

THE COMMONS

THE NEWSLETTER OF NEW HANOVER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Room At This Inn

*New Hanover – and friends
from all over the community –
welcome CARITAS.*

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features healing prayer.*

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There's ROOM at this INN

WHEN STACEY MURRELL SAW THE

story in the the Times-Dispatch, she heard the call, clear as
a bell – this message was meant for New Hanover
Presbyterian Church.

CARITAS had run out of options - no churches were willing to step forward and provide housing for 64 homeless men and women during the week of Christmas. When Stacey saw that story on October 2, she knew that New Hanover Presbyterian Church, a church accustomed to putting faith into action, was being called to the fore. She felt the tug that had to be the Holy Spirit telling her that her church could and would step in and fill this need. Her first call was to Mission and Outreach chairman Lee Blackburn – fine with him if the pastor was on board.

One more call confirmed that, and NHPC began an remarkable journey of faith, community, trust and social media. When our 28 guests arrived on Christmas Eve, the food was ready, the



furniture was positioned and the activities were organized. In the end (you might want to sit down for this one) more than 200 individuals cooperated to welcome and care for our CARITAS guests! Platters and platters of food poured in, people signed up all day on Christmas Day to make that day full of activities (and rest) and the church even had a washer and dryer installed.

Would people *really* sacrifice time on Christmas to give to others? Answer - we had to turn them away, there were so many. **Thank You** to the big three – Stacey Murrell, Katrina Van Huss and Lin Tyler – for everything you did to make this happen.



CARITAS VOLUNTEERS RECOGNITION SERVICE on January 29, 2017.

*Be sure to join us as we
recognize and thank the
more than 200 volunteers
that made Christmas
CARITAS a reality and a
tremendous success. Our
service of thanksgiving will
be at 9:30 a.m. followed by
a reception in the Laburnum
Commons.*

COMMUNITY LIFE



Science and Christian Faith

How many times have you heard that the new science 'proves' that the Bible is wrong? How many times have students come home asking how 'evolution' or the 'big bang' fits into their beliefs. Our Adult Sunday School class for January and February is designed to address just these topics. Teaching as a group, Eric Douglass, Tom O'Brien, and Frank Willing will present the science and the various Christian responses. As a group, we will focus on the topics of cosmology (the Big Bang), evolution, and the miracle stories of our Bible, as faithful and thoughtful Christians.

Second Sunday Celtic Worship Introduces Services of Christian Prayer for Healing

Those who have been attending New Hanover's Second Sunday Celtic Worship services (each second Sunday of the month at 6 p.m.) have been introduced to an ancient, deep path into knowing and loving God through appreciation of the world God has provided and God's work within this creation. Each service includes a celebration of the Lord's Supper and a simple fellowship meal following the service.

On the evening of February 12, 2017, a new type of service will be introduced: services which include Christian prayer for healing and wholeness. This service, which will be a regular part of our cycle of Celtic

services, will be dedicated to prayers for healing and wholeness and anointing as a part of each prayer. No running about or fakery, only faithful prayer for those things that oppress us in body mind or spirit. Healing prayer is for **everyone**.

Prayers for Healing and Wholeness have been a part of the church's life since the time of Jesus and the Apostles. We take seriously the scriptures where, among many other places, we are encouraged to pray for healing "Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord." James 5:14. And we take just as seriously

1 Corinthians 14:40 where Paul instructs that "all things should be done decently and in order." Join us as we seek God's face to shine upon our deepest needs. The service begins at 6 p.m. with a soup and bread supper to follow.



NEW HANOVER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Loving Care and age-appropriate activities for children from 2.5 years to Pre-Kindergarten. Accepting applications now for Spring 2017 and Fall 2017-2018. Call Julie Moore, Director at (804) 730-9700, extension 103 for more information or to schedule a visit.

BOARDS, TEAMS AND PROJECTS

TEAM

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Elder Larry Diebold, Team Leader

This team makes sure that the Buildings and Grounds of New Hanover are ready for ministry! Caring for maintenance needs and planning for future needs, B&G makes sure that our facility is ready to welcome people in and care for their needs once they are in.

This team seeks people who have an eye for making space hospitable and welcoming as well as people who have an interest and/or expertise in maintenance, repair and groundskeeping.

TEAM

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Elder Lee Blackburn, Team Leader

Mission and Outreach seeks to take the people and material resources God has allowed NHPC to administer on behalf of the Kingdom of God for the benefit of the poor, the marginalized, the oppressed, the lonely and those who have not heard the Gospel.

This team seeks people who have a passion for bringing the love of God into the world in various ways. If you have a passion for making the love of God real for the disadvantaged this team is for you.

BOARD

BOARD OF ELDERS (SESSION)

Moderator: Pastor Robert Johnson

Clerk of Session: Elder Ron Garstka

The Session is the body charged with governing the congregation and guiding its witness to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that the congregation is and becomes a community of faith, hope, love, and witness. The congregation elects people from its membership to serve on the session to represent them in decision-making that is loyal to the Gospel.

TEAM

COMMUNICATIONS

Elder Ron Garstka, Team Leader

The Communications team helps interpret the life and work of NHPC to its neighbors in Hanover and the Richmond region. This team oversees communications through the Web, social media, print, mailings, email, internal communications and marketing.

This team seeks people who have expertise in any of these areas. We also seek people who have connections in the community that can help us interpret our ministry to the community

TEAM

NURTURE AND DISCIPLESHIP

Elder Christy Presseau, Team Leader

This team seeks to strengthen the congregation in following Jesus Christ through the encouragement of fellowship and the study and practice of the disciplines of Christian faith.

This team seeks people who understand the importance of fellowship in the formation both of Christians and Christian community. We also seek those who understand and appreciate the necessity of the practice of spiritual disciplines for Christian growth.

BOARD

BOARD OF DEACONS

Moderator: Deacon Deanna Bowen

The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress. At NHPC, deacons, also elected by the congregation, are the warm heart of our church, offering hospitality, compassion and consideration to all.

TEAM

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Elder John Bowen, Team Leader

The task of this team is to help NHPC and its people make the best use of the resources God has entrusted to them. This team advises and consults with many groups in the church on all matters of budgeting, financial and administrative matters.

This team seeks people who have experience in financial and managerial matters and who are committed to making NHPC's ministry in this place stronger and more far-reaching.

TEAM

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Elder Margaret Elliot, Team Leader

This team is charged caring for matters that affect the church's worship – the church's primary reason to be in the world. They assist the pastor and session in planning services of worship and providing resources to the music ministry.

This team seeks persons who care about worship, who are willing to educate themselves about worship in the Reformed Tradition and have interest in the music ministry of the church.

ONGOING PROJECT

CARITAS HOSTING

Deacon Stacey Murrell, Coordinator

New Hanover has the honor of providing respite housing for homeless men and women for one week twice each year. This requires a great deal of coordination of persons, materials and schedules.

This team seeks persons who wish to show the love and care of the Kingdom and NHPC to those who are in extreme circumstances. The willingness to work hard and to encourage others to do the same is a must!

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Light Up the Darkness

Bring candles for the homeless, put them in the box in the narthex. During the Month of January, HUM is collecting candles (new or gently used - bigger than a birthday candle). See Cassie Matthew or Jay Bernsley for details.

Frozen pipes in the Carson Building

Below zero temps played havoc in the Carson Building in the beginning of January. Pipes run through the walls near the kitchen burst and soaked carpeting, floors and lower walls in the eastern section of the building. Building and Grounds quickly mobilized and has brought in remediation and restoration experts to make the building usable again. Most of the costs will be covered by insurance.

Sound Board in the Sanctuary

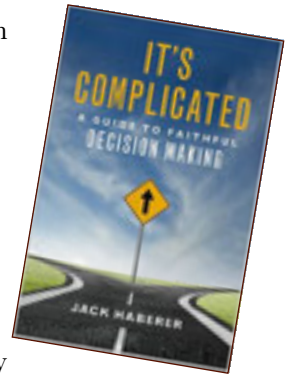
Since taking a lightning hit in the late fall, the sanctuary sound board system has been down, and we have been making do with the smaller board from Hanover Hall. This board is too limited to be able to use all the speakers in the sanctuary so we will be replacing it soon with a new, more capable system.

This system will run about \$10,000. The session has identified some restricted funds that can be applied to the purchase price, **but we will be asking the congregation for special contributions to cover the costs as well.** Please prayerfully consider what over-and-above gift we can give to cover this essential piece of equipment in our worship space.

Holy Hops!

Conversation and Fellowship for Men

Holy Hops!, the New Hanover Men's group meets on the second Tuesday of each month for conversation, dinner and fellowship. Each month men of all ages gather at the Pastor's Table to discuss a book on one aspect of Christian living. Right now we are reading Jack Haberer's *It's Complicated: A Guide To Faithful Decision Making*. Following the discussion we adjourn for dinner (usually \$6 Burger night at Marty's) along with your choice of libation.



Since the second Tuesday in February is Valentine's Day, and many of our men are happily married (and want to stay that way) **the February meeting of Holy Hops! will be on February 21, 2017 at 6 p.m.** Come join us!!



Congregational Meeting February 12

The Session of New Hanover Presbyterian Church has called the 2017 Annual Congregational Meeting for February 12, 2017. This meeting will be combined with worship as mission and service goals for 2017 are shared with the congregation. At the conclusion of the service, the two matters of business which require congregational action will be presented: changes to the congregational rules proposed by the session (which will be available the Sunday before the meeting) and the election of a Nominating Committee. Following the service there will be time for questions and comments followed by refreshments and further conversation. Voting at congregational meetings is one of the

privileges of church membership, and we encourage all members to join in. Everyone is welcome to come, contribute to the discussion and share in worship.

WORSHIP AND SERVICE

Musical Gift?

Like to Act?

Tech-curious?

Please Share!!

At New Hanover Presbyterian Church, we offer praise to God and service to others through the efforts of our members and friends, not paid staff. Our choir, handbell ringers, praise band members and other musicians are all volunteers, coordinated by our Music Director, Dr. Sam Brannon. So, we want to hear from you if you:

- Love to sing (extreme talent not required)
 - Can play an instrument
 - Are attracted to ringing bells in rhythm
 - Have experience acting
 - Are interested in audio tech
 - Know about scenery, costumes and props
- So, let Sam, Pam O'Brien (Handbell Choir director), Robert or one of our

musicians know if you are gifted or even interested in one of these areas. **YOUR** gifts enrich **OUR** life together!!!



Lent
begins this year on
March 1 with the
observance of Ash
Wednesday.

All these church holidays can get pretty confusing for folks who weren't brought up

in churches where the church seasons were not so important, but there is nothing foreign or scary about the church year. All the church seasons do, whether it is Advent (right before Christmas), Lent (right before Easter), or Pentecost (the "birthday of the church") is ask us to remember the life of Christ and Christ's love and provision for the church so that the practice of our faith never gets lopsided or me-centered.

Lent is a perfect example of this. Lent is a time that calls us to look carefully at our lives in light of God's forgiveness of us offered in Christ Jesus. Are we the people we want to be? That God calls us to be? What habits, behaviors or attitudes must we leave behind if we truly want to follow Christ as his disciples?

Let's not make a mistake here – Lent cannot and should not be a time where we pretend Jesus hasn't yet suffered, been crucified and raised again. That is the *wrong* way to observe Lent. The *right* way is to remember that, day by day, Christ calls us to be his disciples in every situation and in every place. Lent helps us refocus each year on leaving behind the things that keep us from being the people God calls us to be. This year, may this Lent give us all the occasion to stop, think, repent and recommit to being the women and men God has called us to be.

Ladies' Night!

- ★ Sunday, February 26, 6:30 p.m.
- ★ Hostess: Tina Egge
- ★ Place: 10325 Berkeley Manor Dr., Mechanicsville, 23116
- ★ Invite a friend, bring a little food, something to drink and come fellowship

CONNECTIONS



Presbytery of the James in Partnership with NHPC

The Presbytery of the James has affirmed their continuing partnership with New Hanover Presbyterian Church. For the 2017 calendar year, the POJ has announced that a \$50,000 grant would be given as an incentive for the congregation to develop and implement a plan to help NHPC grow and prosper in its place.

Right now, NHPC has an operating deficit. In order to take care of our many financial obligations in the upkeep of our very large facility, in addition to paying staff and financing ministry programs we spend more than we take in by nearly \$40,000 a year. This grant enables us to continue to work to raise giving and membership to sustainable levels.

We are grateful to our sister churches and to the leadership of the POJ for their continuing vote of confidence in NHPC and its future.

New Church Management Software Project

Someone, in the next few weeks, will call you or stop you at church with a request to help us update your personal information. This is a part of the normal updating of our records and a part of installing our new church management software.

Our new CMS will help us keep better track of things like addresses, phone numbers, email addresses and life situations. The questions you'll be asked will help our pastoral staff become more familiar with you and your needs, and enable us to contact you with important information.

You will also be given a form that will help us remember things like birthdays, anniversaries, personal preferences and things you would like to assist your congregation in achieving. Thanks for your cooperation!

Regular Meeting Dates and Times

Every Sunday

8:45 a.m. Choir Practice
9:30 a.m. Service of Worship
10:50 a.m. Sunday School

Every Tuesday

7:15 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 555

Every Thursday

7:00 p.m. New Hanover Ringers Rehearsal

First Monday of the Month

Team Meetings

6:45 p.m. Finance and Administration
Building and Grounds
7:30 p.m. Mission and Outreach

First Wednesday of the Month

5:30 p.m. Worship and Music Team

Second Sunday of the Month

6:00 p.m. Celtic Candlelight Worship/Meal

Second Monday of the Month

Team Meetings

6:45 p.m. Communications

Second Tuesday

6:00 p.m. Holy Hops! Men's Group

Second Wednesday of the Month

7:30 p.m. Nurture and Discipleship Team

Staff

Rev. Dr. Robert Johnson, Pastor
Rev. Dr. Eric Douglass, Covenant Pastor
for Adult Education
Rev. Terry Diebold, Parish Associate
Dr. Samuel Brannon, Music Director
Steve Harmon, Church Administrator

Congregational Leaders

NHPC Session

Dr. Lee Blackburn
John Bowen
Larry Diebold
Margaret Elliot
Ronald Garstka (Clerk of Session)
Christy Presseau

NHPC Deacons

Deanna Bowen (Moderator)
Mary Gail Brittingham
Cheryl Cage
Suzanne Casey
Stacey Murrell
Tracey Sigmon
Andrea Young