Each winter and spring, we read in worship about some specific events in Jesus’ life and ministry. We begin with Advent and Christmas, reading passages from Isaiah 11, Luke 2, Matthew 1-3... the prophecies about Jesus and accounts of his birth. We end with Holy Week and Easter, reading passages such as Matthew 26-28. Between Christmas and Easter, in January and February, the focus turns to some specific occasions in Jesus’ life, when his call was confirmed by a voice from heaven. Those occasions were his baptism, the Transfiguration, and his forty days in the desert.

At Jesus’ baptism, God speaks and says, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:17). At the Transfiguration, Jesus appears with Elijah and Moses, and God speaks again: “This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!” (Matthew 17:5). During his time in the desert, Jesus confirms some central tenets of discipleship (such as, worship and serve God alone — (Matthew 4:10).

In these winter readings, there is a call to us: a call to focus on Jesus, to focus on what is important. What call does God have for us today? In the midst of all the noise and things pulling us in every direction, what does God really want us to know? In the midst of times when we feel lost and alone, what words from God ring out in the silence? Hear the words from Jesus’ baptism, the Transfiguration, and the time in the desert as words to you: you are God’s

(continued on page 2)
On Wednesday, January 18, six of our youth, their parents and mentors gathered in the fellowship hall for our make-up confirmation class. We watched a video entitled “Was the Reformation Really Started by a Control Freak?” We learned that John Calvin (the possible control freak) helped with the Reformation started by Martin Luther — through his prolific writing and belief that God is sovereign which is one of the basic tenets of our Presbyterian beliefs.

Confirmation is a class that is taught in most Presbyterian churches for youth in 8th or 9th grades (or up) to help explore more of what it means to be a Presbyterian and to consider whether to join the church. I try to emphasize to the youth (and parents) that this is a personal decision they will make, and at the end of the confirmation class a young person may not feel ready to profess his or her faith and join the church. This is totally normal and part of the journey of faith!

One of my colleagues told me the youth in his church create an unfinished stole during their confirmation process — as a symbol that faith is never finished — we should be nurtured, growing, changing and expanding our faith our entire lives! One of the phrases the youth learned on Wednesday was “Reformed, always Reforming”. “But what does this mean?” you might ask? Theologian Harold Nebelsick put it well: “We are the recipients of the activity of the Holy Spirit which reforms the church in accordance with the Word of God.” The church is God’s church, a creature of God’s Word and Spirit. As we say in our Brief Statement of Faith, “we belong to God.” God’s Word and Spirit guide the church’s forming and reforming. (From: www.presbyterianmission.org/whatwebelieve)

If you did not grow up Presbyterian or if you have perhaps forgotten what you learned in confirmation, I encourage you to attend the class Kerri is teaching on Sunday mornings called “Presbyterian 101”. One of the characteristics of Presbyterians is we like to do things “Decently and in Order” (thank you John Calvin!). It is important to know what we believe as a denomination, as a church, and how your beliefs line up with Reformed theology — or maybe not. You are also invited to attend one of our confirmation classes — check the church calendar for our schedule. But you need to act as our classes are few and the youth will be confirmed on May 14.

And please keep our confirmands in your prayers: Jeffrey Case, Nick Case, Niels Nickelson, Walt Pierce, James Rosati-Rowe and Zuling Quade.

From the Pastor (continued from page 1)

child. Listen to Jesus. Worship God.

Take some time this month to focus on what is important in 2017. This year, it may be most important for you to focus on a family member in need of care. Or to focus on your education. Or to deepen a spiritual life that has begun to feel a little flat. Or it may be time for you to get involved in the community in a new way. Our local schools are always looking for volunteers; you just need a background check and you’re ready to go.

Whatever you do, keep in mind God’s words to you from Scripture: you are God’s child. Listen to Jesus. Worship God.

Volunteer in the Nursery

Did you know that the God is in the church nursery? “Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the One who sent me.” (Mark 9:36-37) When you welcome a child in the name of Jesus you welcome Jesus himself. When we minister to children — God is with us.

If you wonder why so many people enjoy serving in the church nursery, now you know — God is there.

So please, volunteer today so that you too may be blessed with God’s presence and our little ones will be well cared for. Call Mary Todd Peters or Katherine Check to volunteer for a Sunday — or why not two? And if you are reading this and wondering if you are being called to volunteer — you are!
We are fast approaching the time of year when we celebrate Mardi Gras! We have a great tradition of hosting a Mardi Gras pancake dinner with musical entertainment, and we are excited to offer a great program this year. Please mark your calendars for Monday, February 27th at 6:00 pm. We will serve hot fresh pancakes with fruit and other fixins’. Our entertainment this year will be provided by the handbell choir and the chancel choir. It will be a fun night of music, celebration, and fellowship for all ages.

The Mardi Gras program also serves as a fundraiser for the NHPC Music Fund. Money from this fund goes toward paying for guest musicians, purchasing new instruments, and supporting workshops/learning opportunities for members of the church. This year we will be taking a small group to the Montreat Worship and Music Conference in June. We will be spending a week in the mountains learning about thoughtful worship planning and incorporating music into the service. Attendees will sing, play instruments, and participate in worship services that enhance our connection with God. Thank you for your support of the music program at NHPC, as it allows us these very special opportunities.

Please mark your calendars for 3 special Organ Recitals here at New Hope Presbyterian Church:

Sunday, March 26 at 4:00 pm
Sunday, June 11 at 4:00 pm
Sunday, September 24 at 4:00 pm

What would you do if you had the power to change someone’s life? What if God was calling you to do so? My name is Megan Mouton. I am a member of New Hope Presbyterian Church. I have recently started a blog titled “A Child After God’s Own Heart”. I was born in a Christian house, with Christian parents. I have always had a fairly strong faith. I want to share my faith stories with others in hope that by doing so I can inspire at least one other person. To bring the Glory to someone, or to strengthen a relationship with God. I love Jesus and I want to spread his blessings for he has been so generous with me. If you are willing to read my blog you can find it at https://achildaftergodsownheart.wordpress.com.

New Year. New Me. Same Jesus.

January 1, 2017

Every day I change and as I reflect back on the past year I am astonished to see the changes that have occurred. Through all these changes, one thing remains steady and never changing, I need Jesus and he is always there for me.

From Revelation 11:15

The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever.”

At times I try to do things on my own, as if I am strong enough to go through life without Jesus. However, every time when I fall Jesus is ready to catch me. He never leaves and never quits. I should know better, I make the same mistakes over and over. Nevertheless, Jesus never gets frustrated and never stops caring. He is always ready for me when I come back and admit my faults.

As this new year starts, I know that many things are going to change, but my God will never stop loving me, never stop caring about me, never leave me.

He will never stop loving you, never stop caring about you and never leave your side.

Happy New Year,

Megan Mouton
**Children’s Time with Mary Todd**

Preschool Bible Study Class on Baptism

**Scout Sunday – February 5th**

Troop and Pack 449 will be helping in our worship service during the Scout Sunday celebration on February 5.

After the worship service, the Scouts will be hosting a fundraiser Pasta lunch in the New Fellowship Hall. We will have a Jazz Ensemble (some of our Orange County school band members) playing during and after lunch.

Please plan to attend and support this important part of our church ministry.

**Our October Mission is OCIM**

What is Orange Congregations in Mission? (OCIM) is a non-profit ministry located in Hillsborough to provide a helping hand to those in our community in a crisis situation. Their Samaritan Relief Ministry has seen an increase in people needing help with the basics of life, such as food, shelter, water, electricity and clothing. Much publicity has been given to the national issue of food banks running out of food. At this point, the Samaritan Relief Ministry has not had to turn anyone away because of a lack of food, but the Samaritan Relief Ministry is only able to distribute what it has in stock.

What can we do? We can participate in the October Pantry Resupply as well as donate cash that they can use to buy perishable foods such as eggs, milk and meat. Their food needs are: canned vegetables and pinto beans (dry and canned), pasta sauce, tuna, soups, bath soap, bath tissue, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo and deodorant.

We will collect these items in a box next to the 2nd floor elevator. Checks for Samaritan Relief can be made out to New Hope Presbyterian Church with “Samaritan Relief” on the note line.
Epiphany Dinner Highlights

2017 UNC Hospice
Upcoming Bereavement Events

● **SPOUSE LOSS SUPPORT GROUP**
*For those experiencing the loss of their spouse*
Fridays, Feb. 24 through April 7
1:00-2:30 PM
Seymour Center
2551 Homestead Rd, Chapel Hill, NC 27516
To register for this group please call or email Gail Smith,
919-218-7995, Cynthia.Smith@unchealth.unc.edu

● **SHARING OUR STORIES**
*For anyone who has experienced a loss – HILLSBOROUGH AREA*
Held Tuesdays afternoons 1:00-2:30
Tuesdays Feb. 21 through April 4
At the PASSMORE CENTER (beside Sportsplex)
103 Meadowlands Dr., Hillsborough, NC
To register for this group please call or email Gail Smith,
919-218-7995. Cynthia.Smith@unchealth.unc.edu

● **SHARING OUR STORIES**
*For anyone who has experienced a loss – PITTSBORO AREA*
Held Thursdays, Jan. 12 to Feb. 23
10:00 – 11:30 AM
At the UNC Hospice Office
287 East St, Suite 221, Pittsboro
To register for this group please call or email
Ann Ritter, 984-215-2650, Ann.Ritter@unchealth.unc.edu

● **MEN’S COFFEE TIME**
We have a men’s coffee time for gentlemen who have lost
their spouse. It meets at local coffee shops every other
week. Gentlemen – if you are interested in meeting with
this group please email Gail at Cynthia.Smith@unchealth.
unc.edu and she will connect you with Mike

● **WINTER DAZE COFFEE TIMES**
An informal time for bereaved to connect over coffee –
open to everyone. RSVP is not necessary but will help in
knowing how much coffee to prepare.

**Held the following dates:**
Fri. Jan. 13:  10:00 -11:30 AM
Mon. Jan 23:  10:00 -11:30 AM
Fri. Feb. 3:  10:00 -11:30 AM
Will meet in the Home Health 2nd floor
conference room, Timberlyne Shopping Center,
1101 Weaver Dairy Rd., Chapel Hill

Call or email Gail Smith, 919-218-7995,
Cynthia.Smith@unchealth.unc.edu
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If viewing in Newsletter, Worship Volunteers on www.newhopepresusa.org has the most current version. If you cannot serve on your scheduled time, please notify the Church Office (919-942-4710). Alternate arrangements will be made and we'll correct our records in the Website, Newsletter, and Church Bulletins.
Since publishing the January issue of Historical Notes, I have learned that the Alexander Craig house shown in that article was on land that James Craig purchased in 1782 on the waters of Richland Fork. Alexander Craig was a son of John Craig, James Craig’s brother. Both John and James were sons of William Craige, one of the founders of New Hope Presbyterian Church. John Craig’s first recorded land was purchased in 1780 on either side of New Hope Creek and that land was about a mile away from James’ land. Furthermore, there are no recorded records of James selling his land to John or Alexander Craig. Thus, the house in the January article is more likely the house of James Craig or one of his descendants, none of whom were named Alexander.

Before commenting on the two-story Craig house in this article, you need to know more about William Craige’s four sons: John, Col. David, Samuel and James Craig. Note that William Craige always had an “e” on his surname, whereas his sons and later generations wrote their names as Craig. After the Revolutionary War, Col. David Craig (1733-1785) was given 3800 acres of land in Maury County, Tennessee for his service and all of his descendants either stayed in Tennessee or moved to other frontier states. Samuel Craig (1739-1790) married Mary Johnston and they had nine children. Samuel and Mary’s oldest son, William Craig, moved to Perry County, Alabama. Samuel and Mary’s other two sons did not have any living male descendants.

Only John Craig (1731-1816), the oldest son, and James Craig (1741-1821), the youngest son, stayed in Orange County, NC. John married Mary Blackwood, William Blackwood’s daughter, and they had ten children. John and Mary Craig’s second oldest son, Alexander (1773-1855), and his wife, Jane “Ginny” Strayhorn, had seven children. One of their four sons, David Craig (1810-1893), and his wife, Nancy Moore Strayhorn, had seven children and their oldest daughter, Martha Jane Craig, married Samuel David Blackwood. Martha Jane and Samuel Blackwood had nine children, the second oldest son, Robert Phillip Blackwood, married Alice Moore Craig. Robert P. and Alice lived in the house shown in the January issue, which has been confirmed by first cousins, John Blackwood and Ginny Nunn. John Blackwood’s brother, Sam and his wife, Marguerite Blackwood, have a brick from this house, dated 1845.

William Craig’s youngest son, James Craig, married Rebecca Ball and they had ten children. One of their six sons, David “Wilson” Craig, married Isabella Nelson and they had six children. David Wilson and Isabella Craig’s oldest son, James “Newton” Craig (1816-1879), married Emeline Moore Strayhorn (1823-1908) and they had ten children. The picture of the two-story house in this article was taken in 1886 and shows Emeline M. Strayhorn Craig, widow, and some of her children: Suggie, Nancy Jane, Addie, Tom, Alice Moore, and David Irvin Craig with his two children. David Irvin Craig wrote the first history of our church. Alice Moore Craig in this picture married her third cousin once removed, Robert P. Blackwood. Alice and Robert Blackwood had ten children. The oldest daughter, Annie Virginia Blackwood, was Ginny Nunn’s mother. The second oldest daughter, Miss Mattie E. Blackwood was a first-grade school teacher and played the piano and organ at our church. The third oldest son, Samuel Craig Blackwood, was John Blackwood’s father.

(Sources: John Blackwood, Ginny Nunn, Jack Tapp, Orange County Land Office and the family histories of the Craigs, the Blackwoods and the Strayhorns).
Welcome Debra! We hope you have had a chance to meet our new Retreat Coordinator and Financial Administrator. She has been with the team since November 28th and is already part of the family. Debra was born in Michigan, moved to California in her teens, has worked in several non-profit organizations and as an electrical engineer in Silicon Valley. She has been in North Carolina since 2003 with her husband, son, and 2 dogs. Stop by and say hello.

February, the Month of Love

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that who so ever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

What can we give on Valentine's Day
To show our love in a special way?
Chocolates, flowers, a trinket or two......
A card with a heart that says, “I love you.”
These expressions are nice, but there are better ways
To show your love to others every day!
A smile as you pass someone on the street...
A kind word to everyone you meet
Visit a shut-in wearing a cheerful smile...
Tutor and nurture a lonely child...
The whole world needs this gift of love,
That is given so freely by God above!
Praying that you will share your love with others,
Love and blessings,

Pansy Dodson

NHCCC 12th Annual Fundraiser

Save the date! Join us for our 12th annual fundraiser, “Tastes & Tunes” on Saturday, April 8th, 2017. Enjoy live music and eat delicious food in support of New Hope Camp and Conference Center. There will be a ‘Wall of Wine’ and you will have the opportunity to bid on local handcrafted items. The event is from 6:00 pm-8:30 pm in the Dining Hall. Tickets are $20 per person and can be purchased in advance at the office or on the evening of the event.

Please join us for an evening of fun and fellowship as we raise money for Summer Camp programs and facilities.

If you would like to donate a handcrafted/handmade item to the event please contact us at the office at 919-942-4716 or email info@newhopeccc.org.

Want a fun summer and earn money! Join us for a fun summer. Hiring is in full swing for our summer staff opportunities. The application process is online.

We continue our registrations for Spring Intersession Camps and Summer Camps.

We are always in need of scholarship money. There are so many children who are unable to come to camp but would truly benefit from the wonderful experience at New Hope Camp.

For all additional information go to our website www.newhopeccc.org or contact the office at 919-942-4716, info@newhopeccc.org.
**February Birthdays**

- Paul Andrews
- Andrew Prioli
- Andre Pierce
- Eva Aycock
- Harriet Isbell
- Kerri Hefner
- ShiLi Quade
- Kay Sharpe
- Jennifer Selvidge
- Chris Gurr
- Amy Cannon
- Stephanie Wittmann
- Christopher Kohler
- Lee Ann Brown
- Lawrence McAdams
- Daniel Slocum
- Anne Montgomery
- Rebecca Tobin
- Virginia Brown
- Gregory Skarda
- Ahren Johnson
- Svenja Nickelson
- Angus Aycock
- John Blackwood

**February Anniversaries**

- Barbara & Michael Murphy
- Lynn & Tom Spragens
- Elizabeth & Lincoln Pratson

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**Youth Calendar & News**

**February 5, 12:15 pm** – Boy Scout Luncheon

**February 12, 12:15 pm** – Confirmation Class

**February 19, 12:15 pm** – Confirmation Class

**February 26** – NO YOUTH PROGRAM

**March 3-5** – Youth Group trip to CROSS Mission Program at Myers Park Presbyterian Church. CROSS stands for (Charlotte Reach Out Spirituality and Study) and is an outreach program based in MPPC in Charlotte, NC. This will be our third experience with CROSS and the youth are very excited about returning to this wonderful program. The youth will be taking advantage of the opportunity for ministry in two different urban situations. Our participants have found that their work for others brings them closer to Christ in surprising ways. It is the hope of CROSS that youth and adults will be inspired by their experiences to return to their communities and find ways to serve in local agencies.

**March 17-19** – High School Retreat Camp, Willow Run

**March 19, 12:15 pm** – Confirmation

**April 23, 12:15 pm** – Confirmation/Youth plan worship

**April 30, 9:30 am** – Youth and confirmation plan worship and lead worship

**May 7, 12:15 pm** – Confirmation and session lunch

**May 14, 11:00 am** – CONFIRMATION SUNDAY

**June 4, 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm** – Lake Party at Jordan Lake (families invited)

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**Mark your calendars for the Music Program's Annual Fat Tuesday & Mardi Gras Celebration**

**Monday, February 27th at 6:00 pm**

The choirs are providing a scrumptious pancake supper and musical entertainment.

*You won't want to miss it!*

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**Online Church Calendar**

http://tinyurl.com/NHPC-Calendar
Reports & Announcements

Usher Training
Usher training will be Feb. 26 right after worship. At this training I will go over some of the basics of ushering. David McLamb, member of worship committee, has volunteered to be head usher, meaning that he will help us fill in gaps when we don’t have ushers on a Sunday morning, and he will help coordinate ushering for special services/large-attendance services. So David will speak for a bit on 2/26 about how to handle large attendance.

Boy Scout Troop 449
The Cub Pack is up and running. We’re still looking for any young man, from 1st thru 5th grade, or ages 7-10, who’s interested in what Cubs have to offer. If you know families with boys that are interested, contact Ed or Al.

The Scouts enjoyed an annual January city/historical tour. This year, they visited Savannah, GA on Jan 14-16.

The Scouts are working hard on the Scout Sunday worship service on February 5, and in addition are planning another Pasta Lunch fundraiser with a jazz ensemble.

If you know young men from 11-17 years of age who may benefit from the fellowship, training, and leadership skills available in the Scouting Program, please go to our website: troop449.org or see Ed Lowdermilk or Al Townsend for more details.

Presbyterian Women’s Circle
For this month’s meeting, on Tuesday, February 7, we will meet in the Old Fellowship Hall and assemble the Annual Valentine’s Gift Bags for all NHPC college students, homebound members, and others facing illness or other situations. Homemade cookies, candy and personal care items are preferred.

Thanks to all the contributors for this month’s Newsletter.
We are always looking for new contributors to the newsletter. If you’d be interested in writing something about faith journeys, mission service, people, or occasions you’ve found inspiring, let me know. If you have taken pictures of church people or events, send them in.

Submit your contributions to: newsletter@newhopepresusa.org
Have submissions in by the 20th for inclusion in the following month’s newsletter.

– Clare Strayhorn

New Editor for Newsletter !!
Clare Strayhorn has taken over the task of editing our monthly newsletter. In the short time she has assisted while learning the process, with plenty of experience in the publishing trade, she’s already taught me as much as I’ve taught her! Please thank her for her commitment, and keep those articles and pictures coming.

– Al T

Men’s Prayer Breakfast
Meets Thursdays at 6:30 am at Bob Evans Restaurant. Come enjoy the fellowship, humor, discussion, and spirituality of our early-bird group.

Concerns & Celebrations

Homebound Members

Content removed due to internet privacy concerns

Remember in Prayer

Content removed due to internet privacy concerns

Usher Training

Boy Scout Troop 449

Presbyterian Women’s Circle

Thanks to all the contributors for this month’s Newsletter.

New Editor for Newsletter !!

Men’s Prayer Breakfast

– Clare Strayhorn
New Hope Presbyterian Church
4701 NC Highway 86
Chapel Hill, NC  27514

Mission Statement: New Hope Presbyterian Church is a family of intergenerational Christians, bound together by over 250 years of traditional uplifting worship and service to God through our missions and fellowship with one another. We are committed to the ministry of New Hope Camp and Conference Center, and to local, national and international mission programs. We devote ourselves to support our members and community in need; to be good stewards of financial, natural, and human resources; and to share our faith in God with those who cross our path.

Church Information
Sunday School 9:45 am
Worship Service 11:00 am
Office:  919-942-4710
Pastor: Rev. Kerri Hefner: 919-903-6172
E-Mail: newhopepres@mindspring.com
Website: newhopepresusa.org
Calendar: tinyurl.com/NHPC-Calendar
New Hope Presbytery: nhpresbytery.org
Presbyterian Church USA: pcusa.org