

Belmont Beacon

December 2014

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The Advent season is upon us. This is an important time of the year as we are reminded how we live by God's promises. Advent involves our waiting and hoping for the coming of the Christ, God's most significant promise. Advent is all about preparing our lives for the one who is to come. This waiting and hoping is one of remembering the first Christmas and it also involves our waiting on the promise for Christ to come again.

One of the challenges for many of us involves mixing Advent with Christmas. What I mean by that is how the time following Thanksgiving gets celebrated as the Christmas season. My hope for all of us as disciples of Jesus is that we would follow the church calendar more closely than the Hallmark or Mall calendar.

The church calendar calls us to recognize the preparation and waiting of Advent that begins four Sundays before Christmas and goes all the way up to Christmas Eve. The celebration of Jesus' birth propels us into the season of Christmas. This is when we truly celebrate Christ's coming and this really happens all the way to Lent. Epiphany is the season that occurs on or around January 6 each year. Epiphany is the "revelation of God" to the magi and ultimately to the entire world so the celebration should keep on going.

Another way that Advent and Christmas get merged together following Thanksgiving is through sharing gifts. Family, friends and loved ones will share gifts with each other but the giving does not stop there. This time of year is unparalleled in generosity for individuals and families in need. The expression of generosity is one way that we can mirror God's generosity and love.



Your generosity is evident in so many ways. I want to thank you for that and remind you of the difference you make in numerous lives in our community and beyond. Your generosity excites me as new opportunities arise. Your "good works" are making a difference in the community. As a result of your generous reputation, I received a call from a teacher at Clark Elementary School

discussing the needs of the children in her three-year-old preschool class. She shared how many of these students arrive at school hungry at the beginning of each new week.

Through the willingness of the Charlottesville City Schools, the teachers in this program will ride the school bus home on the final day of school each week with the three-year-old students. They will deliver a bag containing groceries for that family to help them through the weekend.

You and I help out by making sure that food is in those bags. We need your help to make sure that this happens. Food and monetary donations are needed along with putting the food in the bags. This ministry is not one that should conflict with our food pantry ministry. As we serve those families through our food pantry, we can also serve these children at Clark and their families.

We are calling this ministry the "Helping Hands of Belmont." I cannot think of a more appropriate name for what you do to make a difference in the lives of children and adults in our community. Again, I say thank you. My prayer is that God's generosity will continue to guide your generosity in this holiday season and throughout the year.

Blessings,

Greg



Dear Friends at Belmont,

I have had such a wonderful time with all of the things I have been involved in since coming to Belmont. I look forward to coming into the house of the Lord each week and worshipping God with all of you. It took my husband and me a long time to find our church home. It is good to be home.

While preparing music for Advent I have been so refreshed. Preparing music for the holiday season as a public school music educator saddens me. We cannot share the good news and must keep all of the music neutral. I then come into my church office and feel inspired as I prepare for Christmas. Using the word Christmas had become so foreign to me as in public school you must use words like holiday season, winter break, sparkle season. It feels wonderful to say Christmas and not apologize.

With New Years not so far away I would like to encourage everyone to give me a list of your favorite hymns, songs, benedictions, and call to worship. I would love to be able to add each week a favorite from someone in the congregation. I would keep this list handy and try to work from it each week to add in the favorites of the congregation as well as introducing new music from time to time. I had mentioned this to one member of the congregation and she has already given me her list. Many of the hymns bring back memories for me of my grandma and Sunday afternoons that were very different from my Sunday afternoons now. Get me those lists as I will bet your favorites are also someone else's.

We will all make a Joyful Noise.

Musically Yours,
Peggy



Comcast Channel 13 will Rebroadcast the Worship Service at 7 pm. on Sunday.

From the Finance Team

2014 is closing fast and gives us an opportunity to review our year financially. Numbers need to be compared between 2014 and 2013 to judge just how the year evolved. This comparison will be year to date of October.

	2014 (OCT)	2013 (OCT)
Income:	\$298,474	\$236,879
Expenses:	\$288,143	\$263,843
Net:	\$10,331 (plus)	\$26,963 (minus)

As you can see the income and expenses are up considerably for 2014.

The income increase is deceiving because of a large donation of \$75,000 during 2014. We have had several large expenses during 2014.

This donation could not have come at a better time for Belmont Church. The Lord must have been watching our needs. Praise be to God.

Psalm 22: 26 (NKJV reads in part)

Those who seek Him will praise the Lord
Let your heart live forever!



The painting committee is looking for the church's approval in the next steps of the painting. As you



know, the baptistry and downstairs of the sanctuary have been freshly painted this year. The balcony and the vestibule would be next on the list. The balcony has flaking paint from past water damage and cracks and has the original 40-year old paint, which is darker. The vestibule is in better shape, but has cracks and marks on the walls, and, of course, it's the first thing one would see upon entering the church. The painting committee recommends that the church paint both the balcony and the vestibule. Please come to the next business meeting on Sunday, December 14th, where the church will vote on the next step in the painting of the sanctuary/ vestibule as well as the budget and deacons for 2015.

Elevator Fund



At the October business meeting we discussed the need for an elevator. As we minister to our community and accommodate the needs of individuals who use our facility, we recognize the necessity for an elevator. In the past we have discussed the benefit of an elevator. Now it is becoming more of a necessity.

Several donations have been received to further this purpose following that business meeting conversation.

Please consider making a donation!



To the Belmont Baptist Church Family,

We gratefully acknowledge the generous donation given to purchase a new sound system for the church. This gift was given to the glory of God and in memory of Peggy Blincoe by her family.



We also would like to acknowledge the generous donation to purchase the new pictorial directory. This gift was given to the glory of God and in memory of Catherine F. Dudley.

Church Directory



A new pictorial directory is coming soon.

As a part of the process, Jim Carpenter will be available at Gitchell's Studio, 618A Forest Street.

Please call **296-7558** to make an appointment.

Your smiling face is needed for this very important project.

December Wednesday Schedule

December 3	2015 Budget Discussion
December 10	Bible Study
December 17	Church Wide Christmas Dinner at 6 pm
December 24	Christmas Eve Service at 6 pm

BELMONT BAPTIST CHURCH
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Greg

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Ann

Mary

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