



# *The BPC Newsletter*

A publication of Blacksburg Presbyterian Church

January 11, 2012

Vol. 1201 Issue 1

Dear Church Family,

Now that 2012 has arrived, it's startling to think that in four months I will have been here two years. The New Year is always a good time to make assessments, so I've been thinking about why I decided to take this call. The answers are several.

As a preacher, I wanted to serve a congregation that honors the best in biblical scholarship. Some ministers spend their whole careers not being able to share what they learned in seminary, because their congregations don't want scripture to be open to interpretation. Pastors in such settings swallow much of their knowledge, and perpetuate a thin understanding of both scripture and faith. BPC is home to people who welcome the continuing revelation of scripture, and who see its narratives as vehicles for ongoing truth about people and God, not frozen facts.

I wanted to serve a congregation where faith leads to action, locally and in the larger world. The number of local agencies that receive support both in terms of volunteers and money from BPC is long and growing. And there are people in the US, Latin America, Haiti and Africa whose lives have been directly touched by BPC. But I am even more impressed by the personal ministries so many of you maintain. I am moved on an almost a daily basis by the hands-on work done by PJGM committee members, the Wood Cutters, Prays, the Spotlight group, To Our House volunteers, those who help determine the use of the Deacons Fund, and the work of other small groups around here with no particular name. This is a church where many people live their faith.

I wanted to serve a congregation that celebrates and loves its children. As an associate pastor I once served a church that wanted kids to be seen but not heard--and not even seen unless they were motionless, especially in worship; kids were banished during worship until age eight as a result! Here children can be themselves in worship. I can tell you they are listening based on the sermon "illustrations" I sometimes receive at the door! They are encountering scripture in Sunday School and Way Cool Wednesday and elements of service are part of almost everything our children do. Even so, observed interactions between adults teaches the most, and BPC is a good place to see people caring for each other and living their faith.

If we lack for anything, it is a strong vision of what God wants for BPC over the next five to ten years. The Session laid some groundwork for that conversation last fall. This year I hope to move to the next level, developing goals and a mission statement for the years ahead. It feels right to me that this work should be taking place at the same time we are determining how best to retire the renovation debt. After all, the purpose of the renovation was to enable BPC's future ministry. I know I made the right choice in coming, and I look forward to a very exciting year.

Peace,

## Newsletter deadlines!

We look forward to your items for the newsletter.  
Please have all items submitted to Sherry by  
**Feb. 8, 2012**

Items may be submitted by email to:  
**sherry@blacksburgpres.org**

### Newsletter Schedule:

**\*we are now sending out one newsletter each month**

February 15, 2012 - deadline Feb. 8, 2012

March 14, 2012 - deadline Mar. 7, 2012

Don't forget our newsletter is available on  
our website! Check it out! [www.blacksburgpres.org](http://www.blacksburgpres.org)



## VIRGINIA INTERFAITH CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY ANNUAL ADVOCACY DAY JANUARY 17, 2012

The Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy invites you to its annual advocacy day, The Day for All People of Faith, on January 17th from 8:00 a.m.– 3:00 p.m. in Richmond. Participants will receive policy updates and advocacy training before heading to the General Assembly to speak to elected officials. Registration is available at [www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org](http://www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org). Cost is \$25 before January 1, which includes lunch and materials. Scholarships are available and transportation to/from Richmond may be available. Contact local VICPP members: Melanie Smith, 540-808-8337 or Mary Lough 540-552-1948 for more information.

## PRAYER CONCERNS



### *We rejoice and give thanks to God for...*

- ... the gift of warm sunny days in winter.
- ... God's love.
- ... a new year of endless possibilities.

### *Trusting in God's presence, grace, healing, and care, we also pray for many people...*

- ...for the Cooper House and Radford students in Haiti.
- ...for the Blacksburg Sister Cities group in Nicaragua.
- ...for Susan Verbrugge as she recovers from a fall.
- ...for Steve Darden and his family following the death of his father in Texas.
- ...for Austin Banks' family following the death of his mother, Margaret.
- ...for Lynn Barber's family following her death.
- ...for Edith Stockton's family following the death of her newborn great-granddaughter, Elliana Rose Freeman.
- ...for Dave Smith's daughter Kristen as she recovers following a stroke.
- ...for The Reverend Dr. George Telford, pastor of BPC from 1981-87, and his family.
- ...for Jim Thompson as he recuperates at home.
- ...for Rev. Randy Stevens' family following his death and for 1st Presbyterian Church where he was pastor.
- ...for Carolyn White as she recovers from a broken hip at Kroonjte.
- ...for Steve Watson who is in the Radford Health and Rehab Center.
- ...for Winnie Myers as she recovers from Knee surgery.
- ...for Peggy Cain, as she recovers.
- ...for Martha Valz, sister of Linda Pospichal, as her cancer has spread.
- ...for Eleanor Lau as she continues to heal at home.
- ...for Barbara Houston.
- ...for Shalini Perumpral.
- ...for Arlice Banks' parents, Arthur and Mildred Buncombe.
- ...for Linda Smith's mother.



### JOIN US! ART FORUM

The Art Forum, on Sunday, January 22, will be co-led by Gary Meador and Cathy McCollough, and will be entitled, "The Healing Power of Creative Expression."

Gary Meador was born in Salem, Virginia and has lived in Vinton, Floyd County, and now Blacksburg. He graduated from Virginia Tech with a degree in urban affairs and has studied art at Virginia Western Community College. He worked with autistic adults at Blue Ridge Community Services, Roanoke. Gary has two children, Cody and Molly. He paints in watercolor and acrylics.



### BPC'S TWO CENTS A MEAL COLLECTION IS SUNDAY, JANUARY 15, 2012

#### **How much does food cost? (How much should it cost?)**

Something to think about when you are tempted to complain about the cost of food: Less than 7 percent of the money Americans spend goes to buy food, the lowest of any country that keeps such data. This is compared to 11.1 percent in 1990, 17.5 percent in 1960, and 20.7 percent in 1940! According to a Bureau of Labor Statistics study, the average family in 1901 spent almost half of their budget on food!

\*Another way to break down the current 7 percent average: The more Americans make the less they spend on groceries. The bottom fifth of earners spend a whopping 12% of their yearly budget on food at home, compared to 9% for the middle fifth, and 6% for the top fifth.

\*Do you know how much of your budget you spend on food to eat at home? Could you increase the percentage you spend and give more to **2 cents a meal** to help those who can't afford to eat anything but the cheapest (often less nourishing) food?

\*Source: USDA/Economic Research Service, [civileats.com](http://civileats.com), and [Forbes.com](http://Forbes.com)

## BPC's YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group: Middle and High School students (grades 6-12) meet most Sunday evenings from 5:30 -7:30 PM in Fellowship Hall for dinner, games, and discussions about faith in the lives of youth. Please see the schedule to check out the activities and service projects. For more information, contact Susan Hunter at 552-2504 or [susanbhunter@yahoo.com](mailto:susanbhunter@yahoo.com).

Friends and visitors are welcome!

Youth Group meets:

<b>Sunday, Jan. 15</b>	5:00 - 7:30 p.m. Pizza & Movie Night
<b>Sunday, Jan. 22</b>	5:30-7:30 p.m. Dinner & Service Project at BPC
<b>Sunday, Jan. 29</b>	5:30-7:30 p.m. Dinner & Program at BPC
<b>Friday, Feb. 3</b>	6:00 p.m. –9:00 a.m. Sat. Lock-In at BPC
<b>Sunday, Feb. 5</b>	Souper Bowl Sunday Go out to lunch together
Sunday, Feb. 12	5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Dinner & Program at BPC

## COOPER HOUSE HAPPENINGS

Cooper House

Sunday, January 29, 2012 at Blacksburg Presbyterian Church: a pot luck Welcome Back Student Luncheon – Sharing the Haiti Mission Trip and more! Sponsored by the University Ministry Committee of BPC. We warmly invite our partner churches to participate! Come to BPC's Fellowship Hall right after 11 AM worship and join us for a great lunch, time for fellowship, and sharing. If you're coming from Northside, Christiansburg, or Roanoke Valley, please come as our guests (no need to bring food).



Cooper House group in Haiti.

## SPOTLIGHT THE POSSIBLE



### **DID YOU KNOW THAT ...**

Virginia is within the “Atlantic Flyway,” one of the four major pathways for migratory birds in North America ([www.birdnature.com](http://www.birdnature.com))? Shorebirds and waterfowl, with other birds, travel this flyway from coastal waters up into North Dakota and Canada, and back. However, now we are losing many of the birds that we love. For along their flyways, birds face many obstacles, especially from the expansion of our cities and towns: only 3-5% of American land remains undisturbed habitat ([www.deepmiddle.blogspot.com](http://www.deepmiddle.blogspot.com) ; Douglass Talamy, [www.bringingnaturehome.net](http://www.bringingnaturehome.net)).

### **HOWEVER, DID YOU ALSO KNOW THAT ...**

Without action we may, this century, lose a fourth of all America's bird species and see greatly reduced populations of many others. What can we do? The National Wildlife Federation ([www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org)) suggests we fashion our home gardens and yards—perhaps even the BPC grounds—as “bird-friendly” habitats by providing good cover, nesting areas, and forage. Among NWF's recommendations are to:

- plant native flowers, trees, and shrubs to provide nectar, pollen, fruit, and seeds
- install a water source (bird bath or pond); and keep this water source thawed in winter, if possible allow for thickets or brushy areas, to provide hiding places and nesting material. These changes will probably reduce lawn size (less time on the mower!), and may call for letting leaves stay where they fall, in places (ah, less raking!)

For Jesus, birds provided a ready lesson: “Behold the birds of the air. They sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them” (Matthew 6:26). *Would He be able to use the same lesson today?*

Winter Sunday School began on January 8, 2012 at 9:30 a.m. for all ages.  
Below are the Adult Education Classes being offered. We hope you can join us!

**Toward the Common Good** (Hatcher Conference Room)

This course is a perfect follow-up to Dr. Amy-Jill Levine's book and lectures: The prophetic messages of Jewish prophets such as Isaiah and Jesus for our times.

"The great crisis among us is the crisis of 'the common good,' the sense of community solidarity that binds all in a common destiny--haves and have-nots, the rich and the poor." With this opening line, Walter Brueggemann's book, *Journey to the Common Good*, draws on the experiences of Eighth Century BCE Israelites and First Century CE Christians as guidance for dealing with our 21<sup>st</sup> Century's multiple crises.

This is Bible study with a scholarly twist: Scriptures' relevance for today's tough economic, social and political issues. Brueggemann makes a strong case for God's politics and civil ethics. Sunday school class discussions will openly and objectively probe his case for scriptural relevance for our times.

Text: *Journey to the Common Good*, Walter Brueggemann, 2010 (\$12, available at the first class and in the church office). Course Coordinators: Phyllis Albritton-Webb, Tom Howard, Bob Stuart.

**Love Wins** (Fellowship Hall)

"May you experience this vast, expansive, infinite, indestructible love that has been yours all along...And may you know, deep in your bones, that love wins." This is the last line of Rob Bell's book *Love Wins*. His provocative book wrestles with questions of heaven and hell and God's power—the same questions people have been talking about for millennia. So in the end, do some people go to heaven and some to hell? How does God choose? By living good lives, can we make it into heaven? Does a person have to believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in order to get into heaven? Bell wrestles with these questions and more and so will we as we read the book together, study scripture, and ask each other questions. This class is facilitated by Susan Verbrugge and will meet in Fellowship Hall.

**Don't forget our other Adult Ed Opportunities that continue:**

***Tuesday Morning Bible Study*** at 7:30 a.m. in Hatcher Conference Room facilitated by Susan Verbrugge. We study the Bible to grow in our faith and to uncover old and new meaning in God's word. Join us on Tuesday mornings at 7:30 a.m. to study the week's lectionary texts together, to grow in faith, and to support one another in love. This class is facilitated by Susan Verbrugge, and sources of caffeine are provided.

***The BPC Café*** on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in the Gathering Space. Join us each week during the Sunday School hour in the gathering space for coffee and fellowship. We will have opportunities to talk, to read and learn, to view art, to listen to music, and just enjoy time with our church family. Contact Arlice Banks, Connie Cummings, or Kirby Deater-Deckard if you would like to volunteer to "host" one of the Sunday café's.

**Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study** continues on Sunday evenings from 5:00-7:30 p.m. in Westminster Hall. Facilitated by Catherine Taylor. Join **Catherine Taylor** one day a week in the evening for a back-to-basics study of the Bible using the highly acclaimed United Methodist **Disciple** curriculum. If you have never studied the Bible before, or haven't in some time, this class is a great place to begin. It is a commitment: the evening class is 2 to 2½ hours, with three to four hours of preparation on your own with the study manual during the week. Yet the manual provides exactly the structure needed for those who have "always wanted" to read and study the Bible in a way that is meaningful--and potentially life changing. Having never worked with this curriculum before, Catherine is "very excited about the bonds that will be created as we deepen our discipleship together."

All are invited to join us for any or all of these on-going opportunities.





## —Dates to Remember—

\*-HCR—Hatcher Conference Room  
\*-FH—Fellowship Hall \*WM—Westminster Hall

Check our website for the most up to date calendar

### Wednesday, Jan. 11

- 12:00 p.m. Adult Ed Committee meets-\*HCR
- 12:00 p.m. Malawi Committee meets-\*WM
- 4:00 p.m. Way Cool Wednesday
- 5:00 p.m. Finance Committee meets-\*WM
- 7:00 p.m. Adult Choir Practice

### Sunday, Jan. 15

- Two Cents a Meal Collection today
- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages begins
- 10:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship
- 11:00 a.m. Worship
- 2:00 p.m. Presbyterian Women Joint Circle Meeting-\*FH
- 5:00 - 7:30 p.m. Youth Group—Pizza & Movie at Russell and Colleen Drumhellers home

### Monday, Jan. 16 Church Office Closed Today

### Tuesday, Jan. 17

- 7:30 a.m. Bible Study -\*HCR
- 5:30 a.m. Personnel Committee meets-\*WM

### Wednesday, Jan. 18

**NO** Way Cool Wednesday tonight

- 7:00 p.m. Adult Choir Practice

### Sunday, Jan. 22

- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages
- 10:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship
- 11:00 a.m. Worship
- 12:15 p.m. Art Forum with Gary Meador
- 7:00 p.m. Session meets-\*HCR
- 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Disciple Class meets- \*WM
- 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Youth Group meets—  
Dinner & Service Project at BPC

### Monday, Jan. 23

- 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting -\*HCR
- 7:30 p.m. University Ministry meets-\*HCR

### Tuesday, Jan. 24

- 7:30 a.m. Bible Study -\*HCR
- 10:00 a.m. Prayer Group meets

### Wednesday, Jan. 25

- 4:00 p.m. Way Cool Wednesday
- 7:00 p.m. Adult Choir Practice

### Sunday, Jan. 29

- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages
- 10:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship
- 11:00 a.m. Worship
- 12:15 p.m. Student Mission Report Potluck Luncheon-\*FH
- 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Youth Group meets—Dinner & Program at BPC

### Monday, Jan. 30

- 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting-\*HCR

### Tuesday, Jan. 31

- 7:30 a.m. Bible Study -\*HCR
- 10:00 a.m. Prayer Group meets

### Wednesday, February 1

- 4:00 p.m. Way Cool Wednesday
- 7:00 p.m. Adult Choir Practice

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



- 1 - Susan Bartko
- 2 - Sarah Windes
- 3 - Patti Talbot, Skip Jubb, Jamie Furr
- 4 - Evelyn Wolf, Sara Hunter, Joyce Frahm
- 6- Nathan Skreslet
- 8 - Hanlie Wessels
- 9 - Christina Kass
- 10 - Mark Hutchins
- 11 - Brenda Roberts
- 12 - Sherry Ingham, Ellen Oliver
- 14 - Connie Cummings, John Perumpral
- 15 - Sally Alderson, Heidi Ann Mesmer
- 16- Jane Perry
- 17 - Linda Harvey
- 19 - Caroline Taylor, Pamela Turner
- 20 - Blythe Holloway
- 21 - Jim Bryant, Patti Goudy
- 23 - Bill Henika
- 25 - Frances Sterrett, Winnie Myers
- 26 - Judith Jones, Joey Showalter
- 28 - Hillary Schmitthenner
- 29 - Lewis Barnett, Steve Darden, Josh McGilliard
- 30 - Lilia Bundren
- 31 - Ted Ake, Haley Bechtel



## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 - Elly Deater-Deckard
- 5 - Phyllis Hain, Marcia Leary, Kathleen Wampler
- 6 - Jennifer Jones, Meredith Jones, Daniel Stahl
- 7- Sophie Thompson
- 9 - Dylan Frantz
- 10 - Caitlin Baird
- 12 - Barbara Michelsen, Katherine Burkhardt
- 14 - Phyllis Talley
- 16 - Rick Goudy
- 17 - Sam Dannenberg, Charlie O'Dell
- 20 - Steve Grieco

## SERVING THIS MONTH

### ELDER OF THE WEEK

- Jan. 15 - Scott Smith
- Jan. 22 - Mike Drzal
- Jan. 29 - Joyce Frahm
- February 5 - Mike Harvey
- Feb. 12 - Janne Mathes

### COUNTERS

- Jan. 15 - David Harder and Jim Hardell
- Jan. 22 - John Dillard and Bill/Mary Jane Henika
- Jan. 29 - Easley Smith and Bob Hendricks
- February 5 - Rosalyn Lester and Easley Smith
- Feb. 12 - Neal Boyd and John Dillard

### HEAD USHER

- January: Charles Goodsell February: Jim Echols



**BLACKSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
*A Vibrant Congregation of  
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*"Those who bring sunshine  
to the lives of others  
cannot keep it from  
themselves."*

—J.M. Barrie

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