

# THE SPIRE



Centenary United Methodist Church 1501 Rivermont Avenue Lynchburg, VA 24503  
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September 2007

## Director of Women's Division To Speak at Centenary

Carol Gaston, a past Virginia Conference UMW President currently serving on the Board of Directors of the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries, will be the featured speaker at the Lynchburg District UMW Annual Meeting to be held at Centenary on September 23. Her topic will be "New UMW 101". Our UMW unit will host the Sunday afternoon gathering that will begin with registration and refreshments at 2:30 followed by the program and business meeting 3:00pm to 5:00pm.

Members attending this event are asked to support the Kingsway Prison Ministry by bringing with them some of the following items which will be used as Christmas gifts for the prisoners: 5" x 8" yellow or white lined notepads (like legal pads), #2 yellow pencils, adult size individually wrapped or boxed toothbrushes, plastic tubes of TRAVEL size toothpaste--any kind.

All Centenary women are invited to take advantage of this opportunity for inspiration, service, learning and fellowship with our sisters from the other churches of the Lynchburg District.

## What's a Pastor to Do with Harry Potter?



Unless you are have been living in a cave, you have heard that it is pretty much Harry Potter Year here with a new movie that has just been released and the final book recently published. There seems to be at least three responses to Harry.

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## Organ Recital to Feature Centenary's New Organist

There will be an organ recital at Lynchburg College featuring F. Johnson Scott, instructor of music, at 7:30pm, Monday, September 17 in the Snidow Chapel. He will be performing works by Bach, Buxtehude, Mendelssohn, and Durufle. The recital is open to the public without charge. Mr. Scott will be joining Centenary's staff in September and we look forward to his playing for our worship services. For more on our new organist turn to the article on page 5.



## Family Fun Night!

Please join us on September 26th for Family Fun Night. We will be having meatloaf, macaroni and cheese, green beans, rolls and cake. Our theme will be "Bouncing Back to School". We will feature a jump castle for the kids!

All funds raised from Family Fun Night will be donated to the Children's Ministry for Fall Festival. We hope to make this year's fall festival an even bigger success.

Join us for Family Fun Night and Come have fun with your church family!

## FROM THE



## Pastor

Dear Friends –

I have been concerned since my arrival at Centenary about our membership numbers and the need to attract younger and more diverse members. This

make new disciples of Jesus Christ.

I have identified some folks in the congregation as those who may have a special interest in making new disciples and invited them to participate in this **Outreach/Evangelism Task Force**. Of course, any Centenary parishioners who want to be involved will be most welcome and are strongly encouraged to attend!

year's Virginia Annual Conference's slogan was:

***"Let's get growing – all for Jesus,"*** with the understanding that churches throughout Virginia must grow younger and more diverse.

Jesus gave his disciples and by extension, us his later disciples, the Great Commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19–20 NRSV). This cannot be ignored by us or any true Christian.

The Virginia Conference is tasking all churches and especially those who did not receive many new members by profession of faith, to study and adopt an outreach plan to increase our numbers and

I'm planning a day set apart for study and retreat and the development of an outreach/evangelism plan for our church. I am thinking that a Saturday might work best (9 a.m. – 3 p.m. possibly in early November, but would welcome your thoughts, suggestions, any ideas on who else might be included, suggested days and/or dates or anything else pertinent for the good of the cause. Prior to that day of study, there will an opportunity to read and study together materials that will be helpful to us.

Please feel free to contact me to share your thoughts on this vital subject at any time. May God bless all of you!

Grace and Peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

## Centenary Members celebrate with St. James CME

- Fred Gillispie, Spire Reporter

On Sunday, August 12, three members of Centenary attended the 134th Anniversary of St. James Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. Ida Powell had initiated the idea of St. James worshipping at Centenary when they have to move from their Lakeside Dr. location. Garland Harper, as our Lay Leader, represented Centenary. I wanted to show my support for this move and for a long-time friend, St. James' pastor, Arlean Boozer.

We were most graciously welcomed. It was quite obvious that St. James' members are very grateful to Centenary for the invitation to worship in our building. Although we are not the first to extend such an invitation to another congregation,

I feel it is the right move for us at this time in Centenary's history. Also I would like to see us extend comparable hospitality when they come by having an extended fellowship time before their first service here, or some other appropriate gesture.

The service followed the same order and rituals as we do, except the congregation was more responsive and participative. Some of us think that is a lesson we could benefit from. The highlight of the service was the sermon by the presiding Bishop of the AME 7th district, Bishop Thomas L. Hoyt, Jr. Bishop Hoyt early on in his remarks let it be known that he realized not everyone in St. James was in favor of their selling their building, which holds life-long memories for many of the members. He related their feelings to his upon seeing his destroyed home church in

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## Harry Potter...continued



One response is that some people are mad about them, upset, angry. Why? Some are literary critics who think they just aren't that good, while others oppose them on religious grounds. Some churches have even had bonfires to burn the books. One man interviewed said that they did this because they were convinced these books were evil and a great danger to children and youth, that they would lure them into the occult. When asked if he had ever seen one of the movies or read any of the books, he admitted that he had not.

Another response is from a lot of people who are crazy about them. I confess that my family & I probably fall in or close to this category. We attended the "Midnight Madness" Party at Barnes & Noble to buy the latest book and have seen the newest movie several times. We're not alone, of course. These books have sold hundreds of millions of copies and have been published in 63 languages.

And then there's another group who could care less and wish the whole thing would go away, like Paris Hilton! They can't understand why so many people feel one way or another about Harry Potter.

I also confess that when the first books and movies came out, I was in that third group. The stories just did not sound all that interesting to me – I thought they were just for kids. So I was slow hopping aboard the Hogwarts Express (for you Muggles that's the train that takes the students to school). But so many others were talking about the books and started asking for my opinion about them. I thought I'd better read at least one. I ended up reading them all and I've come to some conclusions about them.

First, I can understand and respect those who are mad about Harry in terms of being concerned about the possible negative impact they might have on children. The books, as they go along, get darker and darker, and may be too intense for some young children. You could be concerned about the same thing with the Wizard of Oz, for

example, and even a good number of television shows. We need to take a more active role in what our children read and watch.

The second conclusion I reached after reading the books is that I can also understand why millions of other people love these books. I think they are well written, often funny, and insightful. As I read them, they are not primarily about magic. They are very much about the real world in which you and I and our children and youth live every day. They deal with issues like growing up, discovering who you are, what your gifts are, using them well. These books are about friendship and how the choices we make often make us. They deal with loss, death, power, injustice, evil and the overcoming of evil. And the main theme that underlies these books, as I read them, is love, a love so great that persons would sacrifice their lives for others.

The third thing I learned was, that it really was not a helpful position for me to just not care or ignore this phenomenon. I think we Christians cannot stick our heads in the sand. We need to be aware of what is going on in our world. We are not of the world but we are still in it. I strongly feel we should be on the lookout for ways we can share our faith in our time. There are opportunities all around us to present the Gospel – the Good News of God's love. That Gospel does not change; however, we must share it in ways that modern people can identify with and understand. Jesus took images and events right out of the everyday life of his time to teach persons about God and God's love. We need, you see, a firm grip on the Scriptures and our faith, but we also need to know

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## Day of Difference – Looking ahead to 2008

Well, 2007 is past and it was a wonderful experience for all that participated. At our final meeting for 2007 several letters were read from people that were helped in some of our projects as well as many comments that had been passed on to the volunteers about what a great example it is to the community as well as a great service.

We are anxiously awaiting the planning for 2008. Rivermont Baptist Church is leading next year; I hope that many of you will take the opportunity to work with this wonderful outreach project to our community. Our next meeting will be held on September 17, at 7 PM, Rivermont Baptist Church on Fauquier Street. You don't have to let anyone know just show up for the meeting, many hands are needed to keep this going.

–Paula Howell, 2007 Day of Difference Representative

## St. James...continued

Mississippi after the hurricane. Particularly disturbing to him was the destruction of the stained glass window he had placed in the church in memory of his mother, but he said he soon realized that the church was not the building, but the people, and that the replacement building would again have a window in memory of his mother. (St. James intends to move with them into the building they will build their beautiful stained glass windows.)

He told how his mother could take hoecakes and molasses and somehow make a meal for any and all who might be in the home and then said he believed the parable of the five loaves and two fish was similar. The crowd saw the young boy offer what he had for lunch and, one-by-one, this caused them to bring out and share what they had, thus providing more than enough for the entire crowd. He credited us with similar sharing and predicted we would be blessed many times over for doing so.

Bishop Hoyt concluded the service by having everyone come to the altar and join hands in an impressive show of unity. This was a moving experience for the three of us from Centenary, as I believe their presence will be for our entire church.

## Promotion Sunday and Teacher Recognition

On Sunday, September 9, 2007 a new Sunday School term will begin. Children and youth will go to one of the classrooms listed below, according to grade.

### Second Floor:

Nursery: Infant – 2 years of age – Teacher: Darlene Bryant

### First Floor:

3 & 4 year olds – Teacher: Fay Gillispie

K-2 Grade – Teacher: Linda Porter

Elementary 3, 4 & 5 – Teachers: Garland Harper and Betty Wooldridge

### Third Floor:

Grades 6 – 12 – Teacher: Rodney Bell

Teacher recognition will be during the 11:00 a.m. worship service. This is for all teachers, substitute teachers and all Sunday School officers.

### **SHARE Packages available for September**

**Call in by 9/9. Pickup on 9/22.**

**REGULAR PACKAGE-\$20:** 1 lb. extra-lean teriyaki pork tenderloins; 1 lb. 80 percent lean pure beef patties; 1 lb. smoked Polish kielbasa, made by Johnsonville; 10 oz. oven-roasted sliced turkey breast; peach pie; 3 lbs. potatoes, onions, apples and additional seasonal fruits and vegetables

**NEW YORK STRIP STEAK PACKAGE-\$18:** includes six 8 oz. steaks. Fire up the grill!!

**CHICKEN BREAST FILLETS-\$15:** 3 lb. boneless, skinless pre-cooked chicken fillets.

**TYSON MEATBALL DINNER SPECIAL-\$7:** Family pack (2.75 lbs.) Tyson cooked beef and pork meatballs with marinara sauce. Microwaveable, just add pasta.

*(all packages are subject to change)*

*If you EAT, you qualify! Got questions? We've got answers!*

*Call Paula or Chris Howell 847-8138*

SHARE (Self-Help and Resource Exchange) is a nonprofit food distribution and volunteer service program that helps everyone stretch their food dollars. Participants pay \$20 (regular package) in cash or food stamps and complete two hours of volunteer work for a food box valued at \$30-\$35. SHARE has no income requirements, so anyone can participate – if you eat, you're in. SHARE is a program of New River Community Action.

## Harry Potter...conclusion

our times, to be ready to use images, metaphors from our culture to help persons hear the Gospel in a fresh way.

I want to share with you just one example of what I found in these books that I think provides a way to speak about our faith to the many persons who are reading them. Harry is an orphan. His parents, Lily and James, were killed by the evil Lord Voldemort, who craves only power – who is an empty, soul-less shell of a man who does not even resemble a human being any longer (which I find a pretty accurate picture of what happens to anyone who lives only for themselves). Not only did he kill Harry's parents, he tried to kill Harry although Harry was just a baby, leaving a scar on Harry's forehead. Voldemort failed. Albus Dumbledore, headmaster at the school Harry attends, explains at the end of the first book why Voldemort could not kill Harry. Listen to his words: "It was love, you see, the love of his mother that led her to sacrifice her life for him. In a way it was the shedding of her blood that saved Harry's life. That love left a far greater mark on Harry than evil ever could."

Does this sound slightly familiar? The heart of our faith is contained in that simple verse we read today – John 3:16 – that God so loved not just one person but the whole world that God sent His only beloved Son, who willingly gave his life on a cross to save us, to give us abundant and eternal life! That is how much you are loved! What Harry's mother did for him, Jesus did for us all. His love has marked us, too. It is the mark that was placed on our foreheads when we were baptized...it is the mark of the cross, the sign that we are protected by the greatest power of all – the love of God.

What truly excites me is God's love and if I can use something from today's culture to help more persons feel the same way, I will. The bottom line is that more than anything else I want for myself and for you is to fall madly in love with God, for God is madly in love with you. If you don't believe it, just remember the mark – the Cross.

## New Organist Joining Centenary Staff

The Music Committee is pleased to announce that effective September 9, our new organist will be F. Johnson Scott, III. Johnson is an Instructor of Music at Lynchburg College. He has a B.S. degree from James Madison University, a Master of Music degree from Shenandoah University, and is currently working on a Master of Music Education degree also at Shenandoah University.

Johnson has served as the Director of Music/Organist at Main Street United Methodist Church in Bedford since 1987. He was seeking a part time position due to his work load at Lynchburg College & Shenandoah University. Those of you who attended the Lynchburg District's "A Great Day of United Methodist Singing" in May will certainly remember Johnson's organ postlude. We look forward to him joining our staff and becoming a part of our church family!



## Concert in November

The Sanctuary Choir and friends will sing the Faure Requiem at 3:00pm, Sunday, November 4, accompanied by several instrumentalists along with the organ. Also on the program will be 2 anthems arranged by John Rutter and accompanied by the harp. Mark this day on your calendar and plan to spend part of the afternoon enjoying beautiful sacred music in Centenary's Sanctuary.

## New Church–Wide Focus on Outreach – “*Becoming a Contagious Christian*”

*Good News:* By God’s grace over the past decade a million people have been trained to communicate their faith through the “Becoming a Contagious Christian” training course. The materials have also been translated into twenty other languages and have had a powerful impact around the world.

*The Challenge:* As exciting as it has been to see so many people find their natural evangelism style and become equipped to share Christ, in most churches it’s been limited to those who attend only a class. There are many members who just aren’t willing to give it a try, given their negative perceptions of evangelism from the past. Recently I asked some folks in the congregation who have a special interest in making new disciples and invited them to participate in an Outreach/ Evangelism Task Force. I also invite all Centenary members concerned about our church to become a part of this process. This course will be a great way to prepare for our church–wide focus on outreach and evangelism.

## Children and Youth

### Choirs To Resume Rehearsals

Children through 7<sup>th</sup> grade are encouraged to take part in the Children’s Choir this year. We had a small, but vibrant, group of children in the Choir last year. The grade limit has been increased by one year to include 7<sup>th</sup> graders in an effort to include 6<sup>th</sup> graders who might want to continue singing with this great group of choristers. Rehearsals will resume on Sunday, September 9 at 9:15 in the Layne Choir Room.

Any youth (7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade) who would like to have a choral experience at Centenary this year should plan to stay after church on Sunday, September 9 for a brief organizational meeting in the Layne Choir Room.



*Exciting Solution:* I envision “Becoming a Contagious Christian” to include a church–wide teaching campaign for six weeks starting **Wednesday October 3 at 7:00 p.m. The Task Force on Outreach & Evangelism (& all others who want to be involved and a part of the team) will meet on Saturday, November 10 from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (Lunch will be provided).** And, most exciting of all, on Sunday, November 18 our worship service will be an outreach service where all members are encouraged to bring their friends, relatives, neighbors, & lapsed church members to hear and respond to the Gospel message!

*Imagine:* all of us being inspired and equipped together. Conversations happening at dinner tables, coffee shops, restaurants, & all around the church in which our members—young and old, bold and not–so–bold—talk about their faith, tell each other their spiritual stories, try their hand at explaining a Gospel illustration, and pray together for the people in their lives who don’t yet know Christ.

God is going to work in powerful ways—and you and I get to be in on it all as we learn how to encourage others!

## Missing Book

Can you help the librarian locate a missing book? It is Volume 1 of “the Revelations of John”, by William Barclay in “The Daily Study Bible Series”. Unfortunately, no sign–out card was left when it was removed. This may have occurred when someone who was not familiar with the library self check–out procedure wished to read it. Without the sign–out card, I am unable to remind the reader that it is over due, should he or she have laid it down and forgotten it.

Please check the bookshelves and around your house to see if it has been laid down and forgotten. No harm has been done, but it would be nice to have the book back in the library for future use by others.

Thanks for your cooperation. *Terrell Moseley*, Librarian

## New Library Books

Our church now has the recently released book entitled *Live the Light* by Larry Davies of Timberlake UMC. This is a fine book giving examples of how you can draw closer to God and live a life of meaning and significance, and inject vitality into your church. It is full of humor and the realities of daily life.

Another book being added, thanks to Bob and Pat Staples, is a pictorial time-line in full color of Biblical events throughout the ages giving dates, events, and leaders and how they come together and overlap one another. It helps one better visualize our past and how we have evolved through the years.

Stop by the church library today and browse through our 2,500 plus books. You will be pleasantly surprised of the scope and variety of books available for your enjoyment and education.



## Time For Us All to Go “Back to School”

Just as students are opening their minds to new ideas this fall, we, too, should go “back to school.” Here are a few ideas to inspire lifetime learning.

- ✓ Read, read, read. Challenge yourself to read a new book every month.
- ✓ Find organizations and associations to help you stay up on new things in your profession.
- ✓ Attend church services weekly or participate in a Bible study to learn more about your faith.
- ✓ Spend time with a young person and experience the wonder of seeing the world through a child’s eyes.
- ✓ Finish a crossword puzzle, play a card game or complete a jigsaw puzzle. Brain research shows that puzzles and games keep your mind sharp.
- ✓ Use your life to teach others. What have you experienced that you could share with other people?
- ✓ Find your inner artist. Learn to paint, create pottery, play an instrument or write poetry.
- ✓ Take a course at your local university or community college.
- ✓ Stretch your muscles. Learn a new sport or challenge yourself to a new exercise schedule.
- ✓ Listen to, remember and share the stories of your elders; they contain important history and great messages.



- From *Neighbors*, Fall 2007

## Memorial Gifts

### In Memory of Frances Carson

Mrs. M.P. Gregory  
Louis & Peggy Stinnett  
John & Ann Shively  
Virginia Hogan

### In Memory of Ruth & Cecil Adams

John & Ann Shively

### In Memory of Rudi Dodl

Betty & Tommy Wooldridge

**Believe it or not 2008 Budget  
Planning Time is Here!**

To all Committees:  
Please turn in your 2008 budget requests as soon as possible - Charge Conference will be here before we know it!

Thank You

**Stewardship -August 2007**

	<u>Operating Budget</u>
August 5	8,055
August 12	7,641
August 19	2,027
August 26	3,397
July 29	2,735

**2007 Operating Budget**

Receipts.....187,019

**Expenses:**

Apportionments	-51,710
Pastor Support	-39,154
Program Support	-7,618
Building & Grounds	-42,478
Office Support	-10,709
Staff Support	- 54,794

Total Expenses 2007.....206,463

**Total Shortfall 2007           \$ 19,444**

**Benevolence Receipts Outside of Budget**

Local Benevolences	1,637
Fellowship Fund	1,076
JIFF	1,832
Conference Second Mile Giving	1,481
Scholarship	1,782
Pennies For a Purpose	436
AED	1,838
Operation Teddy Bear	240
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,322</b>

