

CGN!

Caldwell Good News!

January 2015



Sun fills our sanctuary on a beautiful Sunday morning in January.

Caldwell is at the point where our ministry now includes a very active youth group.
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'Magic Mike' brings his delicious barbecue to men who appreciate it.
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Christmas Eve was a good time for families to get together.
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Fostering a missional church is among the plans for this year's Session.
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God's grace exists for you. *The Ragamuffin Gospel* shows you how to accept it.
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Pastor's Column

Bearing Witness

Pastor Cleghorn wrote this column from the road as a blog post during his studies.

On the eve of my last day for this January session of my doctorate study, I finally have a few minutes to write.

I have missed you all and look forward to seeing you soon. You have been in my thoughts during the day and my prayers at night. These two weeks of intensive study have been, at once, both stimulating and tiring. The six members of my cohort all agree that, while we have been feed immensely by this process, we are ready for a break ... at least until our next two-week session in June.

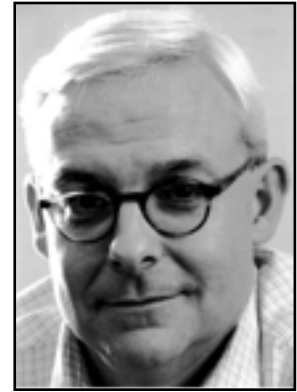
While here, we have been reading and discussing some of the key questions facing the church at large: What does it mean for any congregation to be a truly Christ-like covenant community? How are we called to be a missional community that abandons itself in the service of others as Christ's hands and feet? What does it mean to bear witness to an alternative way of living, serving and being together in a way that is both "in" yet not consumed by the ways of the secular world and surrounding culture? What constitutes evangelism in these

days when so many are cynical and wary about organized religion?

How should the church go about its mission of heralding the in-breaking of the Kingdom in Christ now that we live in a post-Christendom era, now that the church is more on the margins of society and culture than in the "mainstream," as it was for much of the last century? Can it be that salvation is not just something that comes at the end of life – but, rather, that salvation is realized through participation in the church in the work of exhibiting and advancing the kingdom of God on earth (a question N.T. Wright, one of the world's great living theologians, asks in one book we're read.)?

These aren't easy questions. They won't be answered this week, this month or this year. As we have talked about at Caldwell from the pulpit and in all sorts of other gatherings as people of faith, we are living through a rare time, an up-setting of the church, a transformation in organized religion. We are experiencing the "birth pangs" of something new, yet we do not yet see it fully – and won't any time soon.

While here, I must say that I have had the same thought that I often do when I gather with other pastors, each with their own congregation and context for ministry. That thought is one of thanks for the "new thing" God is doing at Caldwell, gratitude for the saints who hung on fiercely and faithfully amid Caldwell's decades-long decline from 1960 to 2006 and deep appreciation for all those who then came and, with those senior saints, served as midwife to God's rebirth of Caldwell. You are a congregation that holds what we have been given carefully, precious and faithfully in your hands, serving as fine stewards and, at the same time, being bold in taking risk and experimenting on behalf of the Gospel. Thanks be to God. There is so much I want to share – and will. As I said in the pulpit before I left,



Rev. John Cleghorn

this study is more about advancing what we can do together at Caldwell than anything else. For now, let me offer just one 'nugget' for your prayerful consideration and reflection. It's from a book that asserts that the work of evangelism today is not about recruiting new members. It is to bear a true witness to the gifts and demands of our baptism. Brian Stone writes:

"For it is in and through a people that bears faithful witness to God's reign that the world comes to recognize what it truly is – and thereby stands invited and summoned but also exposed and judged."

While I am here, you have been 'bearing witness' to how the Gospel calls us to live differently in important if not routine ways – celebrating weddings that give promise to love for all, marching for justice and reconciliation in the MLK parade, worshiping, praying, studying, attending meetings, caring for each other, organizing and refining our ministries for 2015 and more. Your staff has been working hard, too, especially with both Susan and I gone for these two weeks. To Evie, Anne, Sally, Smitty and Manley, I am so thankful.

My mother has declined further. So I will spend the weekend in Atlanta and be back in the office early next week.

On Sunday, we will have a fresh voice in the pulpit, Rachel Pence, a friend, frequent visitor at Caldwell and a seminary graduate. Rachel will pick up on a theme of Evie's last Sunday – what it means to be 'called.'

Yours in Christ -
John

Caldwell Good News!

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Presbyterian Church
1609 East Fifth Street
Charlotte, NC 28204
704-334-0825

Rev. John M. Cleghorn, Pastor
pastor@caldwellpresby.org

Rev. Evie Landrau, Assoc. Pastor

Anne Hunter Eidson, Music Director

Sally Herlong, Bus. & Oper. Mgr.
admin@caldwellpresby.org

Contributing editors: John Cleghorn, Dave
Bradley (david.bradley@yahoo.com)

Good for the Buddy and good for the Mentor

‘... to me, it has God’s hands all over this ... if we get out of the way and let God do it, small miracles can happen.’

The **Buddy/Mentor** program at Caldwell - where church members meet with young people - is off and running. Nearly 20 Caldwell volunteers meet with 18 ‘Buddies’ - 1st to 5th graders - on the second Sunday of each month in Belk Hall.

The turnout has exceeded what program founder **Kim Bohannon** expected. “I’m beyond thrilled,” said Kim, who thought if the first year effort drew 8 - 10 members “that would be hugely successful.”

The mentors and children gather for several hours of varied activities but the primary aim is to create an environment where a one-to-one relationship between the adult and child can flourish.

The program will continue through June.

Yet it’s the Caldwell mentors who seem to gain as much as the children.

“I think it’s a great program,” said **Myrtle Anderton**, who mentors 10-year-old **Monse**. “It’s going to help a lot of children who are at risk. I have a great feeling that I’m helping a child, and I get out of it as much as she does.”

The children and their families (mentors aren’t intended to be surrogate parents) also notice the positives.

Kim said the children thank her “for letting me be in the program.” The children “feel valued and supported,” said Kim. Myrtle said the parents of Monse aren’t fluent in English but still manage to get their ‘thanks’ across. “The father speaks broken English but is very appreciative.”

Kim dispels any doubts our mentors may have about their ability to make a significant difference in the lives of their buddies.

“I really think they (mentors) are being transformed in a way they didn’t expect,” said Kim. “For the mentors, it’s intrinsic. We may never know the implications of these relationships.” Part of that, she said, may not show itself until years later when the once-students return to become mentors themselves.

“That we have 19 one-to-one relationships, to me, it has God’s hands all over this,” said Kim. “I think for each one of us, we have this thing we can do, and if we get out of the way and let God do it, small miracles can happen.”



Mentors with their buddies (clockwise from upper left): Ann Alford, BG Metzler, Rosalyn Allison, Hutch Hutchinson, Johnny Johnson, Miranda Davis, Michael Luther, Donna Willis and Myrtle Anderton. Top: Andrew Gibson. (Photos: Kim Bohannon)

Caldwell's ministry and outreach efforts has spanned many audiences but until recently, we had a gap for one important and underserved group - our youth. Now, however, as the church has grown, we've got a youth group that has found its niche.



Youth group keeps growing

Almost unimaginable a few years ago, the church is building a 2015 calendar - for our growing youth group.

What you'll begin to see is more involvement in church life by our middle and high schoolers.

There will be "just a real focus on incorporating the youth into worship so they can be readers, or a regular acolyte to light candles," said group coordinator **Caroline Lublinkhof**. "That's my goal."

A year-long schedule is coming together, and already the youth have set events: Their own version of Sunday school on the second and fourth Sundays plus youth group meetings after church on first and third Sundays. If there's a fifth Sunday in a month, that is devoted to a service project. Caroline said the group ranges in size from seven to 10, which should appeal to families looking to involve their teenager in

church. "I'd encourage parents to be involved. Part of bringing those numbers (of youth) up is parents being engaged. I'd be glad to grab a coffee with parents" to talk about the involvement of their child in the group.

That adults are stepping up in numbers to help caught her somewhat off guard. "I think it's a surprise that we're so blessed to have the people involved with the youth. Caldwell has so many really rich gifts to offer the youth." She's not surprised, however, that the group continues to build momentum. It is an "expression of how God is at work in Caldwell. I think it says that Caldwell is in a different phase. When I got here we were celebrating that the church was reborn, and now we have a future and look at what are we bringing to that future."



Anyone who shows up early for Sunday service is in for a treat as our choir and musicians get in a last few minutes of rehearsal.



Mike Watson dishes up some tasty food as only he can make it on New Years' Eve.

'Magic Mike' to the rescue

The men at McCreesh Place know him as 'Magic' and that's what Mike Watson delivers

The way **Mike Watson** saw it, he could spend \$300 on a New Year's Eve bash Uptown for he and his wife **Lynn** or he could put his money toward a festive dinner for the men of **McCreesh Place** and "and wake up the next morning feeling good about myself."

Fortunately, he chose the latter.

That's because New Year's Eve is when Mike, aka '**Magic Mike**', does what he does best - cater a full meal of barbecue and fixings - to a group that rarely sees such a delicious spread on their dinner tables.

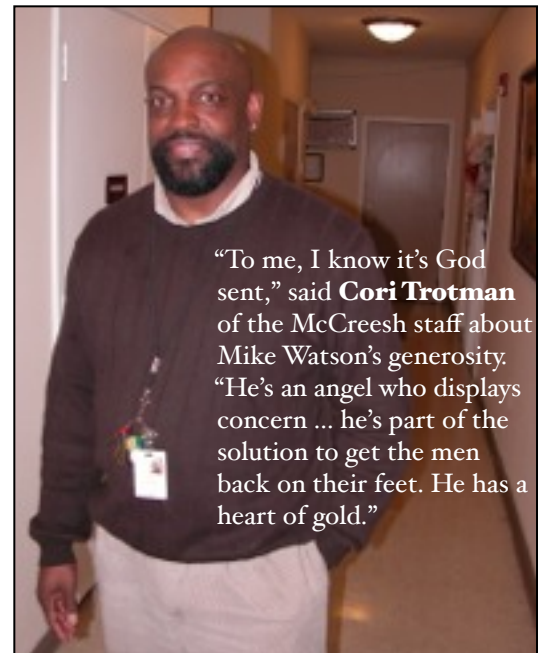
The food "Looks good ... and it's a blessing from God that he's cooking for the guys," said Albert, one of the men in recovery at McCreesh.

"I like these men," said Mike. "This is something I can do, and one of them said to me one time, 'The food is nice and we appreciate it, but the fact that you take your time to come and do this for us what is makes this special.' I'll remember that for the rest of my life."

Indeed, many hands rushed to help 'Magic' unload his van of the precious cargo as he pulled up a few minutes past 7 p.m.

And he did need the assistance. His buffet on wheels delivered 15 racks of pork ribs, 12 roast chickens, 25 lbs. of barbecue pulled pork, 25 lbs. of baked beans, 25 pounds of cole slaw, plus several dozen bags of potato chips and assorted cookies.

It sounds like \$300 well spent.



"To me, I know it's God sent," said **Cori Trotman** of the McCreesh staff about Mike Watson's generosity. "He's an angel who displays concern ... he's part of the solution to get the men back on their feet. He has a heart of gold."



Kim Hyde,
Susan Biggers,
Trent Biggers
and Greg
Biggers



Paul and
Sharon Mesiti
with daughter
Leigh Ann



Arthur and
Holland Pulley
and Deonese
Pulley



Ann Alford
(right) with her
daughter
Courtney and
granddaughter
Olivia. They
visited from
Las Vegas.

Christmas is ...

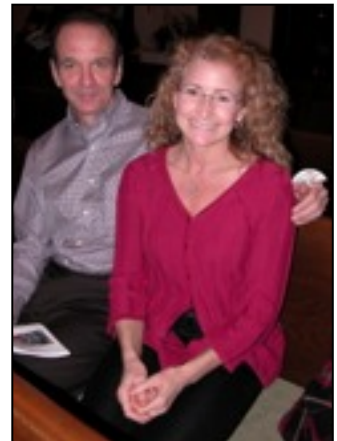
A time for family

Christmas Eve at Caldwell drew friends and families from all over the Carolinas - and elsewhere



Heather, Emily
(age 1 1/2),
James (age 3)
and Kyle
Newgreen

Dan and Pauline
Petrillo visited from
Detroit, Michigan.



Josh Ogle,
Braden, Jodi
and Anthony
Fowler



Mary Alice Bryson
receives one of the
candles to be lit at
the end of the
service from Wayne
Russell.

The 2015 Session may turn its attention to continuing, and perhaps expanding, on its missional focus, according to the new Clerk of the Session.

Peg Robarchek said “For one thing, in 2015 you’re going to see us becoming more focused in terms of our role as a missional church.” Peg said while the church has embraced many activities, “There’s some sense that now is the time to take a moment to consider the question ‘where can we do the most good?’ That may well involve consideration ‘on more specific areas.’”

Also up for discussion are more activities tied to our recent Caldwell in 3D. One such activity that arose from 3D - the Buddy/Mentor program - is already underway. “And we’ve already had one meeting about a coffee shop that we could launch in partnership with others as part of our outreach to the surrounding community,” said Peg.

Our Sunday morning **Adult Christian Education** (ACE) class continues to grow in popularity, and Peg said we may

2015 menu already shaping up for Session

‘There’s so many things that we can do at Caldwell that we have a heart for ...’

also be more intentional about increasing offerings for adults, including ways to be more accessible for parents with small children. She also cited the more attendees for **Theology on Tap** as another strong attractant for adults. Children and youth are a high focus and we want to make sure we provide ways for their parents to get involved also.

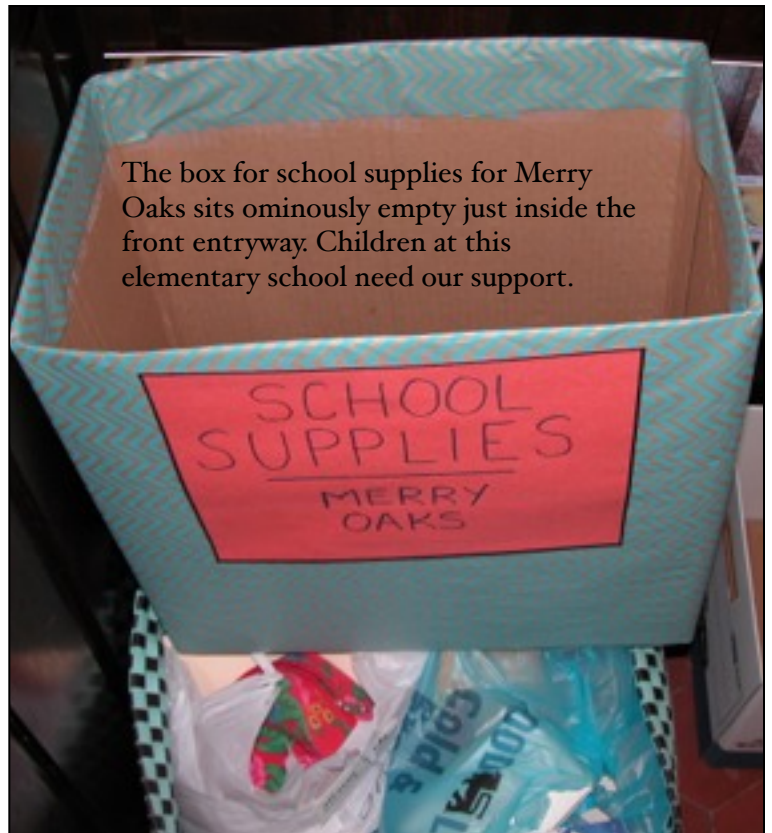
Peg said also under consideration is a survey “about what people really want to participate in to broaden their faith in community with others.”

Newcomers may also get some attention. “Personally, I’d like to see us look for ways to be involved in community outreach to families,

particularly parents of LGBT youth,” said Peg. “I’d love for them to know we are a church that welcomes their children. In all, the effort to reach out to our community will continue. There’s so many things that we can do at Caldwell that we have a heart for.”



Winter crops in our community garden actually thrive in the cooler temperatures.



The box for school supplies for Merry Oaks sits ominously empty just inside the front entryway. Children at this elementary school need our support.



Making Connections in the Prayer Room

Each Wednesday,
4 - 6 p.m.



Your photo here! If you've yet to attend the Women's Retreat, this is your chance - April 17 - 19!

Back to Montreat

Women's Retreat set for April 17 - 19

The always popular - and well-attended - Women's Retreat will be held this year in Montreat.

The retreat centers on spiritual activities but there is plenty of things to do outdoors, too.

If you're interested, talk with **Katy Hill** or send her an email at catharine.hill@gmail.com



It's Souper Bowl time!

Caldwell youth will tackle hunger during their **Souper Bowl of Caring** on Sunday, February 1. Make a forward pass of any of your spare change into the collection bowls held by the youth after Sunday service. And stick around for a bowl of real soup downstairs!



This is a lot of new members!

Many of our new members broke bread recently.

It is quite a group.

Call the church office at 704-334-0825 if membership interests you.

What are you **Praying for?**



Close friends and closer community throughout the world.

Joyce Deaton



Peace, primarily for the church universal. We are reminded as Christian people that the very peace we seek comes through God.

Richard Harrison



For my dad and my mommy and Mandie (her cat).

Ellen Martin



I would have to say peace in general since a lot of people are having tough times ... and internal peace, too.

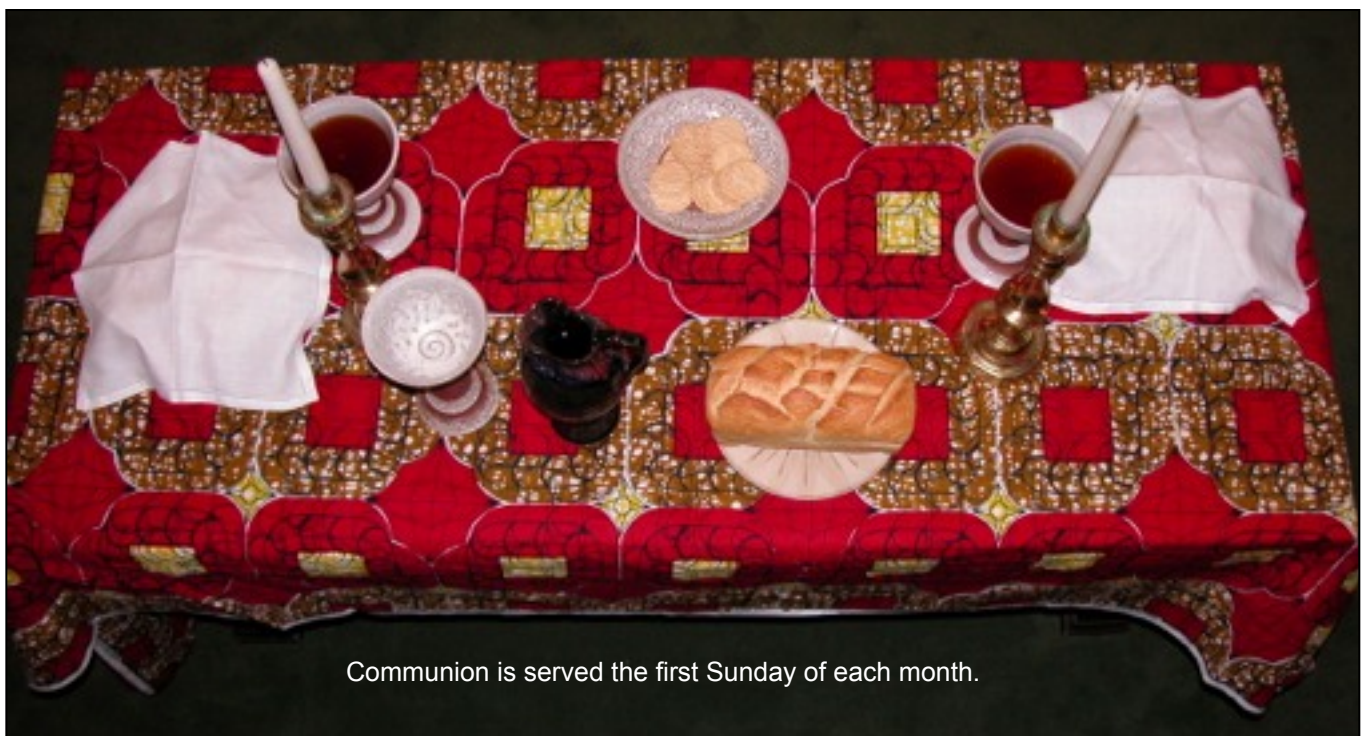
Alonzo Jones



I'm praying for discernment in my life, and for strength. I just want to understand what God wants in my life.

Eddy Capote

Our question of the month will change next month to coincide with our religious seasons.



Communion is served the first Sunday of each month.

Don't we all have trouble
accepting God's grace?

The Ragamuffin Gospel is for folks like us

Feel beat up and burnt out? Not sure
if God deems you worthy of
receiving grace let alone salvation?

By **Brennan Manning**' definition,
you're a Ragamuffin.

His book, *The Ragamuffin Gospel*, is being
dissected by our Adult Christian
Education (ACE) class through Feb. 15.
It's an often humorous look at how
incredulous we have become at the
notion that grace exists for us and that
somehow we're not worthy of it.

"The focus is the difficulty we have
accepting grace," said discussion
moderator **Linda Matney**. "Even
though God loves us we feel undeserving



of it. It would be nice if we could accept
grace more graciously."

In the hustle and bustle of today's world,
"Something is radically wrong," said
Linda, when "we feel we have to do
something to earn our salvation. Even
though God loves us, we feel
underserving of it."

The Ragamuffin message is "Grace is the
goodness of God and he loves us in spite
of us being sinners and all the things we

manage to mess up," said Linda. "Every
day, we do something and God loves us
anyway." But accepting grace requires
something on our part, too. "You can't
just do anything you want and say 'Oops,
God forgive me'," she said.

As with all ACE classes, Linda
encourages drop ins. "Our class is
fascinating. Just come and enjoy it and
put your two cents in. It's not a dull
book. Don't feel bad about feeling good."



Glass pebbles gleam in
our baptism bowl.

Caldwell Good News! Bulletin Board

January 2015

Sun., 25	Women's Retreat planning session	12:30 p.m., Nothing But Noodles
Sun., 25	Elder training	12:45 - 2:15 p.m., upstairs
Tue., 27	Session	5:30 p.m. Shelby Room
Wed., 28	Contemplative Prayer	4 - 6 p.m., Prayer Room
Fri., 30	La Casita de Amor Bible study and Zumba	9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Price Bldg., second floor

February 2015

Sun., 1	Elder installation	During worship service
Sun., 1	Annual Congregational meeting	Noon, sanctuary
Sun., 1	Souper Bowl of Caring	12:30 - 9 p.m., Belk Hall
Tue., 3	Theology on Tap	7 - 9 p.m., Leroy Fox restaurant
Wed., 4	Contemplative Prayer	4 - 6 p.m., Prayer Room
Thu., 5	MeckMin and NC Peace Action book study	6:30 - 8 p.m., upstairs
Fri., 6	La Casita de Amor Bible study and Zumba	9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Price Bldg., second floor
Sun., 8	Buddy/Mentor	1 - 3:30 p.m. Belk Hall
Tue., 10	Women's Circle	10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Shelby Room
Wed., 11	Contemplative Prayer	4 - 6 p.m., Prayer Room
Fri., 13	Caldwell hosts Room in the Inn at St. John's Baptist	5 p.m. through Saturday morning
Fri., 13	La Casita de Amor Bible study and Zumba	9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Price Bldg., second floor

Church Calendar

Sundays

9:45 a.m. - Adult Christian Education, Shelby Room
 10:45 a.m. - Nursery is open
 11 a.m. - Worship (including Children's Sunday School)

1st Sunday

Communion

Session receives new members

2nd Sunday

Ten Cents a Meal Offering

All Sundays

Loaves & Fishes Collection (non-perishables in entry basket)

Mondays

6:30 p.m. Mustard Seed Men's Group (biweekly)

3rd Monday

6:30 p.m. - Women's Book Club

Tuesdays

6:30 p.m. - Yoga, Fellowship Hall

7:00 Theology on Tap (biweekly)

2nd Tuesday

10:30 a.m. - Women's Circle

3rd Tuesday

6:30 p.m. - Building and Grounds, Shelby Room

4th Tuesday

5:30 p.m. - Session, Shelby Room

Wednesdays

3:45-6:45 - Contemplative Prayer, Prayer Room

7:00 p.m. - Choir Practice, Choir Room

2nd or 3rd Wednesday

6:00 p.m. - Mission & Justice, Shelby Room

2nd Thursday

6:00 p.m. - Congregational Care, Shelby

3rd Thursday

6:30 p.m. - Worship Committee, Shelby

6:30 p.m. - Education Committee, Upstairs Meeting Room

Fridays

9:30-11:30 Casita de Amor Bible Study & Zumba, Belk Hall

7:30 p.m. - Alcoholics Anonymous, Shelby Room

2nd Friday

6:00 p.m. - Young Adult Fellowship

3rd Friday 12:15 p.m. - Finance Committee, Upstairs Meeting Room

Administrative office hours

Monday, 2:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday through Friday, 9:30 - 5 p.m.

Pastor's office hours

Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Reach Pastor Cleghorn on his cell: 704-957-4511

And lastly ... Amen!



A basket of Christmas candles await eager hands before our Christmas eve service.

Caldwell's Mission Statement

In the summer of 2007, Congregational Dialogues formed the foundation of our church's renewed mission statement as adopted by action of the Session that Fall:

- We seek to build a diverse, intentional, affirming community animated by joyful worship and called forth in social action for service to the greater good.
- We seek to hear God's call not only as individuals but also as a progressive, missional community striving to reflect the Kingdom of God in the here and now.
- We embrace the rich history of the Reformed Tradition and the storied past of our once-prominent, center-city church, as we welcome a diverse, urban community of seekers - young and old, gay and straight, rich and poor, of all races and ethnicities.
- We are called into a meaningful, transformative community that values the unique blessings and perspectives of each member and offers a place of welcome and healing to weary souls.
- We seek dynamic servant leaders who serve humbly, embrace change, and boldly challenge injustices in the wider community.
- Most important, we seek to proclaim the Gospel in both word and deed, follow the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.