



## TRYON TRUMPET

Tryon Presbyterian Church

A Stephen Ministry Congregation

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## TPC's second century of discipleship begins

Our centennial celebration worship service was 100 years in the making, and "I am especially glad this day is here," Gloria Underwood declared.

Gloria led the commission that planned the centennial events, and in her remarks to the congregation during the Oct. 23 service she thanked fellow members Susan Woodcock, Lesley Bush, Sally Hursey, Rachel Ramsey, Woody Headden, Catherine Lynch and Allan Purtill. She named others who played key roles but noted that everyone present had a part in this history of the church.

She also stated the most important purpose of the gathering: "We're here to praise, we're here to give thanks, and we're here to begin our next 100 years of service."

Indeed, the corporate Affirmation of Faith served as a rededication to the mission of the church: "Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another. Before the mountains were brought forth or the land and the sea were born, from age to age you are God. Responding to the call of God, we rededicate ourselves to the next one hundred years of discipleship loving God and our neighbors. May the graciousness of the Lord our God be upon us and prosper the work of our hands."

One expression of love for neighbors is our centennial gift to Thermal Belt Outreach to support its transitional housing program. The final amount, which exceeded hopes, will be announced soon.



Dr. Gloria Underwood led planning for the day.

# Dent Davis delivers timely message

Ministers almost never deliver sermons based on the first 16 verses in the Gospel of Matthew, which recount the 42 generations from Abraham to Jesus. Many of the names are obscure and most are difficult to pronounce, Dr. Dent Davis admitted from the pulpit during the centennial celebration service Oct. 23.

In fact, when Dent told his wife, Mary, he was using that text, she was incredulous. “How are they going to stay awake?” she exclaimed, wondering about the congregation’s reaction to a long recitation of biblical characters.

No problem, it turned out. Dent, who pastored TPC from 2009 through 2017, chose the perfect Scripture to inspire a sermon with a timely, and timeless, message. He titled it, “From Time to Time.”

Matthew begins his Gospel with a genealogy “filled with wisdom for a time like this,” Dent said. The genealogy places Matthew’s story in a particular moment of human history, “maybe the most special time you could imagine – the end of one time and beginning of another.” That’s exactly why the early church gave this Gospel its distinctive place in the Bible, following the Old Testament and beginning the New Testament.



Dr. Dent Davis titled his sermon, ‘From Time to Time.’

This is an important time in TPC’s history, too.

“What might Matthew be saying to this extraordinary congregation poised on the cusp of yet another 100 years of ministry?” Dent asked.

The first message is conveyed by the 42 men and women who make up the genealogy. Even the leading figures, such as Abraham and David, were flawed, Dent said. The women “had their shady side. Most of these men and women were hardly heroes. In many ways, they were just ordinary people caught up in a particular moment in time when they dared to say yes to God.”

Each of them contributed somehow to God’s plan, just as “even in failure, we are moving toward the purpose of God,” Dent said. Which sounds like a good explanation of the history of any church.

The rest of the story requires reading through the Gospel, said Dent, who touched on some of the highlights. Along with miracles and great teachings, it contains conflict, betrayal and suffering.

“If Matthew’s description of the life of Jesus has any relevance for us today, we can be pretty certain that the future will not, unfortunately, be a time of simple happiness and prosperity,” Dent said. “For us, next year may be no easier than last. And for Tryon church, the next 100 years will likely be no less challenging than those before.”

So, how to endure? Dent followed the Gospel from its first verses to its last: The Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20. Jesus directs his followers to make disciples of all nations, baptize them in the name of the

**(See DENT DAVIS on Page 3)**

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Father, Son and Holy Spirit and obey his commandments, “and surely I am with you always, even to the close of the age.”

“Our job is to be the best disciple that we can be,” Dent said. “Thankfully, God uses just about everybody, so there’s a place for all of us.” He added: “You and I have to get involved. Disciples are not spectators.”

We can derive strength from Jesus’ promise.

“No matter where you are, no matter who you thought you could be, and even now, no matter how excited or how anxious you might feel about life, and even at those moments, yes, those moments when you might not even be aware of his presence, the risen Christ is with you,” Dent said.

“The future will always happen in ways we cannot possibly imagine, yet the message of this text is that we will never experience it alone. ... For me, that’s a pretty good message for just about any day of life and especially for the 100-year anniversary of Tryon Presbyterian Church, a moment that only happens from time to time.”

## A prayer for the ages

The Rev. David Garnett offered a pastoral prayer for the ages at our centennial celebration service Oct. 23.

David served TPC as our most recent interim minister, between Dent Davis and Allan Purtill.

“We give you thanks this morning for the 100 years of life you have given this church,” David prayed. “We thank you, oh Lord, for bringing this church into being.

“ It was you, oh Lord, who stirred the hearts of the original charter members so long ago and convinced them of the need for a Presbyterian presence in this community. ...

“It was you, oh Lord, who for a century at every twist and turn, through every circumstance enabled this church to survive and even to thrive. ...

“Lord, you have been this church’s help in ages past and right up to the present. Now, be its hope for years to come. Gracious God, for all you have made possible these last 100 years and for all the things you will make possible in the future, we give you thanks.”

When he stepped to the pulpit following Dent’s sermon, David remarked that the two have known each other for many years and once served together in the Presbytery of East Tennessee.

Yet, “this is the first time I’ve heard Dent preach. It was worth the wait.”



Rev. David Garnett, a former interim minister at TPC.

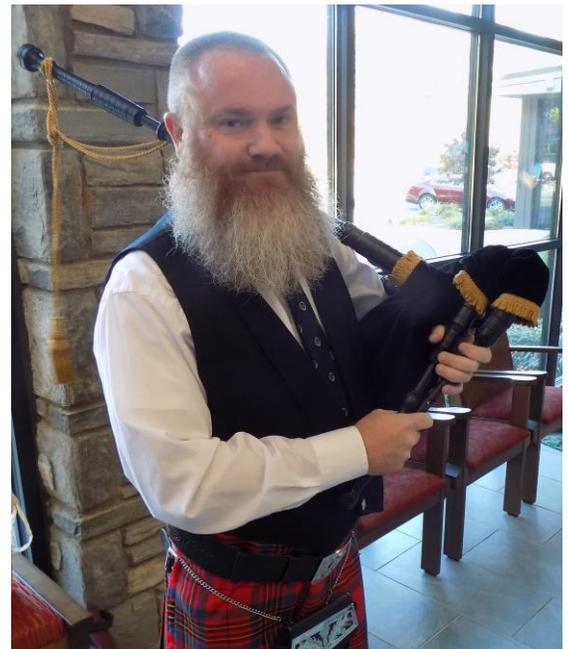


## Memorable music marks most joyful service

From the bagpipe processional to a stirring original introit to a rousing new hymn, the centennial celebration worship service was marked by memorable music. A theme throughout was joy.

Following organist Lesley Bush's prelude, "I Was Glad When They Said Unto Me" by C. Hubert H. Parry, piper Eben Mann led the processional. Then came the introit, "Make a Joyful Noise," composed for the occasion by TPC member Rita Landrum and sung beautifully by the Chancel Choir directed by Richard Kennedy. The Anthem, "God is Here," setting by John Ferguson, was aided by trumpeters Seth Carson and Jim King and trombonist Hank Sibley. A highlight of the service was the congregation's singing of "Here in North Carolina's Mountains," with words written for TPC by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. To the tune of Beethoven's "Hymn to Joy," it concludes:

*"As we look into the future, God, we wonder what will be.  
 "We're beginning new adventures, whole new forms of ministry.  
 "It's our prayer that what was started will live on in what we do.  
 "May we live as Christ's disciples, loving others, serving you."*



Photos: The Chancel Choir and brass players Seth Carson, Jim King and Hank Sibley (above); bagpiper Eben Mann.

As Lesley noted previously, our congregation will enjoy singing this hymn for many years to come.

Lesley sounded the final, fitting musical notes with the postlude, "Now Thank We All Our God" by Sigfrid Karg-Elert.

## Robin Lattimore records (only) TPC's first 100 years

Robin Lattimore began and concluded his presentation during our centennial celebration service with doses of humor.

"It's a privilege to serve as the church's historian," he said as Allan Purtil summoned him from the choir to the pulpit. "I'm delighted not to have to serve as its genealogist" – a reference to Dent Davis' sermon drawn from



Matthew 1:1-16 listing the 42 generations from Abraham to Jesus.

And later, "I'll catch you at the bicentennial," Robin told the congregation. "I'll be here, and let's do this again in another 100 years."

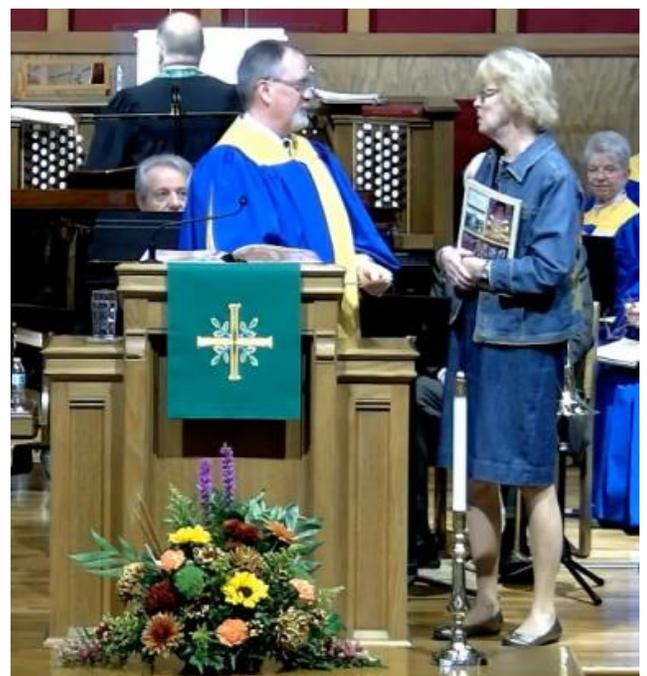
If that's his goal, he's begun well. Robin presented the first copy of "Tryon Presbyterian Church: A Centennial Celebration 1922-2022" to church librarian Carolyn Thompson. It's an incredible resource that likely would be the envy of other church librarians.

"We'll treasure it in our library," Carolyn said.

Robin worked on the project over the past year, not only telling TPC's history in 30,000 words but showing it in 275 photographs and other images. He hopes it will be an heirloom for every TPC family.

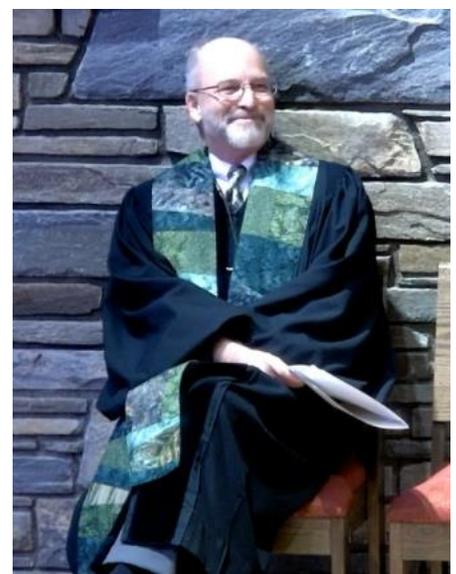
Indeed, the book will serve as an invaluable record of a congregation's life over a century of growth and sometimes struggle, of changes and continuity. While neither Robin nor any of us except possibly our youngest children will be here for a bicentennial celebration, a future church historian can begin with the assurance that TPC's first century has been carefully and accurately documented.

Robin credited Gloria Underwood and Lesley Bush for helping to shepherd the project to completion, and he thanked the Session for supporting its professional publication. The Session also bought a copy for each church household. Additional copies are available for purchase at a price of \$25 each.



Photos: Robin Lattimore introduces his book (above) and presents the first copy to church librarian Carolyn Thompson (right).

**(More celebration photos on Pages 6-10)**



Clockwise from top: The processional; Rev. David Garnett; Dr. Allan Purtil greets the congregation.



Clockwise from top left: Time with children; the congregation sings our new hymn, 'Here in North Carolina's Mountains'; the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary cake designed and created by Stephanie Greene; acolyte Jesse McGrath leads the recessional.





Clockwise from left: Camilla Dick and son Jim; Betty Brewer and son Paul; Kay Davis and Brittany Meissner; dinner on the grounds; Rev. David Garnett and Skip Taylor.





Clockwise from top left: Musician Seth Carson and kids; Dr. Allan Purtill; Stephanie Greene, who designed and made the cake; Ed and Petra Harrelson with Dr. Dent Davis; friends and family of former pastor Jim McPherson.



**Clockwise from top left: Dining on the grounds; Robin Lattimore autographs his book for Ed Harrelson as Hank Sibley waits; Mary Davis; Linda Lee Reynolds, Rev. Lesley Bush, Dr. Charles Drawdy and Robin Lattimore; George Dreyer purchases an extra book from Sally Hursey and Carolyn Thompson.**

## Fellowship Committee was pleased with the dinner

Greetings from the Fellowship Committee. We are pleased with the ease with which the new improved kitchen equipment performed for our centennial celebration dinner. We served around 160 members and guests.

Our team worked well and together, so the end result was fun for all. We especially appreciate the help from our young people volunteers. We will continue to use them in the future.

Several people from the committee helped with the menu creations, for which we are grateful. We really appreciate Stephanie Greene for the wonderful cake she designed and made.

We are currently planning a Thanksgiving dinner for Saturday, Nov. 19, at noon in the Fellowship Hall.

**By Pete Bellamy, Fellowship Committee chair**



Pete Bellamy and crew prepared and served our meal.

## Betsy Zeek won't really retire from teaching the Bible

Betsy Zeek says she has retired from teaching Sunday school. Maybe. But I don't think she's finished teaching.

I write in appreciation of Betsy. I joined her study of 1 Peter last year and continued into 2 Peter this fall. Betsy has been teaching the Bible for many years, and she knows it well! But she doesn't lecture, preferring to pose questions about the Scripture and lead a discussion. I really enjoyed taking part in her class.



Betsy Zeek lives her faith daily.

Unfortunately, the 9 a.m. hour isn't the best time for Sunday school in our church. It's early. Choir members report for practice at 9:30. Greeters take their posts shortly thereafter. All this combined to limit participation in Betsy's class. My own travel schedule forced me to miss a few times.

At any rate, Betsy says her age compels her to give it up. I look at it a bit differently. In all her interactions – in church, at the Big House, as she calls it, or elsewhere – she will impart to others her understanding of Scripture. It is who she is. It infuses her thoughts, words and deeds every day. She trusts God to guide her steps through life, and it shows.

She has served our church in many ways over the years, and she has done the same for fellow residents at Tryon Estates. I expect she will continue to give of herself. She won't retire from being a faithful follower of Christ – one from whom we can continue to learn. Thank you, Betsy.

**By Doug Clark**

## Lesley Bush says farewell to TPC, but not goodbye

“Let’s say farewell, not goodbye,” Lesley Bush suggested at a reception in his honor Sunday, Oct. 30. After serving as minister of music and organist for more than 18 years, Lesley will take on a similar role at Rutherford Presbyterian Church in Rutherfordton.



Lesley Bush directed our music program for more than 18 years.

That downtown church has seen growth in young families and children, Lesley said, but its music program has plateaued. So, the new position may be “God’s way of saying here’s another challenge for you, let’s see what you can do with it,” Lesley added.

But he will be missed here. “As far as church musicians go, Lesley Bush is the gold standard,” Parish Associate Minister Charles Drawdy said.

Pastor Allan Purtilt noted Lesley’s “musical excellence and love for Jesus. I’ve loved working with you,” he told Lesley.

Mike Carruth, director of educational ministry, recalled that he and Lesley both joined the staff in 2004.

“We’ve had the best time working here together and serving this church,” Mike said, praising Lesley’s “unshakeable” faith. “That’s part of what draws you to him. He doesn’t talk about it, he lives it. He’s thoughtful, professional, but faithful.”

Lesley offered many thanks – to the church for calling him, to the choir and the congregation and for “the best staff I’ve ever worked with.” His sense of humor didn’t fail him.

“I will miss you. We’re only 30 minutes away – don’t follow me,” he said to laughter.

Those 30 minutes to Tryon from his Rutherford County home have added up to many miles over the years. He’s much closer to his new church, but he won’t forget TPC.

“I’ll pray for you,” he told the gathered church members, “and I hope you’ll pray for me.”

Former choir director Richard Kennedy already has resumed those duties temporarily, and Crys Armbrust will play the organ during November.



Lesley’s New Opportunity Road Trip 2022 cake.

## Crys Armbrust steps in on organ

We will miss Lesley Bush's touch at the organ, but the instrument will be in good hands during November as Crys Armbrust fills in.

Most of us already know Crys, who has served as our substitute organist before. He's also a local renaissance man – elected Town Council commissioner, former economic development director, founder of the Eunice Waymon-Nina Simone Memorial Project and noted musical composer and performer.

Crys holds a Ph.D. in 17th- and 19th-century British literature from the University of South Carolina, where he has also taught. He is an art historian. He has held music director posts at several churches in the Carolinas and directed choral performances in this country and abroad. A search committee is looking for a minister of music to replace Lesley, but with Richard Kennedy directing the choir and Crys playing the organ, the next few weeks are well covered.



Crys Armbrust at Westminster Abbey.

## Commitment Sunday set for Nov. 20

On Sunday, Oct. 30, the church kicked off our Annual Stewardship Appeal, to generate the funding for our 2023 operating budget. Our theme is Celebrating Faithfulness, A Future of Hope, Year 101.

Commitment Sunday, when we turn in our pledge cards, is Nov. 20. Look for a church mailing, which will include your pledge card.



During Sundays in November, various members will share how this church is making a difference in their lives and community. They will share why it matters that this church continues in 2023 and for another 100 years.

Our 2022 budget was \$430,390, with \$66,000 or 15 percent going toward mission projects. Ninety-seven percent of that budget, which will be about the same in 2023, came from the congregation. Our membership is about 250, and last year 90 giving units submitted pledges. We have a most generous congregation. This year our goal is to receive a pledge card from every TPC giving unit.

Keep a lookout in your postage mailbox for the annual appeal mailing, which will include your pledge card. Prayerfully consider your 2023 pledge and the impact Tryon Presbyterian is making on your life and others in the community. Please plan to return your pledge card on Commitment Sunday, Nov. 20.

**By Catherine Lynch, Annual Stewardship Appeal chair**

# Bell tower refurbished and almost ready to ring again

More than 50 years after its installation and dedication, our bell tower looks as good as new again.

Given in memory of Robert L. Dick Sr. by his family, the bell tower was dedicated in April 1972. Its stone was quarried from the same site as the rock for the church and education building. The 400-pound bell was cast of pure block tin and copper by Van Bergen Bell Foundries of Greenwood, S.C.



Work when it was getting under way last month.

The tower needed cleaning and painting, a project directed by our Property Committee and member Milt Morgan and funded by Camilla Dick, daughter-in-law of Mr. Dick Sr.

As of Nov. 1, the bell had not yet been returned to the top of the tower, but that was expected to happen any day. Then the words of the 1972 dedication prayer, by the Rev. Tracy Lamar, rector of the Church of the Holy Cross in Tryon, will be apt once again:

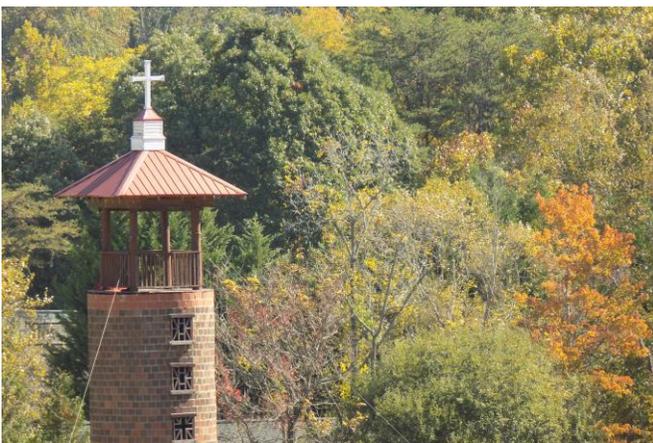
“As we go forth from this place, may we ever hear its calling as a reminder of your presence in times of prayer and worship, in the hours of trial and tribulation, and in our days of gratitude and thanksgiving.”

## You can help ring the bell Sunday mornings

For a half-century, Tryon Presbyterian Church announced the beginning of worship services by ringing the bell that stands tall in the Memory Garden. That tradition was put on hold during the ups and downs of Covid-19. Charlie Speight is looking for one person to help him renew this beautiful tradition, not only to let our congregation know that the service is starting, but to let the surrounding community know, too. Please contact Charlie if you would like to ring – 803-422-0263, [scspeight@windstream.net](mailto:scspeight@windstream.net).



The bell was ready to resume its place.



A scene on the Black Mountain campus.

## Tryon Presbyterian Women seek annual gifts for Outreach, Black Mountain Home for Children

Tryon Presbyterian Women are accepting monetary contributions for annual donations to Thermal Belt Outreach and Black Mountain Children’s Home.

Checks should be made to Tryon Presbyterian Women. The deadline is Nov. 14.

# Strategic plan guides efforts to be and make disciples

In the fall of 2021, the TPC Session engaged Elemental Churches to facilitate a 12-person Strategic Planning Team (SPT) to identify goals for the next couple of years. The team created by the Session included new and long-time members, serving elders and at-large members as well as staff.

The process began with introspection about our church's perceived strengths and weaknesses in various areas identified as Integrity, Passion, Servanthood and Imagination.

Elemental Churches also studied our church's data (by-laws, finances, audit, staff roles, physical plant, etc.) and our staff and member self-evaluation surveys. This analysis resulted in specific recommendations for our Session to consider relating to our governance and structure.

The SPT continued its work throughout much of 2022. Its goal was to create a one-page plan to focus our church efforts in the short term (two to three years). Rev. Purtil will touch on some of these identified areas in his weekly messages. I will also share some of the results in this newsletter.



Ed Harrelson leads a strategic planning discussion earlier this year.

One exercise for the SPT was to identify our church's core values. Starting with around 40 Christian values, we had to eliminate everything that was not central to our identity. These values drive our vision and inform who we believe we are. They are:

**Grace:** We preach and exhibit the unconditional love of God revealed in Jesus Christ. This is the core message of the reformed tradition.

**Worship:** We celebrate God, alone and together in worship, for God's glory and for our encouragement in the faith.

**Community:** We encourage relationships and time together as disciples of Jesus. We build friendships and bear one another's burdens.

**Diversity:** We value people and perspectives that are different from our own. We come from several different faith backgrounds, many different regions of this country and even foreign countries. We have varied educational backgrounds, life experiences, financial resources and political opinions, but we value all of these perspectives that enrich our fellowship.

(See **STRATEGIC PLAN** on Page 15)

(From STRATEGIC PLAN on Page 14)

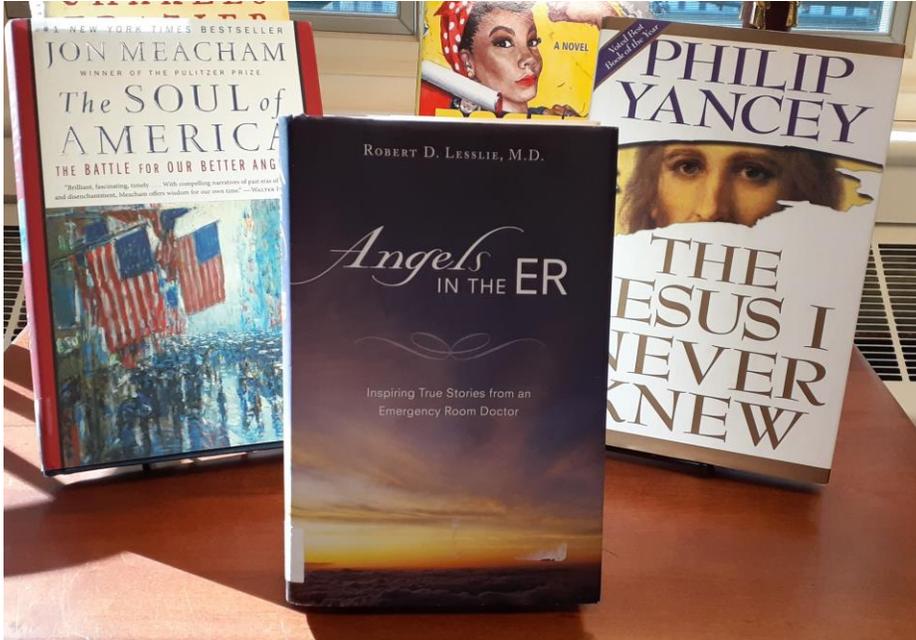
**Stewardship:** We are a generous and active congregation. We share our resources, including our most valuable resource, our time. We are stewards of a beautiful, if aging, church campus and manse. We inherited these buildings from past members and friends of the church, but we responsibly maintain and improve the church buildings and spaces so they will continue to serve for many generations.

In future articles, I will touch on whom we might impact, where we might focus our efforts as well as specific goals suggested by the SPT. Your Session has already taken positive steps in implementing the strategic planning goals.

By Edward Harrelson, Church Development chair

## ‘Angels in the ER’ tells a wonderful story

Dr. Robert Lesslie, an emergency room specialist for 25 years, drove from Rock Hill, S.C., to Landrum in 2007 to introduce me to his collection of ER stories. He had journaled every patient’s story and wondered if a book publisher might be interested in those stories. For seven years, he had written a medical column for the Charlotte Observer, so he had honed his skills as a writer.



Harvest House was the only publisher interested, taking a calculated risk it might sell 15,000 copies. The editorial director suggested the title, “Angels in the ER,” and a book series featuring hospital ER stories was born.

Choice Books placed the book in its racks in airports, laundromats, hotel lobbies. Within a year around 400,000 readers had purchased “Angels in the ER” and a movie producer purchased the movie rights.

Dr. Lesslie, who was tragically murdered with his wife and two

granddaughters last year, eventually wrote eight collections of stories based on his experiences as a medical director of emergency rooms in South Carolina. His stories emboldened another medical writer to tell her stories as an EMS volunteer for 27 years.

“Angels in the ER” is in our church library for anyone who loves a great story.

By Les Stobbe

## When in doubt, just say: ‘I don’t believe I’ve met you’

On a late-summer Sunday morning, I visited the Church of the Incarnation in Highlands, built in 1896. It was a true blessing to worship in the beautifully restored sanctuary.

When I arrived at the front door, the usher said, “I don’t believe I’ve met you.” Those were welcomed words, since I had never been there and didn’t know anyone. Naturally, my thoughts drifted back to our church.

No doubt you have noticed that on any given Sunday, we have many new faces in the sanctuary. However, some of us are hesitant to speak because we “don’t know if they are a member or a guest.” (Hint: Most members have on a nametag.) Visitors often comment that we are a friendly church, but we can do more. Especially during the coffee hour.

The next time you see an unfamiliar face, simply say, “I don’t believe I’ve met you yet.”

**By Susan Speight, Membership Committee chair**

## Breakfast is served the first Thursday of every month

Did you know that it’s been nearly 20 years since then-Pastor David Hosick launched the Men’s Bible and Breakfast meetings?

The gatherings that began in 2003 continue at 8:30 a.m. on the first Thursday of each month.

Come to enjoy a meal, cup of coffee, fellowship,

conversation and even some spiritual development with a great group of gentlemen, like those pictured here: Tom Clark, Art Brown, Mike Carruth and (showing them how to scramble eggs) Ken Shull.

The cooking and clean-up chores rotate from one month to the next, so some breakfasts may be more creative than others. But something must be consistently good to keep TPC men coming for almost two decades.

So, give it a try. Friends from outside the church are welcome, too.



**Brian Bancroft, Stephanie Greene and Penny Padgett greet visitors – as can we all.**



# Dozens of families enjoy TPC's Trunk or Treat

Our second Trunk or Treat festival was a smash, drawing some 70 children along with parents and grandparents Saturday, Oct. 29. Thanks to Membership Committee Chair Susan Speight and everyone who provided trunks, treats, cookies and hot chocolate, the event was successful beyond expectations.

TPC hosts creatively decorated trunks and donned costumes to welcome young visitors, making sure everyone shared the friendly spirit of the evening. Photographers Wes Elam and Doug Clark captured some highlights:







# Fall Festival at Black Mountain Home for Children



Donnie Carruth, John and Amy McGrath, Mike Carruth and Doug Clark helped run Fall Festival events Oct. 8.



Donnie with BMHC President Jimmy Harmon.



Amy and John facilitate the football toss, awarding prizes to everyone!



Donnie helps folks board the shuttle buses.

