of them.” “Love one another as I have loved you.” “Father, may they know you as I know you.” Christian togetherness is important. The apostle Paul added his metaphor to our understanding when he compared Christian community to being like parts of one body.

Being part of a Christian community is vital for all of us for 2 reasons.

- Community can meet OUR needs and bring us joy.
- Life lived in community can also bring healing to OTHERS.

While doing research for this sermon, I came across a post on a blog by a man named Sam Davidson. He wrote:

“Sunday brunch with my family is important to me. I’m able to go to Sunday brunch each week because I stopped going to church. This is so not where I thought I’d be 10 or even 5 years ago. But I couldn’t be happier. Community—having a place where I belong and can be my most ‘me’—is important to me. But it’s so hard to find. For a long time, church was a place where I could find community. It was a place to meet people, talk about stuff that mattered and be encouraged to be my most me. But something changed. I don’t know if I’ll ever go to church again.”

In the blogosphere you can find many similar posts, and if you talked to just about anyone on the streets of Greensboro or anywhere else in America, you’d hear the same thing: For one reason or another, people have been turned off to Christian community. My experience, though, is just the opposite of Davidson’s. In fact, I’ve become a cheerleader for community. I have found such joy in being a part of the church, especially THIS church. It’s been a community of healing and the place where I can be my most me.

When I came to College Park in 1995, I would have diagnosed myself as walking wounded. I was out of work. I didn't know anyone in Greensboro except an elderly aunt and uncle. My father was dying of cancer. My mother and sister were barely speaking to each other. And I was still reeling from the breakup of a 7-year relationship that I thought was heading toward marriage. I needed healing.

Not that I was open to that healing. I'm an introvert, and when I'm hurting emotionally, I withdraw—I go deeper inside. It's sort of a "circle the wagons" mentality that feels self-protective, but it actually blocks me from the cure I need. Have you ever been there?

I well remember the first or second Sunday that I visited College Park. After worship, Janice and Robert Kirkman invited me out to lunch. I could have accepted their invitation, and I should have, but I didn't. I needed that connection, but instead I made an excuse and declined their offer.

Still, deep down I knew I needed this congregation. I knew that the first Sunday I visited, when I heard Ann Usey speak from the pulpit about her father's illness and the dysfunction in her family. Her honesty blew me away. I was even more stunned later when I found out that she was the pastor's wife. Based on what was going on in my family at the time, the message couldn't have been clearer: I needed to be at College Park.

Two months after I joined College Park, my father died. This group of people I did not yet know flooded my mailbox with notes of concern. Every time you saw me you asked how I was doing. In the years since, you have loved me and supported me in more ways than I can take time right now to list. You have seen gifts in me I didn't think I had. You have encouraged my attempts at leadership. You have challenged my immature beliefs about God and community and calling. You have shown me what unconditional love is, which has healed the wounds in my spirit so that I can be my most me. Today I stand before you not as walking wounded, but as one who has been healed and has now entered the temple, dancing and praising God.

And yet, despite how I now beat the drum to proclaim the blessings that community can bring, I know some of you have been where that blogger is. For a while, you gave up on going to church. Maybe you're still not convinced that Christian community can be a positive experience. I understand that, too. Having grown up in church, I've seen my share of so-called Christians attack, wound, and drive away their fellow church members. No Christian community is perfect. Not College Park. Not any other congregation. Finding the drumming circle where your beat blends with theirs may take time. But you cannot give up.

If you are wounded and hurting, you also have to want to be healed. When a wound has been part of you for so long, it can be difficult to let go of it. But I can tell you from experience, trying to go it alone will not strengthen your faith or heal the broken places in your life. Certainly it's difficult putting yourself out there, trying to make friends, trying to trust people. But the blessings of community are worth the effort.

How can we strengthen the fellowship at College Park? **Wherever you are in your journey, take another step toward community.** For some of you, especially if you've been hurt or rejected by the church, just attending a worship service is a huge step. It's all you can give of yourself right now, and that's a wonderful starting point. God's Spirit can work through loving relationships to bring about healing.

For others, you're capable of giving more of yourself, but for one reason or another, you don't. Maybe you think you don't have anything to contribute. Perhaps you've never before experienced community and you don't understand what it means to travel together. Individualism has become a major part of American society, and it has seeped into the church. For Christians under its influence, what's important is me and my faith, with little concern for our togetherness. People may want community but also fear it, partly because they have no idea how to live with folks they disagree with or who are difficult to be around. They don't know how to tolerate, find consensus, or think of others before thinking of themselves.

At its best, Christian community is countercultural. In this age of virtual communication, virtual communities, virtual personalities, a virtual church cannot replace lives lived together. I encourage you to seek ways to develop deeper relationships here. Risk opening up yourself to others. Christian community occurs when we form significant bonds with real people with whom we share the journey.

In my role as minister of small groups, my goal is to help the people of College Park find ways to connect with each other and with God. Many of you want better connections with the other members of this congregation because you said so in the survey many of you completed one Sunday back in July. You want a stronger sense of belonging, a deeper bond with this community. I hope I can help that to happen.

Living in community is a lot like the Asheville drumming circle. Through the work of God's Spirit and the grace and love we share through Christ, our rhythm together will evolve to a common beat. God is calling us to a life together, to community. Will you join me?

Cindy Dillon

Tessera: CP's New Early Service

Location: Chapel

Time: 9:00—9:45 am on Sundays

Name: Tessera (small individual tiles used to make a large mosaic)

Start Date: October 4

Why might we need an early service? After all, the 11:00 service is not full. Three reasons come easily to mind.

First, our parking lot only holds 150 cars. The accepted expectation of cars to worship attendees is 1 car to 1.75 people. Even if we have a slightly larger average, say 2 worshippers per car, this still means only 300 people per service will be able to worship here regularly at one time. A second service would allow the potential for more people to worship here on Sundays.

Secondly, we should be offering worship at another time (other than 11:00 am) for the convenience of our members. Many people and members have asked me for an early service. Many of our members work (for example, Lowe's, or soccer referee) but would still like to make a service. This would be a second hopefully more convenient time for some members.

Thirdly, a second service would allow us to offer worship in a different key. This early service would be more casual, more participatory, less formal, shorter, with a different style of music.

What might we expect the first couple of months? The first couple of months we can expect that the early service will drain some portion of the members from the 11:00 service. However, within one year, we hope to be back up to strength with the 11:00 service, and have 100-125 worshipping in the early service. The key to the success of this service is great music.

What might be some of the elements of this service?

The service would evolve, but here is a possible order:

1. No bulletin, choir, or offering plates. Wooden boxes near the three exits would be for prayers, response cards, and offering.
2. Worship leaders are dressed casually, for example, nice pants and a well-made t-shirt.
3. High quality coffee in the back
4. Service opens with music: guitar, piano, saxophone, drums are all good possibilities.
5. Singing is not so much "I love Jesus" songs (we do all love Jesus, but our hymnody should be more mature than just one type of praise song), but music representing a variety of theological responses and moods.

6. Prayers of the people: worshippers offer petitions and leader leads in a response, such as "Lord, hear our prayer.
7. Scripture reading, creatively done.
8. Sermon, done without notes, in a more casual tone. (same sermon as in the 11, only in a more casual manner)
9. Special music of some sort
10. Sermon talk-back
11. Communion, offered weekly.
12. Closing song.
13. Walking benediction

What needs to be done to the chapel to accommodate this service?

Nothing needs to be done immediately to the chapel for this use, other than possibly relocating Adult 3 into the present location of the library. There might need, however, to be a three stage chapel renovation if this is successful.

❖ **Stage one (sooner rather than later):**

Consult with Adult 3 about moving classroom

Relocate library (to back of chapel?)

Purchase comfortable chairs for parlor (\$)

?Purchase electric piano for Adult 3 (\$)

❖ **Stage two (within a year):**

Removal of pews and carpeting and organ

Purchase of good quality movable and comfortable chairs (\$)

Refinishing of wood floor OR laying down of good high quality flooring (\$)

Wood offering boxes

❖ **Stage three:**

Renovate side door entrance to make a useable and attractive entrance (\$)

Renovation of stage area: removal of modesty rail and choir area. (\$)

Purchase of new piano or electric piano (\$)

Purchase of something to show movie clips and project lyrics (\$)

Logo & Advertising

We would likely need a high quality professional logo that might be identified with the service. Any ideas who we could get to create this?

People Needed

Ideally, we could have about 75 of our members to begin this service. 50 would be enough to attend. The worship musicians should be about 2-5, enough to cover each week, but not too many that it would create problems to rehearse.

Hey! What's for dinner? CPC Wednesday Night Fellowship

September 2

Pork Tenderloin w/ Peach Salsa

Asian Slaw, Corn

Pound Cake

September 9

Pasta w/ Grilled Chicken & Zucchini

Salad, Pecan Pie

September 16

Stuffed Peppers

Salad/Rolls, Cookies

September 23

Tacos, Fixins'

Rice, Cupcakes

September 30

Sweet & Spicy Chicken

Pasta, Carrots

Chocolate Pie

Excerpts from Engine Block Cathedral

(Michael’s 15th Anniversary)

Call to Ignition:

Leader: Oh, giver of all Gas and Oil

People: High octane gives us joy.

Leader: Oh keeper of all green flags and caution flags.

People: Going real fast gives us joy.

Leader: As we make the turns and change the tires.

People: We’re grateful for good crews and steep embankments.

Leader: Help us remember our sponsors.

People: Good energy drinks give us joy.

Leader: Ya’ll sit down now.

People: Sitting down gives us joy.

Kum-ba-ya-Weh

(All—1st verse to Heart & Soul:)

Kum-ba-ya, he fell in love with you

Kum-ba-ya, he fell in love with you mad-ly

Usey just loves you so!

(Men—2nd Verse to I Love the Mountains)

He loves Kum-ba-ya

He really loves that song

He loves Kim-ba-ya

He sings it all day long

When his flock becomes a pain

This is the song that keeps him sane!

Boom-de-ah-da, boom-de-ah-da

Boom-de-ah-da, ae, ae

(Women—3rd verse to Reuben, Reuben)

Michael, Michael

We’ve an idea

Just to help with an strife

We can sing for you “Kum-ba-ya”

Every Sunday of your life!

(Men—4th verse to you’re a Grand Old Flag)

We’re a Kum-ba church

We’re a Kum-ba-ya church

And we never will let you forget

We’re the emblem of

That song you love:

Remember ‘twas here that you met!

(Women—5th Verse to O Give Me a Home)

Oh, give us a home

Where Kum-ba-ya does roam

Where we have Kum-ba-ya at our core

Sing it as we read Luke,

Sing it loud ‘til we puke

And then we will sing it one more.

(All—1st verse to Heart & Soul)

Kim-ba-ya, he fell in love with ou

Kim-Ba-Ya, he fell in love with you mad-ly

Usey just loves you so!

(slowly) Usey just loves you so!

Depart now in the spirit of friendly competition and remember:

By the gas in your tank, you made it round the track.

By the skill in your pit crew, you keep running all day log, even unto this hour,

And by the cash of Dupnt, UPS, Home Depot and many other sponsors, you are

making a handsome living by going around in circles.

Peggy Haymes waves the checkered flag.

Thank You

A huge thank you to all who made my 15th anniversary celebration a success, including the following:

Juanita Lojko & In-High-Gear Hardin, co-pastors of Engine Block Cathedral.

The Not-Ready-for-Big-Church Players, most of who requested their names not appear in print or in any legal documents, but who included DiAnne Borders, Lin Bunce, Cindy Dillon, Susan Finley, Bill Ingold, Susie Karczewski, Matt Lojko, Walter Pickard, Robert Dixon and Millie Thomas, with Wendy Smithey as Stage Manager.

The Lugnuts, including Neil Shepherd, David Hensley, Darryl McMullen, & Steve Rogers, accompanied by **Daredevil David Soyars**.

High-Beam Hensley and the Foglights: Anna Marie Rogers, Juanita Lojko, Scott Smith, Gay Hensley, Lewis Wheless, and Phyllis Kelly.

Guest Proclaimer Hot Wheels Haymes, who preached a mighty fine sermon, before completing a triathlon this past weekend.

Carburetor Kirkman, who dedicated **Spark Plug Jones**, with the proud parents of Lexi and John Eagles.

Thank you for the many notes I received from church members. Several suggested that I try things not anatomically possible, but the good feeling behind the words were clear to me. One of my favorites notes was this one: “Zach is such a wonderful boy. You should give him some money.” Unsigned, but all this in Zach’s handwriting. We are raising such selfless Christian boys.

Thank you to Jerry Cunningham for the three puppets. The two of Dr. Seuss characters were wonderful and whimsical, and the one of me both thoughtful and disturbing in a Chucky kind of way. It’s displayed in my office to welcome and unsettle guests. Truthfully, it is a perfectly odd tribute, and thanks to Jerry for making it happen.

Mucho gracias for the two cakes. I don’t know who provided them, but they were both delicious and enjoyed. Thank you too to Mark File for posting all this nonsense on our website, www.collegeparkchurch.com. Special thanks to my soul brother in arms, Chuck Rush, senior pastor of Christ Church in Summit, N.J., for all that delicious hyperbole. May some of it come true before I die. His check is in the mail.

Thank you most of all for the scholarship in my honor for Romany pastors to attend the Gypsy Smith School (GSS) in Bucharest, Romania. You could not have selected something more meaningful to me personally: I dislike cruises, I don’t need to visit Vegas again, and I’m not a fan of Harleys (I prefer rice rockets). One visit with Romany pastors and you know you’ve invested in some remarkable people—men who may know 5 languages but who may only have a high school education, since higher education is being denied them. They labor for God’s kingdom for next to nothing, among the poorest of the poor and people despised by most of Europe. They come to the school with few possessions, eat whatever is put before them, and spend much of their free time singing with their brothers. These are the church leaders that Ralph and Tammy, Andy and Oti have given so much of themselves too, and they are worth the investment. Special thanks to Kathy Kirstner and the deacons (sounds like a R&B band) for thinking this up, keeping it a secret, and making it happen.

Thank you too for not naming it the Kum Ba Yah scholarship. There is a shelf life for this song, you know, and I think we’re way past it. Besides, if you had done so, then Tammy Stocks would be right: I’d have likely gotten a call every session with a group of Gypsy pastors singing Kum Ba Yah into the phone accompanied by accordion. Not a pretty sound.

I love being your friend, pastor, colleague, listener to your stories, student of the bible, follower of that Jesus fellow, and College Park tribe member. Traveling with you all is often surprising, mostly fun, and always challenging. I love my work and my calling. One of my heroes is Steve Largent, former wide receiver for the Seattle Seahawks. In his acceptance speech to the Pro Football Hall of Fame, he said the following. Although I am not in any hall of fame, I echo his words:

I want to say that whatever favor I have gained is ultimately due to the God I serve. God’s grace is particularly clear in life’s great challenges and in life’s great moments. This is one of those moments for me, and I owe a debt of gratitude that is hopeless to repay. My faith is not a system of belief, not a code of honor, but a relationship with Jesus Christ ... God’s blessing is the ultimate explanation for whatever is praise-worthy in my career and in my life.

Michael

Dear Kathy Kirstner,
Thanks for including me on Michael’s anniversary. I’m glad you are doing that for him.

I’ve know Michael twice as long as you have. We were in seminary together. From the get-go, it was clear to me that Michael was one of the most creative worship leaders that I’d met. That is still true today. He had a keen intellect and he knew how to use it productively. He became one of the finest scholars I’ve known but I’m grateful that he did not end up at the University and took too ministry instead.

We were both chaplains at a psychiatric unit in seminary. It was there that I first witnessed his ability to listen, process, and help others discern how God was active in their life. He had a wonderful emotional centeredness for a single guy that was still pre-occupied with meeting girls. And what a compliment his wife turned out to be. Through An and their children, I’ve watched as he has just matured like a fine wine. He could have been terrific counselor but again, I’m glad that he chose to stay in the church because this is where God needs him to be.

Michael has been a trusted friend to me for many, many moons but I’m not writing as his friend on this occasion. I wanted you to know that he has the deep esteem of his colleagues who have worked with him over 3 decades in ministry. For better and worse, he is about as good as they come (for the time being). He has a wonderful humor that combines with a moral sensitivity. He has sober judgment about who needs to lead our congregations and a personal touch of inspiration that opens our leaders to develop their best selves. He understands the wider social issues of our time and has a great way of seeing how individual congregations can raise awareness and get involved without being overwhelmed. He is a theologian of substance. He has been an important mentor for those that have worked for him. He has a healing way of nurturing spiritual community around him. He preaches thoughtful sermons routinely and every once in a while he hits on something that is truly profound. He has integrity. In short, this is what authentic pastoral leadership looks like.

I know that when I’ve finished a conversation with him, I feel like a plant that has been watered and pruned by a loving gardener. I know you all do as well. Thanks for blessing him. You are lucky to have him as a spiritual guide.

On behalf of his colleagues, I would also like to thank you for keeping him out of the unemployment line. I’ve spent time with him after plying him with too much wine and not enough access to soap. It was grizzly.

God has his hands on your congregation and God is not done with you yet.

Rev. Charles T. Rush
Christ Church
Summit, NJ

Dear College Park Friends,
From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you for your love, support, and prayers during these difficult weeks. Your calls, cards, emails, and kind words have truly buoyed our spirits and brought much comfort. You are living examples of God’s love. We have felt it every day.

Our love,
John & Lexi Eagles

Youth Missions Fundraiser

The Christmas season has a way of sneaking up on us! Despite the hints of its approach, we somehow manage to find ourselves trapped in the chaos of Christmas Eve crowds, shopping for those last minute items. This year our youth will help you get ahead of the game. As the first of this year's fundraising endeavors, the youth are selling Christmas trees, wreaths and garlands to raise funding for our yearly Summer mission trips. We are selling 6'-8' trees, 24" wreaths, and 75' garlands. The price of each item is listed on the order form below. Please note that the orders must be in by September 27th.

We hope that you will see this as an opportunity to make some progress on your Christmas "To-Do" list, and to invest in the youth program.



Tis the Season to Buy Trees From Club Jesús

Please Support the College Park Youth Group's Mission Trips by Purchasing Holiday Trees and Wreaths.

Please make your check to College Park Baptist Church.
Specify: Youth Fundraiser
All Trees and Wreaths are Fresh North Carolina Frasier Firs.

Help to support our local Tree Farmers and our Youth Group by purchasing one of these holiday decorations for yourself or a friend.

Trees: 6'-7' • \$36.00 7'-8' • \$46.00
Wreaths: 24" • \$16
White Pine Garland: 75' • \$30

All orders must be in by September 27th.

Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Tree(s): _____ (qty) Size: _____ Wreath(s): _____ (qty)
Garland: _____ Total: \$ _____

We will contact you when the trees arrive.
(No worries it will be closer to Christmas.)



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Church Telephone: 336-273-1779; Fax: 273-9637
www.collegeparkchurch.com cpbcgbo@bellsouth.net
Alliance of Baptists - American Baptist Churches - Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
August Peanut Butter Donations = 75 Pounds
Total Peanut Butter Donations for Year = 406 pounds
Total Other Food Donations for Year = 503 Pounds

Collage Going Green

If you would like to receive the monthly Collage electronically, please advise the church office at cpbcgbo@bellsouth.net to add your email address to our Collage email list. Every month you will be sent a link to the current month's Collage. You may also view the Collage on line at www.collegeparkchurch.com. **If you do nothing, you will continue to receive the Collage by mail.**

Every Member a Minister
Lin Bunce, Associate Minister
Phyllis Calvert, Treasurer
Cindy Dillon, Minister of Small Groups
Rydel Harrison, Minister of Music & Worship
Stephen Jones, Evangelist of Freshmen Women
Kathy Kirshner, Deacon Chair
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Adult Sunday School

Top 10 Reasons to Attend Adult Sunday School

10. Everybody loves doughnuts.
9. Where else can you get free coffee?
8. It sure beats yard work.
7. For the free childcare!
6. Sunday morning TV is the pits anyway.
5. You get your pick of the best parking spaces.
4. All the golf tee times are already taken.
3. Our wooden chairs are really comfortable.
2. It lets you make new friends and catch up with old ones.
1. Because God wants a closer relationship with you, and attending Sunday School can help that happen!

Check Out a CP Adult Sunday School Class

All 3 of College Park's adult Sunday School classes are back from their summer hiatus, so now's a great time to try them out! These groups meet in the fellowship hall, start about 9:45 a.m., and welcome adults of any age.

Faith Seekers Class:

This class uses a discussion format dealing with biblical texts, other theological topics, and occasional movies that have theological implications. Class members decide what texts/topics will be discussed.

Facilitators: Frank Kendall, Steve Rogers

God & Books Class:

This class seeks to know God better and learn more about God's meaning and purpose for our daily lives through discussion of various books having some spiritual or religious theme. Chosen books are slowly covered chapter by chapter (though articles are sometimes used between books) with an invitation to share leadership if interested.

Facilitators: Susan Finley, Ann Usey

Pathfinders Class:

This class shares a commitment to faith, discussion, and laughter. They study a variety of biblical and faith-based topics determined by the group's interests and spiritual needs.

Facilitators: Mike Cumbus, Cindy Dillon, Ashley Huffman

Have a question about adult Sunday School?
Email cindydillon6@gmail.com.