

The Proclaimer

1201 Oakland St, Hendersonville NC 28792 / 828.697.2878 / info@providencecongregation.org

Sunday Schedule

9:00am Sunday School

10:30am Worship

11:30am Deeper

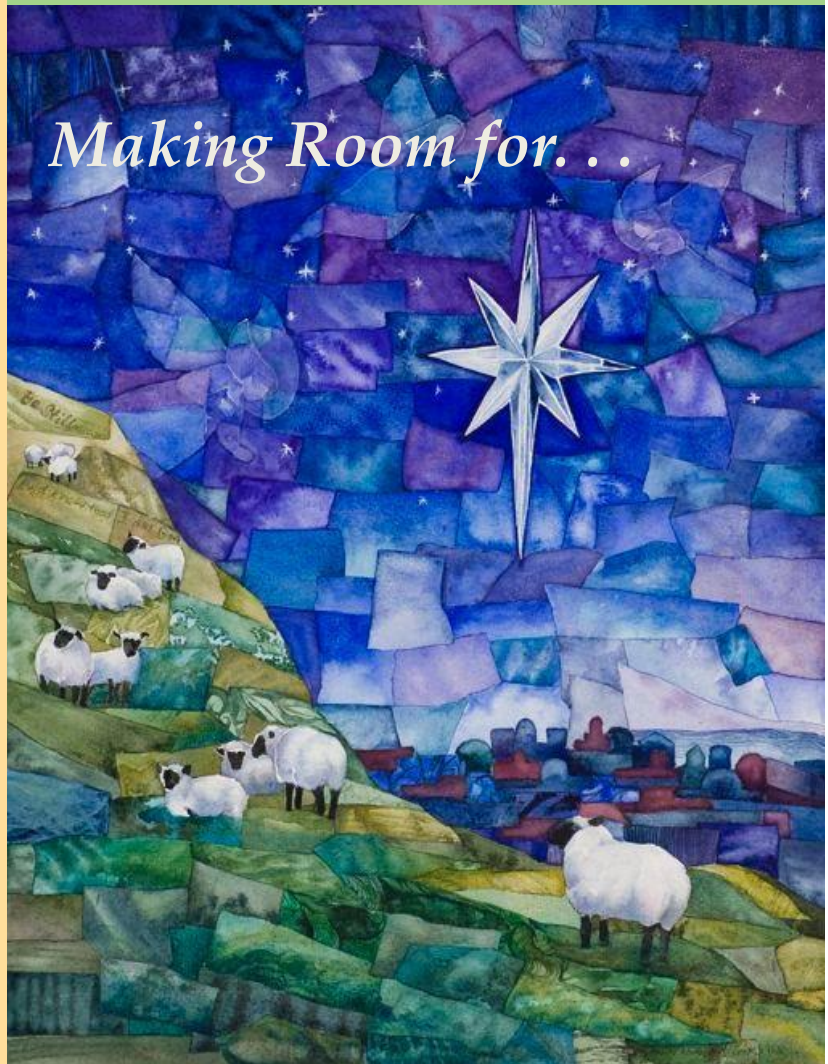
4:00pm 7th Ave Worship Meal

Rev. Dr. Michelle McClendon
Associate Pastor

Robert & Annette Hudson
Music Directors

Rev. Gail Coulter
Pastor Emerita

December 2016



Making Room for...

From the desk of Michelle McClendon. . .

Advent Musings...

The new Christian year has begun: time for preparation, anticipation, and giving; time to allow room in our cluttered lives for the Christ to be born again in hearts and souls. The year 2016 is ending: time to give thanks for the experiences in the past year; time to winnow out what needs to be left behind. Advent for me is the “hinge” at the end of the year... the exit from one year and the entrance to another. To quote Dag Hammarskjöld,

“For all that has been, thanks; for all that will be, yes!”

As we end say goodbye to 2016,

I have a gratitude list to offer and to which you can add!

- the deep and rich well of relationships that our church encourages us to make
- our children bringing in the light in worship each week and their smiles and wiggles
- the opportunity to pray with all who choose to gather every Tuesday at noon at Providence House
- the many people who have stepped up in this interim to give, to serve, to lead, to pray, to repair, to stand in whatever gaps presented themselves
- celebrating 15 years of ministry as a congregation
- having a hymn written to honor women pastors at Providence
- celebrating Julie and Michael, Sophie and Sage, Merlin and Shirley—and grieving their loss deeply
- dedicating infants, sharing communion, welcoming new people in our midst
- saying goodbye as we celebrated the lives of Joan and Hazel
- Free for All discussions over eggs and coffee, and Deeper reflections over Fresh Market gleanings
- Pot lucks and hymn sings
- the preaching gifts that our congregation offers us: Herb, Josh, Phillip, Kathleen, Kelly, John, Charles, James, Dick; and the generosity of Gail Coulter and T Thomas to help us by preaching regularly
- The music offered each week by a good choir and for Robert and Annette’s leadership

- Kat Myers who stepped in to take care of our children when we needed someone so badly
- Stefani, Glenda, and Lisa for working to provide teachers and care-givers for our children (THEY NEED SOME MORE HELP!)
- The endless hours the search committee has put in and will continue to give
- Bible study each week led by Kelly
- A meaningful Advent retreat led by Kathleen and Karen
- All the volunteer hours at the Joseph Center and the generosity of Fresh Market
- Great picnics provided by Fellowship & Congregational Care team
- The time and energy the facilities team puts in and the money they save us!
- Dave's tireless work in getting our technology more workable
- The creativity and commitment that Ana has provided in our office
- Our partners in Cuba and Stan Dotson's willingness to keep us informed
- The leadership of the Missions committee and all the various ministries we have the privilege to support
- The youth who give so much time and talent, insight and wisdom to our congregation (witness Anna and Erin Price's leadership in our Reverse Advent project and Holly Obermiller's poem in this issue of the Proclaimer)

This gratitude list can go on and on... for the people and relationships this congregation offers us. 2016 has been a full year of ministry, celebration, grief, discernment. What a joy and gift it is to share life together!

As we walk together into a new year, hand in hand with God and each other, there are opportunities before us to let our gratitude shape us into better givers. Giving creates space, enlarges our souls, allows our hearts room to breathe, and makes us more like the God we serve. I hope you will participate in the giving opportunity of "Reverse Advent" (details of that are included in this issue). Pick up a bag and bring your collections back each week and we'll make sure they get distributed!

The first week in Advent we are collecting money for poinsettias to support Pack-A-Backpack NC—the non-profit led by youth including our own Anna and Erin Price. The second week, we will collect school supplies to go in those backpacks. The third week, we support “The Storehouse” with much needed food items, and the final week “Safelight” child care needs for toys and games. Each week there is a specific list. Get your family involved in giving!

There are other ways too: Decide on how you will invest your time through Providence in the coming year. On December 11, we will return our commitment forms for ministry teams. Please pray about your involvement and make your commitment for this next year. Currently we need a team leader for the Children's Equipping Team. All teams need volunteers. We need Sunday School teachers for our children. Consider your financial support of Providence at year end. This year, our church has experienced loss in more than one way. Faithful givers have moved on and we have yet, as a congregation, to replace their financial support. As we look for a new pastor, we want to be as healthy as we can be in all ways, including financial. Year-end giving to provide the support we need to meet the opportunities and needs of our community is essential. I hope you will carefully consider your contribution to this life and health of our church. Join us for worship each week, pray for the life we share together. We must all pull together, listening carefully to the leadership of the Spirit, in order to continue to stay healthy as a congregation in the new year ahead.

Blessed and holy Advent to you all! Happy New Year! James Garrison sent this prayer to a group of pastors as a support during this Advent season. I am grateful for it. If you've not read the work of Howard Thurman, give yourself a gift and pick up one of his books. I leave you with his Advent prayer added to my own that you will each experience the peace, hope, love and joy of Advent in mysterious and powerful ways this year.

*I will light candles this Christmas,
Candles of joy, despite all sadness,
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch,
Candles of courage where fear is ever present,
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens.
Candles of love to inspire all my living,
Candles that will burn all the year long.*

~Howard Thurman (1899-1981)

Fellowship & Small Groups. . .

SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS @ 9:00am!

All ages welcome! Two adult classes available, plus classes for Children & Youth at Providence House. Nursery care provided for the little ones.

DEEPER

Sundays following worship. Refreshments and conversation in Fellowship Hall.

FREE FOR ALL

Every Tuesday @ 8:30am at The Green Room Café

All are welcome as we discuss the upcoming Sunday's scripture.
See page 8 for weekly verse.

MID-DAY PRAYER

Every Tuesday @ 12:00pm at Providence House

Join us once a week for a time of prayer, song, and reflection.
All faiths welcome to rest and reconnect!

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS AT PROVIDENCE

On the 1st & 3rd Wednesday @ 5:30pm join us for a POTLUCK supper and program. See weekly e-news and worship guide for details. Nursery provided.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON

Meets Bi-monthly at various locations, check weekly e-news for invitation.

If you would like to host, contact Joyce Faye Myers 828.595.4347

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

Meets the 2nd Friday of every month @ 8:30am at Blackberry Mountain Café

All ages are welcome to join in fellowship and conversation.

Participate in Reverse Advent. . .

“Reverse Advent” is a time for giving back and this is how it works: There are reusable grocery bags available in the sanctuary; one per family or individual. Each week, you are invited to put something specific in your bag that meets the designated challenge need for the week. Donations will be collected each Sunday. Containers will be provided in Fellowship Hall.

Challenge for Week 1 (11/27-12/3): Pack-A-Backpack / Poinsettias

Anna Price will deliver any poinsettias donated to Providence on Dec 11. Families who want the poinsettia for themselves or to go somewhere besides the church need to let us know they want to claim it or donate it when they turn in their money. Plants are \$20 each or \$18 for two or more.

Challenge for Week 2 (12/4-12/10): Pack-A-Backpack / School Supplies

2 - ½ to 1" binders. 1 composition or spiral bound notebook. 2 folders.
1 set dividers (optional). 1 full pencil case: 1 red and black pen, 1 pack pencils,
1 pack markers or crayons, 2 erasers, 2 highlighters, 1 glue stick.

Challenge for Week 3 (12/11-12/17): The Storehouse / Food & Household Supplies

powdered milk, cereal, spaghetti and sauce, macaroni and cheese, peanut butter and jelly, beef stew, pork and beans, chili, tuna, canned meats, canned fruit and vegetables, soups, rice and dried beans, cereal, grits and oatmeal, laundry detergent, dish soap, toothpaste, tooth brushes, soap, toilet paper, diapers, razors, deodorant.

Challenge for Week 4 (12/18-12/25): Safelight Childcare Program

Legos, Transformers, glitter and glitter glue, washable paint and markers, colored paper and cardstock, watercolor paint and brushes, glue sticks and bottles, stickers, colored pencils, children's DVDs (appropriate for all ages), playdoh, bottled water (small bottles), Cornhole set, indoor basketball goal, electronic Battleship game.

Christmas Service Schedule

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols @ 5:30pm

Christmas Day Worship @ 10:30am (no Sunday School)

*A short service of Christmas carol singing, reading the Christmas story,
conversational meditation and prayers of thanksgiving*

New Year's Day @ 10:30am Service of Communion (no Sunday School)

The Continuance of Christ

On it goes, the Hope constructed from the fabric of our Creator
His tunic of dreams and aspirations encasing the world,
Developing rips and tears every second of every day
The lost pieces being replaced by new, fresh ones
Some faded by the radiation of peoples' doubts

On it goes, the Love created and powered by God.
Prevailing, living, dying
Ending in one life, beginning in another
The tears of it dripping down a face as wax does from a candle
The beating heart of civilization causing fear, confusion, and happiness

On it goes, the Joy shaped by the gentle hands of the Father
Showing itself in the form of a grin or tears flowing freely from the eyes
The same way as water does from your skin after emerging your body in it
One of few emotions that is rarely pure
Distributing its raw power amongst all who know it and revealing itself to all who don't
Being the cause of many other emotions such as jealousy, happiness, and sorrow

On it goes, the Peace our Lord created from one soothing touch,
Emerging as a single white dove, purer than the heart of the Holy Spirit
So simple, yet so clean was it back in the time of its birth
Though it has been tainted since those ancient times,
The pureness of it still remains under all the tricks and lies lying upon it,
Just as sea foam and pollution on top of the water
hides the true beauty of the sea beneath it

On he goes, God, Lord of Lords, King of Kings,
Spreading his Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace
In the shape and form of all of his creations
Fighting against the hatred in this flawed world

Weekly Scripture

***Free For All Verse**

Dec 4

Isaiah 11:1-10

***Psalm 72:1-9, 18-19**

Dec 11

Isaiah 35:1-10

***Luke 1:43-55**

Dec 18

Isaiah 7:10-16

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Romans 1:1-7

Matthew 1:18-25

Dec 25

Isaiah 62:6-12

Psalm 97

Titus 3:4-7

Luke 2:(1-7) 8-20

Jan 1

Isaiah 63:7-9

Psalm 148

Hebrews 2:10-18

Matthew 2:13-23

Note: At the time of this printing, some scriptures and Free for All verses are yet to be determined.

December Birthdays



3 Anna Price

4 Gabe Mills

11 Charles Ivins

18 Steve Newbrough

19 Holly Obermiller

23 Ruth Garrison

24 Elizabeth Howe

25 Rick Houston

30 James Garrison

IAM DONATIONS

November & December (Winter)

Pantry Focus: Hams, Turkey Breasts, Whole Turkeys & Chickens. Peas, Green Beans, Yams, Potatoes, Stuffing, Gravy, Cranberry Sauce, Pie Crusts & Fillings, Cake Mixes.

Clothing Closet: Men's Work Pants & Work Shoes, Sheets & Pillowcases, Blankets, Sleeping Bags. All Sizes: Warm Coats, Hats, Gloves, Heavy Socks and Boots during the winter months.

Drop items in the bin near the main entrance of the church.

Our Values

Going to the Other

**Growth ~ Hospitality ~ Inclusiveness
Simplicity ~ Worship**