

# The Scroll

February 2021

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Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church  
www.mallardcreekchurch.org | 704.547.0038  
1600 W. Mallard Creek Church Road

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## From Pastor Rob

Lent begins this month. Lent is a traditional season of reflection, reformation, and reconsideration. We do so because we are preparing for Holy Week and Easter, the pinnacle of the Christ story—the moment when Jesus gave himself for the world, God accepted that gift, and Jesus rose from the dead, breaking the hold of all that would separate us from God and from one another.

Separation is something a good many of us have become deeply acquainted with over the past year. The pandemic separated us from family and friends. It separated us from normal routines and practices. The state of the country revealed the deep wedges of separation within us as a people. A good many folks feel separated from life so strange and unfamiliar has it become.



Lent is a good time for us to ponder deeply all that separates us. It is a time to take stock of our own words and actions—did they build up or tear down? It is time to take stock of our own presence within the world—do we feel a part of life right now? It is time to consider what we might say and do that draws us back into the flow of life. It is time to consider what we might say or do that will build bridges between people. It is time to prepare for the new life through Christ's promise of resurrection to lift us up from where we are to where we might be within the embrace of God's compassion. What are we doing to ready ourselves for that raising up coming in Christ?

Too often, many folks think of Lent as a dreary season of self-recrimination. But actually it is a season of tremendous hope. It is a time of refining—we shed all that weighs us down or tarnishes the image of God within us. It is like emerging from a time of illness. There is nothing like that first breath of fresh air after a confinement. Lent is a period of healing. It is a walk toward wholeness. That walk is a long way from a drudge toward guilt. It is a run into health.

Allow yourself to hope. Allow yourself to look for the warmth of reclamation. Prepare for it. Treat Lent as getting ready for a birthday party. Yes, there may be work to do, but it sure feels great as we get closer and closer to the big day. Let that hope fill your spirit.

Easter is coming. The gift of life will bloom before us.

Ready yourselves!

## Pastor Alison's Care Corner

Like many of us, I sighed an audible sigh of relief on Wednesday evening as we moved through Inauguration Day without any violence in our Capitol and very little across our nation. Our daughter lives in Nashville, and Rob and I held our breaths until the day was over.

The violence in our nation, culminating in violence in our Capitol, combined with the COVID-19 Pandemic, has left us weary, and weary to our bones. I hear it in my own voice. I see it in my own face. And I hear it in your voices, and I see it in your faces. As a member of our faith community shared with me, "I'm ready for this to be over." We understand exactly how she feels. Many of us feel that we have been pushed beyond the breaking point.

What I want to suggest, and I hope I do not come across as dismissing the degree of stress we've all been under, is that we can *do something* to help alleviate at least a portion of our stress, and that *something* is this: We can engage in the *practice of loving kindness*.

*The practice of loving kindness* is a type of prayer in which we use images to send out prayers for others as well as prayers for ourselves. To engage in the *practice of loving kindness*, simply follow these steps:

1. Find a comfortable place to sit. Center yourself. Calm yourself. Take several deep breaths.
2. With your eyes open or closed, picture an individual or group of individuals whom you do not like or against whom you hold prejudices.
3. Imagine God's love blanketing that person or persons. Maybe the blanket is blue, maybe the blanket is white, maybe it's pink or purple. Whatever its color, imagine that person or group of persons literally draped in a blanket of God's love.
4. Hold that image in your mind for at least 30 seconds. Don't rush!
5. Now imagine God's love blanketing you, covering you, and flowing all around you. Hold this image for at least 30 seconds. Don't rush!
6. Gradually let the image go and if you closed your eyes, open them.
7. Engage in this *practice of loving kindness* every day, and incorporate it into your prayer life.
8. In the days to come, notice how engaging in this practice changes you, because it will change you, softening your heart towards others, and softening your heart towards yourself.



By practicing *the art of loving kindness*, you've just lived out Jesus' invitation for us to love ourselves even as we love our neighbors. Blessings as you continue to walk in the ways of Jesus.

Elizabeth King	Warner Marshall	Charley Moon	Ann Brown	Justin Alford
Deane Davis	Sylvia Buchanan, sister of Debbie Killian		Bernice Martin	
Randall Montgomery	Bill Marcus, brother of Jean Thomas		Anne Eberhart	
Laurel Petty, extended family of Mack Downing		Betty Morris, sister of Earlene Craver		
Jimmy Marcus, brother of Rachel Rodden		Kenneth Helms	Donald Buff, brother in law of Jimmy Walker	
Tom Lawing, stepson of Nell	Todd Schroeder, friend of Paul Menconi		David, brother of Nancy Busch	
Linda, sister in law of Nancy Busch		Nancy Carte, mother in law of Louise		
Gail Tucker, sister in law of Kim		Dwayne Martin	Joann Reid	
Steve Schecler brother in law of Mack Downing				

We pray for national and world leaders, the men and women who are serving in the Armed Forces, their families, and those who are deployed: Col. Cristina Moore - LTC Rob Byars - Austin Powers (Nat. Guard) - Major Trevor Sutherland (Air Nat. Guard) - STG2 Hunter Holland - Master SGT Rick Treadway - SGT Malcolm Allen - LTJG Morgan Whitmore, Lt. Alex Busch and PV2 Stephen Lisi



Great things are happening at MCPCP! **Registration for the 2021-2022 school year is underway and we would love to have your child join us!** We offer a 2-day and 4-day program for children who turn 2 to 5-years-old by August 31<sup>st</sup>. We use “WEE Learn,” which is a creative Christian-based curriculum that provides age-appropriate learning experiences to preschoolers. We also utilize the “The Bible from A-Z” to further enhance our Bible learning activities. Church member registrations are due by 1 p.m. on Thursday, February 11<sup>th</sup>. For more information, call 704-549-9741 or email [paulab@mallardcreekchurch.org](mailto:paulab@mallardcreekchurch.org) or [kristym@mallardcreekchurch.org](mailto:kristym@mallardcreekchurch.org).

A big **THANK YOU to Pastor Rob** for talking to the children and telling them all about the church and the people who work here! It was great to see the children participate in church again!

A big **THANK YOU to Monie and Harvey Alexander** and their whole family for acting out the weekly Bible stories and sharing them virtually with us! This is such an important part of our preschool program and we are so thankful that we can still take part in it, in spite of COVID. The virtual Bible stories that Ms. Monie will share with us this month are: David and Goliath, Jesus Loves the Children, Jesus Heals the Lame Man, and Queen Esther.

Our students are learning about Groundhog Day, Dental Health Month, Valentine’s Day, a few of our past presidents, and the 3-year-old classes will have a Multi-cultural Day later in the month.

Our Bible verse this month is: “I will be glad and rejoice in You.” Psalm 9:2

Looking ahead: We will be focusing on reading for the whole month of March. We will be looking for volunteers to donate their time by recording themselves reading a children’s book of their choice and sending it to us so that we can share it with our classes.

**Kristy Maddux, Preschool Director and Paula Brasel, Administrative Assistant**



**Upcoming Circle Meetings**

Welcome to a New Presbyterian Women’s Circle Year. All women in the church have been assigned to a circle, but are welcome to attend any that they wish. Each meeting is centered around a Bible study lesson. Didn’t read? Don’t have a book? Don’t worry, come anyway! Aside from the lessons, there is typically a discussion about mission projects or special events. Please reach out to the women listed below if you have any questions.

Circle of Anna – No circle in February (Polly Caldwell - [cacpwc@bellsouth.net](mailto:cacpwc@bellsouth.net), Linda Apolinar - [edlin1025@yahoo.com](mailto:edlin1025@yahoo.com))

Circle of Mary – Due to Covid Meetings are temporarily suspended. (Jane Isenhower – [isenhowerj@bellsouth.net](mailto:isenhowerj@bellsouth.net) - Linda Wallace - [beach68@bellsouth.net](mailto:beach68@bellsouth.net), Sally Tyler - [tylerstmt@bellsouth.net](mailto:tylerstmt@bellsouth.net))

Circle of Rebekah – February 1, 2021 7:00 ZOOM (Rachel Rodden – [rachrodden@gmail.com](mailto:rachrodden@gmail.com))

Circle of Ruth – February 1, 2021 7:00 on ZOOM (Sue Oehler - [csoehler@bellsouth.net](mailto:csoehler@bellsouth.net))



# Room in the Inn is canceled this season BUT the needs of our homeless neighbors are not.

To read more about how the winter sheltering needs will be met, click [HERE](#)

During the month of February we will collect items for the homeless and deliver them to Roof Above (formally Urban Ministry). You may bring them to worship service or drop them off in the church office. If you have any questions please contact Rachel Rodden: [rachrodden@gmail.com](mailto:rachrodden@gmail.com) or 704.577.2837

## FEBRUARY

**-NEW TOWELS AND WASHCLOTHS**

**-TRAVEL SIZE TOILETRIES** (shampoo, shower gel, razors, small cans of shaving cream, toothbrushes, toothpaste, hand sanitizer)



### \$ 2020 Year End Financial Report \$

The officers and staff would like to thank you for your financial support of MCPC programs in 2020. Our 2020 year-end report shows we only used \$29,092.77 of our reserves to pay our 2020 expenses. However, our actual expenses were less than budget projections by \$150,940.00. These saving were because of the Covid impact on our normal church operations. We paid our staff their budgeted amounts and honored our benevolence pledges to our approved outside organizations.

Our 2021 budget is \$745,422 or \$168,581 more than 2020 collections. The 2021 budget is based on a 11% benevolence rate. If collections meet the projected budget needs, we will be able to pay all our benevolence pledges for 2021 with the 11%.

You indicated the strong level of your financial commitment to MCPC in your giving in 2020. You should take pride in the fact that all our bills were paid, and we were able to contribute \$74,952.10 to benevolence work. We know, with the Lord's help, all things are possible, and we should be able to cover our projected 2021 expenses. If you ever have any questions, the finance committee would be happy to get you an answer. Thank You!!!

### Ash Wednesday Drive-Thru

Remember the Drive-Thru Communion we offered last spring? We are offering a similar worship opportunity on Ash Wednesday, February 17, from 12:00noon to 1:00pm and from 5:00pm to 6:00pm for those unable to join us for our Ash Wednesday Vesper Service which is later evening at 7:00.

In order to protect against spreading the Coronavirus, each car will be given a personal container of ashes and invited to place ashes on their own foreheads as one of our Pastors offers prayers. Each vehicle will also be given a Lenten Bag containing objects and suggested spiritual practices for this sacred season. Our Pastors will be in masks, and we ask that you please wear a mask so that we might continue our practice of protecting one another. Please enter the church parking lot on the I-85 side of the church and exit on the Trader Joe's side.

### Join Us for Wednesday Evening Lenten Vespers

*What do you need to shake off, let go, or release?  
Lent affords us a time of giving up and of letting go.*

Lent is that sacred season of the year for intentional reflection and spiritual growth as we join Jesus as he journeys to the cross. Lent is that season when we intentionally reflect on what it is that we need to shake off, to let go of, and to release so that we might be resurrected from all that weighs us down, and from all that separates us from God.

This year, we will observe Lent by gathering each Wednesday evening at 7:00pm in the Gathering Space for a simple service of music, prayer, scripture, reflection, and ritual. The overall theme for our Lenten observance is Lent in Plain Sight, and we will consider how we might experience God through the common, everyday objects of dust, bread, coins, shoes, oil, and the cross. Our first gathering will be on February 17, Ash Wednesday, and will continue until Wednesday, March 24. These services will be live streamed for those who are unable to participate in person. We look forward to our journey together as we make our way through this sacred season.



**SAVE THE DATE: SEPTEMBER 11, 2021**

Rise Against Hunger has been cancelled in February, but please join us in September for this fun family mission project.

The Congregational Care Committee hopes to begin a Prayer Shawl Ministry in which prayer shawls are knitted or crocheted, prayed over, and given to those suffering due to a variety of situations. We currently have three knitters committed to preparing shawls, but we need more. Do you knit or crochet? If so, please contact Pastor Alison at the Church Office.



## Youth Club and Teen Fellowship

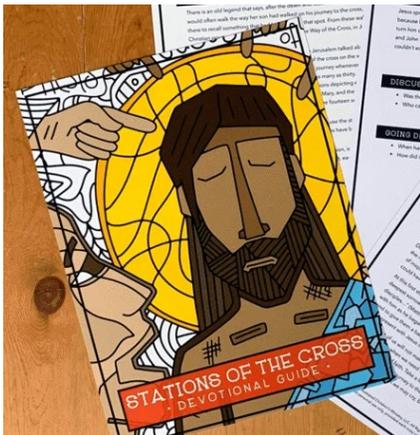
### February 2021

Thanks to everyone for being willing to switch Youth Club & Teens to Zoom format in January rather than in person. We had a great time playing games, learning about the Bible, doing yoga, and participating in our Roof Above mission project! The Youth and Children's Committee will be making a decision about February events in early February, but we will be practicing Sabbath on February 7<sup>th</sup>, so our Sunday afternoon activities will resume either in person or online on February 14<sup>th</sup>! In February, we will be observing Lent and having a Wacky Trivia rematch, in addition to our regular activities!



#### Souper Bowl of Caring 2021 Cancelled

Unfortunately, our Teens will not be able to host our annual tradition of the Souper Bowl of Caring in 2021. However, MCPC is still committed to "tackling hunger!" We encourage you to still donate the "normal" amount of money you would spend on soup and grilled cheese, whether it's \$5 or \$50. Write a check or donate online to MCPC by February 14th and mark the donation "Souper Bowl" to go toward one of our hunger-relieving and crisis assistance community partnerships.



The Advent Coloring Book was such a success that Andrea plans to offer something similar for Lent! We will be providing Stations of the Cross devotions and coloring pages with a guide for how to use it throughout Lent. Copies will be available to pick up at the church on February 17<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, and a copy will be provided via email as well.

## MONTREAT 2021 UPDATE!

The hope is that Montreat 2021 will happen in-person this year!

Montreat Middle School: July 14-18, 2021

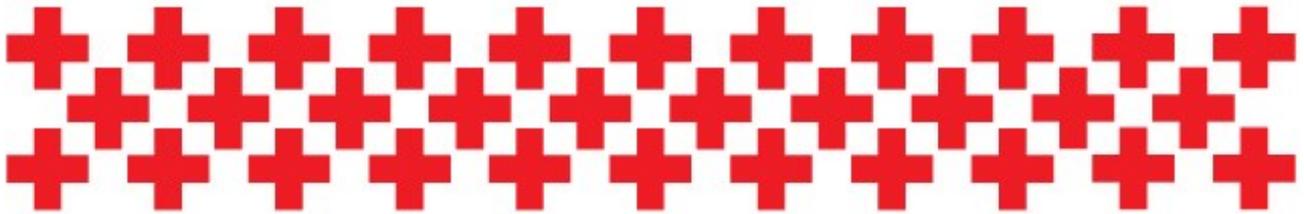
Montreat High School: July 25-31, 2021

If your teenager would like to attend or you would like to chaperone, please let Andrea know! If you are interested but need more time to think about it, please let Andrea know that too. She would like to get a rough idea of numbers for registration.

We collected 26 units on 12/26 , thanks to everyone that gave of their time.

## American Red Cross

*Give blood.* Help save lives.



### **Blood Drive** **Mallard Creek** **Presbyterian Church**

Dining Hall  
1600 Mallard Creek Church Road  
Charlotte, NC 28262

**Saturday, February 27th**  
**10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.**

Please contact Carey at (704) 906-4620, call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter: MCPC to schedule an appointment.

**Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass](http://RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass) to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of your appointment.**

1-800-RED CROSS | 1-800-733-2767 | [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) | Download the Blood Donor App

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[ 16 ] - Order ID: 1152310 - Item ID: 659998 - Qty: 1 of 1 - 01/07/2018 - 2015-APL-01565 - AR12 - 213704

## Session Highlights

1. Elected Andy Spittle as Clerk of session for 2021.
2. Elected Rodney Smith as Assistant Clerk of session for 2021.
3. Elected Jack Miles as MCPC Treasurer for 2021.
4. Elected Bill Wood and Tommy Mitchell as Elder Reps on the Nominating Committee for 2021
  - A. Bill Wood as 2021 Chair
  - B. Tommy Mitchell as 2021 Elder Rep
5. Be on lookout for Lent activities starting on Ash Wednesday.
6. December 2020 collections were \$14,765 less than December 2019
7. Y T D 2020 collections were \$54,385 less than Y T D 2019
8. December 2020 collections were \$44,324 more than December expenses
9. Y T D 2020 collections were \$23,363 less than Y T D expenses
10. 2020 expenses were \$150,940 less than the 2020 budget
11. Capital campaign received to date is \$1,942,302.79.
12. Approved motion from the Cemetery Committee to place a metal cap on the Columbarium Walls to keep moisture from entering the walls. Cost is not to exceed \$1,500.00 and will be paid from the Columbarium account.

Deacon duty for February: Connie Wallace, Jane Marshall, Fred Campbell, Wendy White, Tom Baker and Wade MacNeil

DECEMBER STEWARDSHIP UPDATE	
Sunday School	\$40.00
Worship Offering	\$72,610.00
Online Giving	\$16,263.00
TOTAL Offering	\$88,913.00
Total Offering YTD	\$577,233.58
Total Expenses YTD	\$600,596.39
Under for Year	(\$23,362.81)



*Presbyterian Women are sponsoring **Blanket Sunday** on February 28.*

*This is a mission of the Church World Service organization. Your donation helps families recover from disasters and displacement.*

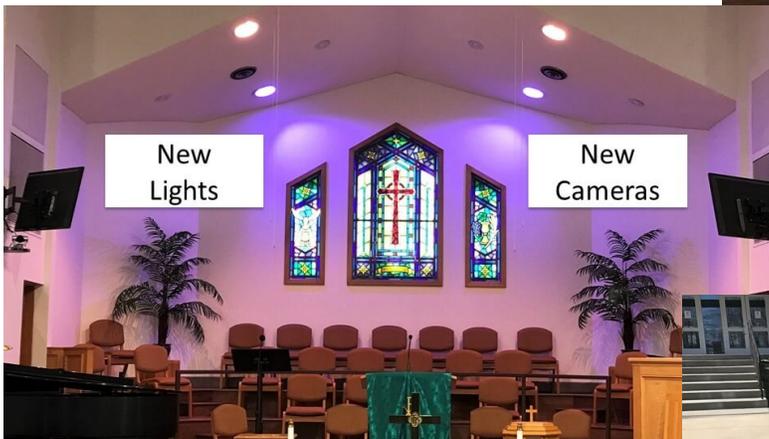
[cwsglobal.org/blanket](http://cwsglobal.org/blanket)

Please make checks payable to  
MCPC Women's Council

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <h1 style="color: blue;">March Birthdays</h1>						
	1 Colton Monteith	2 Asher Buchanan	3 Kim Alessi Reid Wilkinson Julianna Kostrzynski	4 Kelly Oehler Rusty Wallace Jessica Sangutei Sephie Hansen	5 Wendy Brown Sean English	6 Beth Bost Iris Jordan Julie Putnam Tamara Massey
7	8 Pat Dicken	9 Ruby Downing Evelyn DeKam	10 Vance Reid Aimee Carte Oliver Alexander	11 Georgie Zevan	12	13 Christina DeKam Christen Rockholt
14 Carlita Hunter Brooke Meadows Awah Ndingwan	15 Todd Oehler Harper Martin	16 James Killian, Sr. Elaine Lord	17 	18 Merle King Lynne DiMarco Samantha Busch	19	20 Zeek Garrison
21 Catherine Campbell	22 Andy Stiffel	23	24	25 Nancy Semon Elizabeth Benton Ty Burroughs	26	27 Gabriel English Rosalee Stillman
28 Bill Wood Dillon Brown	29 Carol Travis Hunter Curtis Lauren Gulley Caden Clark	30 Joy Jonson Allison Coore Grayson Brookshire	31 Derrick Killian			

# Thank You!

Mallard Creek Presbyterian would like recognize and offer a huge thank you to Mr. Paul B. Christenbury for his generous donation to our church. It has allowed us to do several upgrades on our Audio/Video system, install a new digital sign out front, construct a new safer entrance and exit stair at our Administration ramp area entrance, and also provide some needed landscaping items. Again Mr Paul Thank you so much!



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The Rev. Rob Watkins

The Rev. Alison Messick-Watkins

Mrs. Andrea Thomas

Mr. David Barnaba

Mrs. Kristy Maddux

Mrs. Cathy Marlor

Mrs. Shawn Watkins

Senior Pastor

Parish Associate

Director of Children & Youth Ministry

Director of Music

Preschool Director

Financial Secretary

Administrative Assistant