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COLLEGE PARK

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a newsletter of
College Park Baptist Church • Greensboro, NC

August 2017
Number 250

For more information & sermons,
visit www.collegeparkchurch.com

“Deep & Wide”

Vacation Bible School

August 14-17

5:30—7:45 pm

Ages: 4 yrs.—5th Grade
Fellowship Hall

Adult Bible Study
M-Th 6—7 pm, Chapel

VBS Kickoff—Sunday
Aug. 13, 1:00 pm
Nature Science Center

August Events:

Mondays

Balance Workshop 9-11 am, Room 305

Ultimate Frisbee 6 pm, Lake Daniel Park

Tuesday, August 8

Women of Valor 7 pm, Craft City Spin

Thursday, August 10

Zumba Classes Resume, 6 pm Chapel

Sunday, August 13

Missions Meeting after 10:30 am Service

VBS Kickoff, Nature Science Center 1 pm

Monday—Thursday Aug. 14-17

VBS 5:30—7:45 pm, FH

VBS Bible Study 6—7 pm, Chapel

Tuesday, August 15

PFLAG 7:30 pm, Chapel

Thursday, August 17

Forever 39 11:30 am, K&W

No Zumba

Sunday, August 20

GUM Sunday—Rice

Thursday, August 24

Zumba 6 pm, Chapel

Sunday, August 27

Cello Recital 2 pm, Chapel

Thursday, August 31

Zumba 6 pm, Chapel

Inside:

*P. 2 Three Nickels Focus: Peace Corps
Nate Usey*

*P. 3-7 Ordination Statement
Keith Menhinick*

Three Nickels Focus: Peace Corps

I am Nate Usey and have just finished one year of my two-year Peace Corps tour to the Eastern Caribbean and the island of Grenada. Most people who visit Grenada see luxurious sections designed for tourists, but I assure you there is a much more impoverished side. There are many needs there. I want to thank you all, as this church has helped support my efforts there. After being trained a few months on the island of Saint Lucia, I was commissioned to the island of Grenada to help support education initiatives, which is Peace Corps' main thrust throughout the islands where literacy remains low. I was placed at a little elementary school called Constantine Methodist, which is actually state run despite the religious title. They don't have separation of church and state there.

My duties at this school have included running a little library, and helping daily in the second grade classroom, as well as attending to miscellaneous other needs. One of the needs I took on was trying to bring some computer resources to the school by garnering, donated used laptops to create a small computer lab, although in a very tight space. The mission committee's provision of a small sum helped outfit the electrical needs of the room--as it was actually more complicated to get those donated laptops working there than you might think.

I appreciate how you all have supported me, not only financially with the initiative I just mentioned, but also with your cards, prayers, Facebook interest, and good wishes throughout this last year. It can get lonely there, so that has meant a lot.

On the plus side, it is an absolutely beautiful island, and I live just down the street from some waterfalls that are unbelievably gorgeous. The foliage is dense and lush, and the lifestyle there is laid-back compared to America. There is a forced simplicity of life in a place where people live close to the bone. I live in one of the more charming and roomy homes on the island, right next door to the school I work at. *However*, it is hot and humid, and there is no norm of air-conditioning for the average folk on the island, which includes me, in contrast to the fancy luxury hotels where visitors drop in and out. It makes fatigue a constant issue, especially from the afternoon on. There is also a fair amount of crime, and the roads are tight and dangerous, being bombarded with many small buses whizzing by at scary fast speeds. Unbelievably, there is no safe place nearby for me to walk daily. There is a tiny bar next door to me—**actually it's between my home and the school I just mentioned; I know, a bar right next door to an elementary school? But that's not an eyebrow-raiser there.** I am currently not in relationship with the bar owner who used to chat me up regularly—because he informed me recently that he wanted me to give him some items he randomly thought up, and when I **informed him that essentially I wasn't Santa Claus and lived on a tight salary myself due to the Peace Corps, he didn't believe me and has been sullen, angry, and withdrawn since then. It's a hard mix to communicate**

that you are there because you want to help—but are not there to be exploited as a Westerner.

Another downer is their mistreatment of animals – stray dogs are everywhere and many are kept chained at homes as a form of home protection. They are neglected and mistreated by our standards in a way that would break your heart. The one in my backyard—who I named Travolta--hasn't been allowed to run or have a walk in her whole entire life. She didn't even have a water bowl until I insisted on buying her one. She just lapped up the water from holes in the backyard from the regular short bursts of rain in this tropical place.

Education of children is also primitive and old-world, which helps explain the poor literacy rates. In fact, education itself is not adequately valued, so the children don't bring high expectations, nor do the adults who work



with them. That is a major challenge I continue to face and deal with, and I request your prayers in that regard as I face my second and final year. Also, loneliness. There are other Peace

Corps volunteers on the island who are hard to get to (and for some reason this year there is a deficit of males besides me). But transportation--and time for it--is a genuine challenge, so I see and interact with various Americans rarely. At my school, most of the staff are native older women, which is fine, but there are only two men to interact with: a pot smoking security guy, and the gym teacher, who I have like OK but he is quite a player, always grabbing women's buttes in the streets and cheating on his girlfriend. So there are slim pickings on the friends front. I have them over now and then, and we laugh and have a few drinks together, but, as you can **guess, they're not exactly soul mate material.** When I return shortly, there will be a few more PCVs in a new cycle from the Peace Corps, so please pray that a potential friend is among them.

Still it is a wonderfully weird world, and I have certainly learned to appreciate the many basics I took for granted in the states only a year ago. There is so much more I could share, but I hope this gave you at least a brief overview of the pluses and the challenges of being there. I continue to covet your prayers as I return next week after a welcome 14-day visit home—my first and only. Thank you again for all your help and interest. This church is always been special to me, and this experience has only reinforced that. Take care and hopefully I can provide more updates later.

Nate Usey
July 16, College Park Church

Keith Menhinick's Ordination Statement



I have always been more arrested by the stories of scripture than the creeds of those who read it. The Jesus I find in scripture and in the world, the God that Jesus points me to, is love. All that I have discovered and continue to learn from the church and from my teachers is also the same: the healing that each of us needs, that all of creation needs, is love. Consummate love. As I have come to know it, love is about vulnerability and belonging. Vulnerability and belonging are at the very heart of God, because if I believe nothing else I believe God is love—incarnating in vulnerable flesh with the resounding message that we belong and that we are beloved. That is my call to ministry: to expand Jesus and **God's message of blessing, belonging, and belovedness** for all of creation.

So instead of a pious manifesto or detailed articles of faith, I have decided to write a love letter. Here is that love letter, filled with the stories that make me who I am and who I am becoming.

I am in love with creation.

God showed me...compassion and spoke a divine truth, I made you, dear, and all I make is perfect. Please come close, for I desire You.'

St. Teresa of Avila

That includes me, includes others, includes the land and animals and children and diversity. I am in love with humanity, with flesh and blood and bodies that sweat, grow, age, and change. Human beings are the purest, most heart-breaking and fierce image of God I have ever encountered.

In 21st century American context, capitalistic greed and **individualism drive much of society's motivation, and we** have thus ironically cultivated a culture of scarcity—we are never quite rich enough, good enough, beautiful enough, strong enough. Yet, when I read the Genesis story of creation, I encounter a God who made all things

good and a world in which there is enough. My theology of creation is that God made and God is still making, for creation is not yet finished. God is blessing all creation as **“good,” and there is enough for all of us to have what we** need to flourish. Believing that truth in my own life has been a challenge. Yet believing that I have enough, that I **belong, and that I am blessed as “good” and “beloved” is** integral to my theological anthropology and mission. As **agents of the divine, every Christian's role is to continue** what God started—to ever create new life, to **contextualize abundance as “enough” for all and not** excess or indulgence, and to bless life wherever we find it.

Just as God called creation good when God made it, a **similar story was spoken over me at my birth. “This baby's a preacher.”** She nestled the newly-born child in her arms and danced from patient room to nursing station to wherever there was someone to listen. My proud **grandmother beamed with the news: “This baby's a preacher. I know he is.”** Stories define us, and this story about my infancy and my grandmother claimed me before I even had the agency to claim it. In so many ways, this is the defining story of my birth, and I have spent each day excitedly living into it.

My family is a closely-knit, ragtag assortment of personalities and vocations—from professors to botanists—and God has been the center of our family dynamic. I remember one Christmas, all my extended family pooled their money to buy my grandmother her first dishwasher. My grandmother found out about this **and declared, “No, I don't need a dishwasher! That's when I pray for my grandbabies!”** This is the kind of family that raised me. Growing up, every morning at the breakfast table my dad read the Bible or a devotional with my brothers and me. Then, on the way to school, my mom prayed over each of us and over our day. I was deeply steeped in Christian spirituality, and while I was baptized at age six, I do not remember a time when I ever felt I did not have a relationship with God.

However, despite the affirmation I experienced from family and faith communities, I struggled to accept my worth and calling for the majority of my life. It was while working as a chaplain at the Boys and Girls Home of NC that I experienced the grace of self-acceptance and the clearest call to ordained ministry. At the time, I was over-functioning to perform as the minister that many expected me to be. All the while, I was mentoring and ministering to young people, three of whom stand out to me to this day. Tommy, Quentin, and Shawonda—three **teenagers from the children's home that expanded my experience of God's grace and God's love.**

When I first met them, all three were distant and tough—years of abuse and abandonment secluding them from meaningful relationships. Tommy was fresh out of juvey, tatted-up, mean, and still grieving the deaths of both his parents. Quentin was struggling against a family culture of gangs and substance abuse. Shawonda was the only out-and-proud **lesbian at the children's home, and** she was searching for family and love that she doubted

Continued on p. 4

Ordination Statement continued from p. 3

she deserved. I spent three years returning summer after summer, weekend after weekend to love on these three youth and others at the home. Here, as I invested in those **that society abandoned on the margins, I felt God's call** for my life echoed in the words given to the prophet: **"Shepherd the flock marked for slaughter" (Zechariah 11:7).**

My passion became using my creativity to help others unlock their own creativities, inspirations, and relationships with God. Tommy was a phenomenal artist, who could brilliantly cover any wall with graffiti. I collaborated with Tommy, displaying his graffiti art on the pulpit as a complement to the messages I prepared. Quentin was an extraordinary ball-player, whose leadership on the court amazed me every time I saw it. I recruited Quentin as a leader off the court, empowering him to apply the same leadership and encouragement in a **young men's Bible study.**

Shawonda? Unapologetically herself. I remember throwing football with her one Saturday when she began to tell me about how hard it was to be herself when every family member and minister she knew told her she was going to hell. And yet she trusted her experience in a way I never had. I learned so much self-love from her, even as I sought to show her love and to re-author with her a more healing perspective of identity and God. My counselor **often tells me, "Where the attention goes, the prana flows." I began investing my prana, my spirit's energy,** into blessing those children and everyone I worked with by affirming their innate gifts and Godbelovedness.

For the last sermon I ever preached at the group home, I preached about Jacob and Leah. Both Jacob and Leah were discontent with who they were, and both tried to cover their flaws and be someone else. Jacob lied that he **was his brother and tried to get another's blessing; Leah lied that she was her sister and tried to get another's affection.** They spent so much time envying others and **living up to others' expectations that they lost sight of their true selves.**

Their warped views of self were healed only through prayer, wrestling, and vulnerability. Jacob wrestled with God in the night for a blessing. Leah wrestled with God in prayer for children and affection. Their healing process began when they finally accepted their true selves. Leah **quit trying to change who she was to earn someone else's love, and Jacob finally answered the question, "Who are you," by responding, "I am Jacob" (Genesis 29; 32).** They both realized that in the midst of their imperfections, they were enough, because they were already blessed and called by God.

We need to be saved from all the times we haven't been our true selves, all the times we believed the lies about who God made when God made us. It is as if God is always asking Jacob and Leah and us the same question: *Are you finally ready to be you? Because there's a lot for us to do together.* Ephesians 2:10 boldly proclaims, "You are God's masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for you to do."

Masterpiece. The resounding message of creation is carried through the prophets, the Jesus story, and the early church—a message about our own Godbelovedness.

As I preached to Tommy, Quentin, and Shawonda at **the children's home, I felt something in me breaking open.** I could not preach to them about blessing and belovedness without letting those truths seep into me and transform me from the inside out. As I loved them, I learned to love myself. That has meant unpacking my maleness and sexism, dismantling internalized racism and white privilege, and celebrating my queer sexuality. That has meant opening up to more loving and liberative interpretations of scripture and expressions of community. Ultimately, that has meant an affirmation of my whole self that flows into love for the diversity of humanity.

I am currently living into my call through ministry at the hospital and at College Park, where I have innumerable opportunities to minister in creative ways. I hold hands with a mother while her child is in the **operating room. I play lightsaber "battles" in the hallway** to help a child with leukemia feel brave. I craft poems and rituals to usher in moments of prayer in the church. I design lessons and studies about the fresh movements **of the Spirit's wind in our world. Every time I pour myself out in loving ministry, I am changed in more life-affirming and self-celebrating ways.**

If I boil my ministry down to one word, that word is **"blessing."** **Not the 'blessing' of my past spirituality, that of an evangelical, prosperity gospel.** It is the blessing that assures all of creation belongs to God, and God says it is good, says it is beloved. God instructed the prophet

Green Flamingos Eco-Justice Challenge

College Park is committed to promoting and maintaining environmentally friendly practices in our church and community. We believe that environmental stewardship is a religious value and a moral responsibility



This month's eco-justice challenge is to reduce our water usage. Water is a finite resource, and reducing our "water footprint" is necessary for a healthy planet. Consider this: about 6,800 gallons of water is required to grow a day's food for a family of four.

Think about ways in which you can reduce your water footprint this month. **Take a shorter shower, don't pre-wash dishes before the dishwasher, install a low-flush toilet in your home.** Maybe you could even purchase or make a rain barrel so that you use the hose less often during these hot summer days. Check out <http://waterfootprint.org> for more information and ideas!

Isaiah and God has instructed me: to “know the word that sustains the weary” (Isaiah 50:4). It is a word of blessing. It is declaring the innate sacred worth of bodies, of the intellect, of the earth. It is disrupting and resisting systems that oppress and invalidate human dignity. It is creating systems that lead to the flourishing of all creatures. It is blessing all creation and *my own self* as Godbeloved.

I am in love with the Church.

You might quiet the whole world for a second if you pray. And if you love, if you really love, our guns will wilt.

St. John of the Cross

In August, I begin doctoral work in Pastoral Care at Emory University, exploring the topics of trauma and oppression. I am specifically curious about how a trauma-informed consciousness around issues of race, gender, and sexuality might illuminate healing-justice practices of the church. The core affirmation undergirding this research is that I deeply believe in the power of the church. It is often perceived as an ironic affirmation, especially in regards to oppression-based traumas.

Upon learning about my research interests, many **people are quick to add their own caveats: “But the church also causes trauma, especially regarding gender and sexuality. I know from my own experience! You’re studying that too, right?” I suppose I am also studying the groups of people whose religious ideologies inflict harm and cause trauma.** However, my perspective is overall affirmative of the church of Christ, whose mission is love, service, and discipleship. Sure, I am **amongst the number of those with “church hurt.”** People have spoken hate over me, invalidated my understanding of God, and pushed me out of their community because of my identity. But I have far more experiences of healing than hurt in the church.

Jesus warns us all, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). I think about Jesus’ words in John, words echoed in popular hymns: “You will know my disciples by their love.” Over and over, Jesus sets up a new kind of community, a new kind of family, where loving action matters more than the particularities of one’s theological perspective. In Jesus’ beloved community, power and resources are shared and all are invited in. It is one of the many reasons I resonate with Jesus and with the Baptist tradition—liberty of conscious, and a faith grounded in action and community.

Jesus says, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31). The emphasis is on obedience—on holding fast to the values and practicing the teachings. Only after right practice does a real understanding of the truth unfold. To say it another way, perhaps we can only know truth when we practice love. **Later, Jesus again teaches his disciples to “Do this...”; not believe this but “do this” (Luke 22:19).**

The aim is to follow Jesus and obey his commands, to let love transform our hearts and minds, and to do so grounded in community. This is new life. This is the **church. The priority is people. It is community where “all” means all,** where everyone belongs and transforms together. At College Park Baptist Church, my current home and family, my Pastor and friend Michael Usey often uses **the phrase, “College Park Church meets here,” in reference to our building.** The church is not about structures, hierarchies, or intellectual assent—but instead about that messy conglomeration of people committed to their own growth, to the worship of God, and to the transformation of the world. It is about active collaboration with the mission of Jesus. It means more than simple invitation and inclusion of all people. It means that all people *belong*.

Belonging is expansive and disruptive. When all people belong, racial and cultural norms shift, gendered language and metaphors change, and the entire community expands to be a more diverse, authentic reflection of the heart of God. In progressive church circles, I hear a **lot of energy around the question, “What comes after inclusion? We include women and LGBTQ people as members and even Sunday school teachers. What next?”** *Belonging.* Which means culture change. Jesus was **constantly opening up people’s conceptions of family and community** in more liberating and loving ways. That is the work of the church—to open up family and community so that all of creation knows belonging and knows the freedom to be their true selves.

I have experienced this liberation and belonging in countless churches throughout my life. I grew up a son of a Baptist, so I have as many memories following my minister dad around the church as I do following my parents around the house. Perhaps my most profound experience of the church—that moment when it all began to *click*—was in high school when my dad left his job as a youth minister and began working as a chaplain. During this time of transition, my mom and dad led a house church. They opened up our home for neighbors, friends, and strangers to come in to our living room, eat our food, sit on our furniture, and share their lives with us.

Children and adults stayed for hours discussing the stories of scripture, sharing faith questions and life struggles, wrestling together in prayer and discernment about how best to serve God and our community. I experienced church as a movement of people committed to the Jesus way—not a style of music or geographical **location. Someone would lose a job, and they’d show up to our house to be greeted with warm, fudgy brownies and hugs that assured them they wouldn’t have to do this alone. Or someone would have a child, and they’d come over to receive a blessing of prayer and children’s books.** My parents and their close friends taught Bible studies, led prayer groups, initiated community service, and gave me an image of both the early church and the true church of Christ.

I joined and ministered at many church communities after that. In college, I joined a predominantly black

Continued on p. 6

Ordination Statement continued from p. 5

church, Palmer Grove Baptist, and I learned about the value of racial and cultural diversity. After college, I taught a youth Bible study at Zoar Baptist, and I discovered my gifts and passions for teaching. For the last three years, I interned and then joined the ministry team at College Park Baptist. College Park has affirmed me and loved me more than any other community I have ever known. At College Park, I have been persuaded through kind and authentic relationships to show up—more and more fully, more and more vulnerably.

For the first few months, I found myself censoring and **anticipating the shame of being told, “We don’t do that here,” or “We love you, but not that,” or “Those beliefs are a little too much for us.” My own insecurity about being both gay and Christian, about holding progressive values and liberal theology, kept getting in my own way.** Over and over, I found at College Park true soul and Bible freedom. I found an ethic that valued participation over perfection and that prioritized people over pietism. I found a community that valued questioning and that held doubt and faith together. I found I belonged. All of me. Without having to conform, acquiesce, hide, or assimilate.

This experience of belonging has freed me to explore new creativities and passions in ministry. At College Park, I collaborate with many others to bring poetry, ritual, song, teaching, and service into fresh expressions of **love for God and blessing for God’s creation. Whether it be through leading a small group on a youth retreat, teaching the “Theology on Draft” college and young adult group, singing in meaningful worship with the praise team, or crafting sermons, studies, or rituals for worship—as I minister at College Park I discover new depths of me are healed and transformed.**

Scripturally, my image of the church is that of the river (Ezekiel 47). The Hebrew prophet Ezekiel was shown a vision in which he saw a trickle of water flowing from the Temple in all four directions. As he watched, the water kept flowing out from the Temple until it covered his ankles, then his knees, then his waist, until soon it became a river over his head to swim in. The river flowed from the Temple into the world, and it turned salt water into fresh water, and stagnant seas into moving rivers.

Many years later, Jesus the Nazarene was dunked and baptized in another river as a sign of his participation **with God’s work of justice, love, and peace in the world.** Shortly after that, the Temple that Ezekiel saw was destroyed a second time by foreign Empire. Early Christian theology emerged that affirmed **we are God’s Temple. Our bodies are the Temples of God in the world. God’s river is still flowing, and it flows into the world through the Temples of our bodies.**

A Baptist leader, Ken Sehested, once told me, “There is no getting right with God; there is only getting soaked.” Baptism is about getting soaked. Participation in the life of the church is about getting soaked. It is about experiencing Spirit and being a part of something bigger than us. **God’s great baptizing and healing river flows**

UNCG Parking Permits



Did you know that College Park rents parking spaces to UNCG students, faculty and staff? Annual Parking Permits are \$350 (including summer school) – valid August 1 of the current year through July 31 of the following year. Semester Parking permits are \$200 per semester. Fall permits are valid August 1 – December 31. Spring permits are valid January 1 – May 31. Summer permits are \$40 per session. Call the church office at 336.273.1779 or email: cpbcgbo@bellsouth.net for more information.

through the church into the world, because the river flows through human bodies. We are charged to baptize, to cultivate communities of belonging and discipleship, and to let the river flow through us, the body of Christ, into the world. I am in love with that church: the body of Christ, the holy communion of imperfect people, the beautiful web of relationships of flesh, the family that has been my anchor and lighthouse.

There are gifts, potentials, and loves that awaken in us when we are connected. We are most fully alive when we are in community, and we are most fully worshipful when **we are in service. At the core of Christ’s church is an ethic of belonging, for when we belong, we are saved and transformed into new creations.**

I am in love with Jesus.

But to you I am only the shadowy one who knows with you your loneliness and sees through your eyes.

Rilke

I am in love with Jesus, that wild man from Nazareth **who saved people’s lives by teaching them to savor bread and wash feet.** In Jesus I discover that real, embodied connection with Spirit is possible and already happening. The Jesus way is about ushering in a new reality of justice and peace in this world. Following Jesus awakens us to the truth of our direct access to God, stirring us to more loving and liberative interpretations of scripture and expressions of community.

I am sometimes ashamed to admit it, but I have spent much of my adult journey laboring to intellectualize away the centrality and Divinity of that man. And yet he keeps coming to me when I read stories, dream dreams, feel the wind, and pick fruit off the vines. Jesus is the human face of God. God embodied, God incarnated, God inside flesh and blood. I do not know God without knowing that man. He shows me a more free version of my self, others, and this world. The Jesus way is consummate connection— with Spirit, with self, with nature, with people—a connection grounded in healthy boundaries, prayerful reflection, playful fellowship, and communal contemplation and servanthood. Jesus shows me connection grounded in Godbelovedness and belonging.

I often think about the man who brought his son to **Jesus for healing. The father’s words are so often my**

own: **“I believe; help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24).** Tight creeds and assurances of certainty were not what saved me. There is no magic formula or practice, just the **sincerity of our desire and the reality of God’s grace.** Jesus invites me deeper into that reality and reveals to **me God’s true identity. God is love. God’s power is the power of love,** which often appears weak compared to the powers of this world, for it is not coercive but transformative.

Jesus loved his disciples into new realities, letting his love and belief in them pull them into new experiences of self, community, and God. Jesus and scripture show that salvation lies not in tidy doctrines but in narratives and experiences and relationships of love. We are saved as we lean together into the truth of who we are in God, the truth of our own blessing, belonging, and belovedness by the God of the universe. This salvation leads us to turn towards the world in acts of service, not away from it in pious separatism. God is ever turning towards the world, **towards us. The truth of the Christ in Jesus is that God’s very nature is incarnational.** God trusts flesh, and more than that, God loves flesh enough to risk the divine message in it.

The wisdom of the Christian mystics is that God shows up in your life as you. St Teresa of Avila famously penned **it this way: “God has no body but yours, / no hands, no feet on earth but yours.”** The fullness of God’s love and grace incarnated in the man Jesus. Today, God is still incarnating in risky, messy, imperfect flesh and blood. **The Christian conception of God as “Trinity,”** while beyond exhaustive comprehension in many ways, also makes sense to me: God is ever creating (Creator), ever incarnating (Christ), ever inspiring (Spirit). Of course we **conceive of God as “Trinity,” for relationality is at the very core of who God is.**

I am reminded of the words of the poet Rilke: **“We must not portray you in king’s robes, / You drifting mist that brought forth the morning.”** Ultimately, God is mystery, beyond human apprehension. Thus all language about God is metaphor. In faith, we perpetually shift and expand our images and names for God in new ways, lest our language for God become comfortable, become literal and exclusive, become mere golden calves. Scripture is rife with rich and diverse images and names for God, and Jesus invites us into intimate creativity in our praying. In my own journey, my prayer names have shifted with each season: Father, Mother, Creator, Mystery, Spirit, Lover, Friend. In fact, the only name for God that does not change in my prayers is the name that Jesus teaches me: Holy Love.

I am in love with Jesus, the human face of the Divine, the crucified proclaimer of the Kingdom of God, who was resurrected to new life, in whom we too have faith in the God of love and hope in the resurrection. In Jesus, I see both my need for a Savior and my own innate belovedness. Through Jesus, I am in love with creation, with humanity, and with the church. I join the great cloud of witnesses from antiquity to modernity in **professing the affirmation of scripture: “Jesus is Lord.”**

I do not promise that my faith will never change. I

promise the opposite. I promise to grow. I promise to stay open to grace, to stay open to new revelations from the Spirit, which is still creating, incarnating, and inspiring. I promise to honor the centrality of Jesus as Lord of my life. I promise to remember Christ in the ordinances of baptismal waters and bread and wine, as **well as in all human flesh, and to be Christ’s body on earth** by turning towards the world in love. I promise to defend the integrity of the church, to be a leader and collaborator that helps the Christian community expand in ever more loving and liberative ways. I promise to lean **into new experiences of God’s blessing, belonging, and belovedness** over my own life as I preach and teach those truths to all of creation. I promise to love.

Keith Menhinick

Dipe! Wipe! Swipe!



Our College Park Nursery is growing! There are many ways we can help welcome these sweet newborns to the world and to our church family. Here is one suggestion: diapers, wipes and gift cards are always helpful in those first few months. Below is a list of families who have recently welcomed a little one or will welcome a new baby soon. We have included addresses and registry information if known.

Lauren and Stu Bradshaw welcomed baby girl Sloan Harper on March 6th.
Address: 13294 US 158, Reidsville, NC 27320
Registered: BabiesRUs

Caryanne and Lin Story-Bunce welcomed baby girl Maryn Cole on May 1st.
Address: 305 Lindley Rd., Greensboro, NC 27410
Registered: Target

Mariah Hughes’ baby girl Ava Nicole was born May 28.
Address: 4605 W Market St., Greensboro, NC 27410.
Registered: Target and BabiesRUs

Erica Palmer and Craig Bowyer welcomed baby boy Finn on June 23rd.
Address: 404 Crestland Ave., Greensboro, NC 27401

Lori and Jon Suarez welcomed James Oliver on July 6th.
122 E. Keeling Rd., Greensboro, NC 27410
Registered: Amazon.com and BabiesRUs

Megan and Jeremy Fox are due in August.
Address: 754 Cedar Creek Dr., Asheboro, NC 27205

Rachel & Adam Carroll are due near Thanksgiving.
Address: 1218 West Northwood St., Greensboro, NC 27408

Katherine & Nathan Sparrow are due in January.
Address: 230 MLK Jr., Dr., Greensboro 27406

Youth Mission Trip to Lumberton, NC July 2017



Lumberton, NC was hit with significant flooding from Hurricane Matthew last year. Many homes were still in disrepair. The College Park Youth went to help people restore their houses this summer.



Vacation Bible School: Monday—Thursday, August 14—17, 5:30—7:45 pm
Adult Bible Study 6—7 pm Monday—Thursday, Chapel



Deep & Wide
College Park Church
Vacation Bible School
August 14 - 17
5:30 - 7:45 pm
Ages 4 years - 5th Grade
Register at www.collegeparkchurch.com
VBS Kickoff - August 13
VBS Kickoff Party at the Natural Science Center Aquarium
Cost per ticket \$8/child, \$12/adult
NCS membership can be used toward admission

VBS Kickoff August 13

Sunday afternoon, August 13, your families are invited to join us for our VBS kickoff party at the Natural Science Center Aquarium. Cost per ticket is \$8.00/child, \$12.00/adult. If you have a NSC membership, you can use that toward your admission cost.

College Park VBS August 14-17

Come join us for a week of exploring the depths of God's oceans and the wideness of God's love. Campers 4-years-old through 5th grade (rising 6th grade) are welcome to join us. Please register your camper on the College Park website.

This year our camp will run Monday - Thursday evening, 5:30 - 7:45 pm. We will offer childcare for children birth - 18 months, a toddler class for children 2 - 3 yrs., and an adult bible study 6:00 - 7:00 pm that will cover the same stories your children are learning in VBS. If you are interested in volunteering or registering your child for VBS, please visit the signup page at <http://www.collegeparkchurch.com> or email linbunce@gmail.com.

Blood Drive Results



Our 6/30 blood drive collected 23 units of blood for the Red Cross. This is a good number for a first time drive.

I would like to especially thank for the following folks for their assistance with setting up, working the drive, and tearing down: Randy & Jeri Henderson, Walt & Elijah Floyd-Pickard, Mark Fleming, Caroline Joyce, Phyllis Calvert, Kate Scherer-Jones, and Christian McIvor. And of course the biggest thanks to everyone who donated...you helped make the world a better place with a simple action.

Keith Burkhead

WOMEN OF VALOR NEW BOOK



NEXT MEETING
TUESDAY, AUG. 8, 7:00 PM
CRAFT CITY SPIN
2130 NEW GARDEN RD.

Mostly Men's Occasional Book Club



Next Meeting:
Tuesday, Sept. 5th
6:30 pm, Sicks & Stones



2016/2017 School Year BackPack Ministry Recap

As part of its Ministry Program, College Park partners with Backpack Beginnings to help with food distribution to needy students at Peck Elementary during the school year.

There are two groups of volunteers: the runners who pick-up and deliver the food to the school on Thursdays, and the classroom distributors that help on Fridays. In 39 deliveries, our volunteers delivered 3967 bags to Peck, and increase of 378 over the prior year! A huge thanks to runners John Eagles, Jerry Elkins, Jeri & Randy Henderson, Leslie Hicks, Stephanie Kretz, Tim & Les Lowrance, Kevin Shortt, Michael Usey, and classroom distributors Beth Hoagland, John Eagles, Jeri & Randy Henderson, and Erica Palmer.

If you would like to help with this important ministry, sign-up opportunities and orientation sessions will be available before the new school year starts in August. Please contact Jerry Cunningham, jerrycunninghamgs@gmail.com for more information.



FaithAction Food Pantry

The Pantry is low and needs the following:

- Canned Vegetables (low sodium)
- but NO CORN OR GREEN BEANS
- Canned Fruits (low sugar)
- Canned tuna, chicken, fish (low sodium)
- Pasta (dry)
- Cooking Oil

Drop off items in the marked container in the CP parking lot foyer.

Questions? Contact Betty Ruffin 336-508-0968.

Announcements

College Park Website

Our redesigned church website is now very mobile friendly with several new features. To keep better informed about happenings of the church, check out the online

Collage blog that is updated frequently. And see a weekly **calendar of events**. The **"Library"** is an archive of memoirs, sermons, etc. Give your offering online, read about our latest mission projects or the capital campaign, and share the site as you try to explain our uniqueness to your friends and family.



www.collegeparkchurch.com

Options for Children during the Worship Service



There are several child care options during the worship service: Nursery (birth—24 months) Room 201 main floor, Toddlers (2-3 yr.) Room 104 lower level, Wee Worship (PreK -1st grade) Room 110 lower level. Your child is also welcome to stay in the service with you. Kids Worship binders are available with activities related to the sermon. Look for the bins at the front and back of the sanctuary.

New Members/Address Changes

Jennifer Asbill & Family
1036 McLamb Dr.
Durham, NC 27703

Juanita (Lojko) Blackmon
P.O. Box 8
Buies Creek, NC 27506

Lexi Eagles
New Email Address: lexieagles96@gmail.com

Hjazi Family
123D Yester Oaks Way East
Greensboro 27455-3114

Courtnee Hummel
8 EAMS/TRP, UNIT 61233, APO, AE 09309

Vickie Lumpkin
New Email Address: vglumpkin@gmail.com

Nate Usey's Peace Corp Address:

PCV Nate Usey
Peace Corps, P.O. Box 766
St. George's, Grenada, West Indies

Zach Usey
Calle agentes comerciales
Número 1 (DMZ)
11202 Algeciras
Cádiz
Spain

Visit New York

Have you been waiting for an affordable opportunity to visit New York City? Our family apartment is available again this year with dates in July and August and some other holiday week-ends. Close to Times Square and Broadway. Contact Angela Brady-Fleming by phone [336-501-0270](tel:336-501-0270), text, or fleming1301@yahoo.com.



Kitchen Rebuild Update August 2017

(Kitchen Renovation)

\$205,000 Total Cost

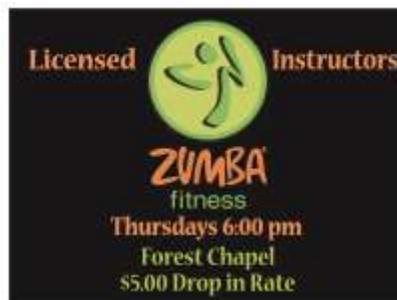
\$125,342 Available Funds

\$79,658 Needed to Pay for Kitchen

3 Ways 2 Give

For added convenience, we have three ways for you to give to the church general budget or special offerings:

- Write a check or give cash at one of our Sunday services or at the office during the week. If you don't have envelopes with an assigned number (for better record keeping), contact the church office.
- **Set up bill pay through your bank online. It's a favorite since there are usually no fees to you or the church, and it's very easy.**
- Pay online with a credit card at: www.CollegeParkChurch.com. Choose the option to cover the credit card fees or let the church pay them.



Classes resume on Thursday, August 10th at 6 pm in the Chapel.

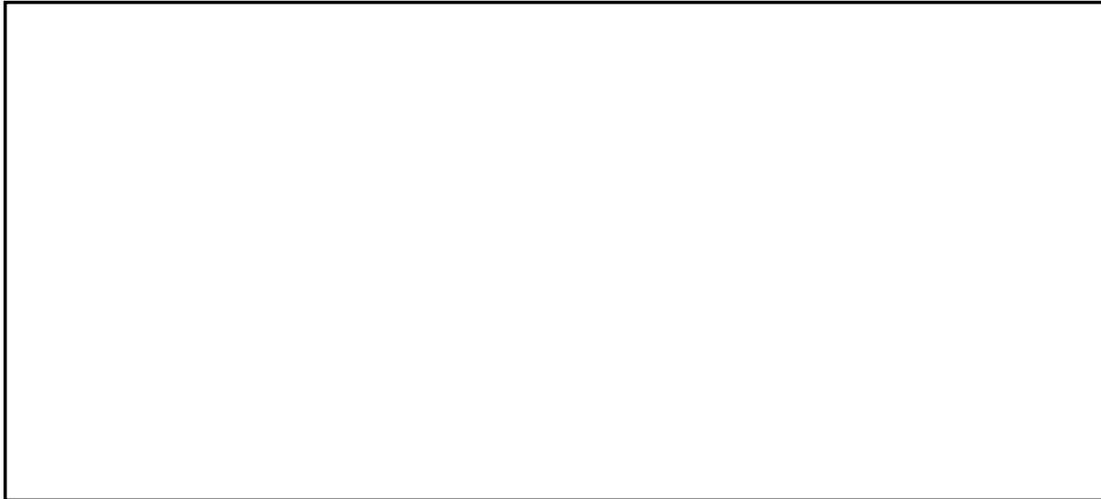
August GUM Donation

Rice (any size, any kind)
Place donations in the wicker basket in the side foyer entrance (beside the bookshelves).



College Park
An American Baptist Church
1601 Walker Avenue,
Greensboro, North Carolina 27403-2318

Return Service Requested



Looking Ahead—August

Aug.
6 8:30am Tessera, 10am Coffee, 10:30 am Blended
Church Offices Closed
7 Balance Workshop 9-11 am, Rm. 305; NA Noon,
Chapel, Ultimate Frisbee 6 pm
9 NA Noon, Chapel
10 NA Noon, Chapel; Zumba 6 pm, Chapel
11 Al-Anon Noon, Board Rm.
13 8:30 am Tessera, 10 am Coffee, 10:30 am Blended
Missions Meeting 12:15 pm, Board Rm.; VBS Kick-
off 1 pm, Nature Science Center
14 Balance Workshop 9-11 am, Rm. 305; NA Noon,
Chapel; Ultimate Frisbee 6 pm, Lake Daniel Park;
VBS 5:30—7:45 pm FH; Bible Study 6-7 pm, Chapel
15 NA Noon, Chapel; VBS 5:30—7:45 pm FH; Bible
Study 6-7 pm, Chapel; PFLAG 730 pm, Parlor
16 NA Noon, Chapel; Pendergraft Meeting 5:30 pm,
Board Rm.; VBS 5:30—7:45 pm FH; Bible Study 6-7
pm, Chapel
17 Forever 39 11:30 am, K&W; NA Noon, Chapel; VBS
5:30—7:45 pm FH; Bible Study 6-7 pm, Chapel
18 Al-Anon noon, Board Rm.
20 GUM Sunday; 8:30 am Tessera, 10 am Coffee,
10:30 am Blended
21 Balance Workshop 9-11 am, Rm. 305; NA Noon,
Chapel; Ultimate Frisbee 6 pm, Lake Daniel Park
22 NA Noon, Chapel
23 NA Noon, Chapel
24 NA Noon, Chapel; Zumba 6 pm, Chapel
25 Al-Anon Noon, Board Rm.
27 8:30 am Tessera, 10 am Coffee, 10:30 am Blended;
Cello Recital 2 pm Chapel; CPR Class 2-5 FH
28 Balance Workshop 9-11 am, Rm. 305; NA Noon,
Chapel;
29 NA Noon, Chapel
30 NA Noon, Chapel
31 NA Noon, Chapel; Pendergraft Meeting 5:30 pm,
Board Rm; Zumba 6 pm, Chapel

Church Telephone: (336) 273-1779; Fax: (336) 273-9637
www.collegeparkchurch.com cpbcgbo@bellsouth.net

Alliance of Baptists - American Baptist Churches
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

2017 Total Food Donations = 642 Pounds

Every Member a Minister

Phyllis Calvert, Treasurer
Rydell Harrison, Minister of Music & Worship
Darlene Johnson, Sexton
Christian McIvor, New Assistant Minister
Keith Menhinick, Missionary to Atlanta
David Soyars, Organist
Lin Story-Bunce, Associate Minister
Matt Lojko, Deacon Chair
Michael S. Usey, Pastor
Annette Waisner, Office & Media Manager

www.collegeparkchurch.com cpbcgbo@bellsouth.net
www.facebook.com/collegeparkchurch

Progressive - Diverse - Ecumenical