

Mt. Hope United Church of Christ

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church pastor

Rev. J. Lloyd Spencer

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Office Hours: 9:00 a.m.-Noon

church secretary

Shirley Connor

Office hours:

Wednesday, Thursday & Friday

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

consistory president

Sharon Moore

choir director / organist

Tim Hucks

custodian

Brenda Currie



Mt. Hope Messenger

December, 2013



“Peaceful” isn’t exactly the word I’d chose for the season we’re going into. With all the hustle and bustle of Thanksgiving followed by all the hustle and bustle of Advent and Christmas our lives are anything but peaceful. The more I think about it, though, the more I’m convinced that even the rat-race of this time of year might be a really meaningful experience.

When we think about the Christmas story we remember that things really weren’t all that peaceful then. The Romans had taken over control of the country. King Herod was doing his political thing. The religious leaders were trying to build up their own power without upsetting the Roman authorities. The story even tells us that across the land people were coming by the scores to be registered by the government. Have you ever been to New York or Chicago? Imagine a little town in the mid-east with all those people converging on it. All those concerns and all those people, peaceful might not be the right word to use.

Maybe it’s good for us to remember that life still went on. Into the middle of all that hustle and bustle a baby was born. In the middle of the personal strife, the political strife, and the religious strife a baby was born. It was into those uncertain, troubled, and turbulent times that a son was presented. Maybe the hectic pace of the seasons is meant to remind us that life still goes on and that we don’t have to be pulled down by the problems of life that never seem to go away.

All those years ago Jesus was born with a message of strength, courage, and hope that has the ability to lift us up above anything that life has to throw at us. Instead of letting the turbulence of life pull us down maybe it’s time that we looked at this story once more and be reminded that it was for real lives that this story was intended for. I don’t know about you but that makes things a lot more peaceful for me.

Lloyd

Mt. Hope United Church of Christ
Consistory Meeting Minutes
October 10, 2013

Members Present: Linda Ayers, Bill Craft, Bennie Gerner, Lloyd Gilliam, Cathy Gossett, Clifton Greeson, Bob Hamlett, Sharon Moore, Chery Royal, Becky Stafford.

Trustees Present: Harden Phipps, Wesley Reece

Pastor: Rev. Lloyd Spencer

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Gloria Apple and Carmen Cox presented to the Consistory the Future Directions that the Mount Hope Youth want to take since the Loaves and Fishes closed. Gloria Apple said that she just tried letting go and letting God lead her where he wanted to take her. The youth were so involved in helping others that she contacted a friend who had been helping with schools in the community. She heard about Meals4Kids and got information from the person in charge. After meeting with Lisa Moser, Carmen Cox, and Helen Busick, it was decided that this was a project they wanted to bring before the Consistory. The Meals4Kids Mission was started at Tabernacle Church and now at Mt. Pleasant and Pleasant Union Churches. Backpacks are packed with two meals, two breakfasts and two snacks to be delivered every Thursday to Nathanael Greene and Alamance Elementary Schools. Mt. Hope would take one week per month to deliver 20 backpacks to needy families at Nathanael Greene School. Gloria stated that at the youth meeting the youth wanted to do things with other churches and this was a good way to get them involved with feeding the children in our community. Carmen Cox said that each backpack would cost \$7.00 per child and would have nutritional foods for child and/or family. Family names would be confidential. Sharon Moore affirmed that this was an excellent idea to involve our youth with other churches. A motion was made that we accept the Mission4Kids Project and every Consistory member unanimously seconded. The motion carried.

It was reported that the Golden Age Supper was a success and that the youth helped serve 77 people. Bill Craft had the devotion focusing on Saint Thomas or Doubting Thomas and how Thomas needed proof of Jesus's crucifixion.

A quorum was established and Sharon reviewed the proposed agenda.

Updates:

- There were no negative responses from the Congregational meeting.
- Incorporation update – Cathy Gossett and Sharon Moore needed additional information to complete the application process. Sharon contacted the national UCC attorney for recommendations. The attorney stated there were no national guidelines required in the incorporation process. Cathy contacted Jared. Sharon and Cathy will move forward with the application process after acquiring additional information.
- The carpet was cleaned in the Nursery at a cost of \$80.00. Tracey Nelson and the Underwood family cleaned, organized and sanitized all the toys in the nursery. Old toys were rotated out and replaced. Many thanks to Colton for the donation of some of his toys.
- The side doors on the Sunday School Building have been repaired by Brian Alcorn who did a wonderful job.

Secretary's Report: A motion was made and seconded to approve the September 12th consistory minutes as written. The motion carried.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the September 26th consistory minutes as written. The motion carried.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the September 29th consistory meeting as written. The motion carried.

Trustee's Report:

- Harden Phipps reported that the heating system was up and running after it had been patched a few times.
- Benny Gerner stated that the Maintenance Committee met and has been talking about using the Aquatherm pipes.
- Sharon stated that tonight we need to have a time line for completion of the heating system.
- Harden suggested that the Trustees and Maintenance Committee write a set of specs installed by the manufacturer's recommendation. He stated that he can have 3 bids to present by our next consistory meeting November 14th.

- Discussion was held regarding a “turn-key” installation process and company’s responsibilities
- Bill Craft suggested that a task analysis of work performed be conducted.
- Harden recommended that the yearly HVAC maintenance agreement with Kay Heating and Air be put on hold since we will be getting a new system.
- An invoice from Kay Heating and Air was presented for replacing 3 disconnect blades that were bad. A motion was made and seconded to approve payment of the bill.

- General fund receipts \$13,898.15.
- General fund disbursements \$15,202.09.
- General fund ending balance (\$4,870.23). This reflects a negative balance.

Major expenses in September were maintenance on the chiller, replace partial pipes and time clock to Kay Heating and A/C, the pastor’s benefit package and September salaries.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the September treasurer’s reports as presented. The motion carried.

Bill presented the Manager’s Quarterly report as follows:

- A CD withdrawal and cash deposit totaling \$10,839.79 was deposited on 7/25/2013. This included: \$1,200 (cash) + \$8,817.11 (parsonage interest) + (redemption of one of two Kinder Morgan CD’s).
- A transfer \$572.25 occurred on 8/29/2013 from the Special Projects Youth Account and the account was closed. The transfer went to our GF maintenance line for the Nativity Scene maintenance and is in the August total.
- A transfer of \$1,120.51 occurred in September when the All Youth account manager requested moving this to the general fund for a sanctuary project system.

Sharon Moore said thank you to the three committee members: Bill Craft, Cathy Gossett, and Becky Stafford for the great work in getting the Financial Report together.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Manager’s Quarterly report as presented. The motion carried.

Bill Craft suggested that we consider starting a new fund at Mount Hope to build back our financial reserves. Bill stated that we need to put a good plan together to take care of future budgetary needs. Benny Gerner stated that the congregation needs to be educated on the churches financial needs and how we can all work together to rebuilding and sustaining church funds.

Committee Reports:

Proposed 2014 Budget – Bill/Cliff: A draft of the proposed budget was presented by Bill Craft. A motion to accept this proposed budget was made and seconded. The motion carried. Future

Pastor’s Report:

- The Ministry Teams have all met recently.
- A movie night will be held Friday, October 11th by the Social Concerns Committee.
- The Social Concerns Committee is working on collecting school supplies.
- Pastor Lloyd Spencer will be teaching a Bible Study class once a month. He will be teaching on Leviticus and Exodus chapters. Everyone is welcome to attend.
- After attending the Western NC Association Conference Lloyd was excited to report that Wedgewood Baptist Church in Charlotte, NC was accepted in to the United Church of Christ. He reported he enjoyed the worship experiences.
- Rev. Spencer stated that he will leave October 14-18th for continuing education event. The topic to be discussed “Who we are for the Future.”
- Rev. Spencer plans to take vacation on October 20th. Gary Owens will fill in for Rev. Spencer. Lloyd will be back in the office October 22nd.
- Benny Gerner reported the Sanctuary Projector Proposal is still being discussed and researched. This project will be tabled until a later date pending additional information obtained by Rev. Spencer.

Treasurer’s Report: Bill reported the September, 2013 treasurer’s report as follows:

- General fund beginning balance (\$3,566.29). This reflects a negative balance.

Constitution task force meetings will be scheduled for 2014.

Constitution Revision Task Force Update - Benny
A motion was made and seconded to table the Constitution Revision.

Nomination Committee - Sharon: Many new people are very interested in running for consistory and trustee and have accepted willingly. For the trustee position the following names are: Stephen Shue and Trevor Bolton. The list of candidates for the consistory are: Gloria Apple, Lori Arrington, Connie Blakesley, Carmen Cox, and Randy Underwood. Cliff Greeson is eligible to run for re-election for a 2nd term.

Finance Committee – Cliff/Bill: Bill placed an announcement in the newsletter and bulletin for each committee chair to present their budget request to the finance committee. Not all committees have reported their requests to the finance committee yet. The proposed budget will be presented to consistory at the October meeting.

New Business: No new business noted

Closing Prayer by Rev. Lloyd Spencer

The meeting adjourned at 9:44 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Linda Ayers, Assistant Secretary



Hello Ladies! Thank you to all of you who helped in any way with the Chicken Pie/Barbecue Supper. It could not happen without all the hard work and co-operation of so many. Virginia Barker headed up our very successful bazaar committee: Cynthia Morris, Mary Neese, Stephanie Warren, Cheryl Royal, Ruth Harris, and Lorena Levens. Some of these ladies must have spent hours at their sewing machines working on various items to sell. Our quilting ladies (Cynthia, Ruth and Mary Catherine) made numerous lovely quilts. One was for the raffle (won by the Bartenfields) and another which sold before the actual bazaar! Jaynee Brown even made her chow-chow before she went for her hip replacement! Because of the contributions of so many our grand total was \$1,376.95.

A few of us attended the Church Women United World Community Day celebration at Coble's Lutheran Church on Friday night November 1st. We enjoyed a light meal at 6:30 PM, followed by the program "Walking Through Doors of Opportunity".

Our Bible Study took an unexpected bump in the road in November, as Rev. Spencer was admitted to hospital and even though he was released by the dates of our meetings we gave him a break. I enjoyed meeting with both circles and attempting to lead the program material. Our next meeting will be a joint one at Linda Miller's on Tuesday December 10th. Please bring finger foods to share. Spouses are welcome also.

One of our dear, faithful members, Annie Mae Victor, was laid to rest on Sunday November 17th. We extend our Christian sympathy to Pattie and Steve and the rest of her extended family.

We look forward to having Jaynee Brown back with us again soon. We need to keep Peggie Coble in our prayers as she has another cataract surgery and continues to deal with other medical issues. Nancy and Jim Wimbish are in the process of moving from their house to an apartment. This is always a tedious and exhausting process, so we wish them strength to carry on until they are happily settled. Nancy is doing well with her therapy.

Love and Blessings, Elizabeth Craft



Greensboro Urban Ministry: On November 13, we sent 198 pounds of food to Urban Ministry. What a blessing! Thank you all so much. They were so appreciative of all we do. Christmas is coming soon so let's fill up those containers so we can get it delivered before Christmas. What a great gift that would be!! Our December collection dates will be Sunday, December 1st, and Sunday, December 8th. For your convenience a basket has been placed in the Narthex for your donations of non-perishable foods. There is also a container for any monetary donations that you may wish to share. There are also containers in the breezeway. We pray for God's blessings on all of us as we support this much needed ministry. Merry Christmas to you and your family and all those we share with!



Friends and Neighbors

A group of 20 Friends & Neighbors enjoyed a trip to Bear Creek, NC on Tuesday, November 19, to visit the Southern Supreme Fruitcake Company. We shared breakfast on the way, then enjoyed a tour of Southern Supreme. It was fun watching fruitcakes, cookies and special candies being made, and the “sample bar” they provided proved they were all delicious. Most of us bought Christmas goodies to eat and share during the holidays. On the way home, we stopped for lunch at Hayley Bales’ in Siler City where we had a delicious meal and enjoyed their Christmas decorations.

Join us for our December meeting in the church Fellowship Hall at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, December 17. We will have a Christmas sing-along, a Christmas story, and good fellowship as we celebrate the birth of our Savior. Please remember to bring a few canned goods for the food bank; we will be sharing food for the hungry this year instead of gifts (no gifts). We will then share lunch at the Golden Coral in Burlington around 12:30.



Cliff Greeson (our driver and photographer) with Mr. Scott, the owner of Southern Supreme



Women’s Bazaar Quilt Raffle: On Sunday morning, November 3rd, following the worship service, the drawing for the beautiful quilt that was raffled at the Women’s Bazaar on Saturday took place. Ruth Harris drew the winning ticket which belonged to Jerry and Nancy Bartenfield!

Congratulations to the Bartenfield's for winning the quilt. Our quilting ladies worked many long hours to make this beautiful quilt. We hope the Bartenfield's enjoy it for years to come!



Cynthia Morris & Ruth Harris



Jerry Bartenfield poses with Ruth Harris and Mary Catherine Moser as he picks up his quilt.



2013 Ladies Bazaar: Thanks to everyone who participated in the Bazaar and making things. We made \$1675. 00. That's the best we have ever done since I have been Chairman. I want to thank the ladies that made the quilt for the drawing. That went over very well. Nancy Bartenfield won the quilt and was so excited. She kept sending Jerry back to buy more tickets ever so often. It took us two days to set up and price everything. It was great. Also I wish to thank all the ladies that helped with the sales; we couldn't have done it without you! Virginia



The 2013 Chicken Pie / Barbecue Supper was also a great success again this year. Many thanks to everyone who helped in the preparations and in

the actual day of serving the meals. There is so much that goes in to preparing for the big day and the folks at Mt. Hope are always willing to put in the extra time to help!







Fund Raiser: Cold weather is here again and it's soup time! Church members will be working with Cliff Greeson to make his vegetable/meat soup as a fund raiser for the church to help meet budget needs. It will be available for pick up on Saturday, December 14, from 8:00 to 12:00 noon. Cost is \$6/quart and may be picked up at the church. Please contact any member of the Consistory or the Supper Committee to place your order as it will be pre-sold. Cut-off date to order is Sunday, December 8, 2013.

To place your order call either:

Clifton Greeson – 336-580-3790
 Barbara Greeson – 697-1930
 Gloria Apple – 312-8951
 Pat Branson – 697-1820



CHRISTMAS PROGRAM AND LUNCH – December 15th – directly after church

Our Christmas Program and lunch will be a combination of things this year. We would love to have **all ages participate.**

We will be having a Birthday Party for Jesus, a Christmas Carol Sing-A-Long with Christmas Memories. If you would like **share a poem, a song, a Christmas tradition, or a Christmas memory** please see Lorie Arrington, Carmen Cox or Gloria Apple so we can get you on the list. Thanks

Before our Christmas program, we will have a **soup and sandwich lunch**. The soup will be provided by Cliff Greeson and Jeryl Apple. If you would like to donate an item for the lunch there is a **signup sheet** in the breezeway. Also this year we would like to ask if you have a favorite Christmas cookie or Christmas candy that you would like to make. We will have a large dessert table as a special decoration. We would love to fill it with wonderful cookie and candies for each of us to try. The **signup sheet for the sandwich items needed** is in the breezeway, along with another **signup sheet** for the **cookies and candy**. Thanks



As you can see from the photo of the beautiful mums below, our Good Earth Garden Club has been busy making things look good around the church. The Club will be meeting for their Christmas Party on Tuesday, December 3rd at 6:30 p.m. They will be meeting with Rita Alcorn.



It's that time of year again! Time to decorate the church for Christmas! We will decorate Monday, December 2 at 6:00. We will serve a light supper, so please come and join us for fun and fellowship! Remember, the more helpers we have, the less time it will take! It's a great way to get in the Christmas spirit!



The Poinsettia Fund - The Music and Worship Committee has decided to make a change this year in our Christmas tradition. We are NOT going to order poinsettias this year to decorate our

church. Instead, we are going to give you an opportunity to donate money in memory or in honor of your loved ones. We are calling this the Poinsettia Fund and the money will be divided between Urban Ministry and Meals4Kids Mission. An insert will be placed in the bulletin on Sunday, December 22, listing the names of the memorials and honorees. Instead of purchasing a poinsettia, we hope you will donate \$10 toward this worthy cause. Please turn in your donations by Sunday, December 15. The form is included at the end of this newsletter. Thank you!



Everyone is invited to attend the Christmas Eve Service which will be held Tues. December 24th at 8:00 p.m. Please join us in a service of music, scripture, Holy Communion and candlelight.



The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that grants us an opportunity to recognize and honor those who have served and continue to serve in lay and authorized ministries of the United Church of Christ. One of the unique aspects of the Christmas Fund is that the funds provide direct financial assistance to individual UCC clergy and lay church employees – the funds do not support programs or institutions, but people.

During 2012, you provided gifts totaling \$1,465,437.55. Thank You!

Our goal for the 2013 Offering is to raise \$1,700,000 for the vital ministries of Pension Supplementation, Health Premium Supplementation, Emergency Grants, and Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks.

The theme of the 2013 offering is We Have Come to Bear the Light of Christ. We will receive this offering on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 22.



Address Change: Jim and Nancy Wimbish have moved. Their new address is: 7548 Woodspring Drive, Apartment 102, Whitsett, NC 27377. Their phone number has not changed. It is still 336-449-5901. They will no longer have internet access though. Please make note of this change.



Thank you: Words can't express my appreciation for all the prayers, cards, phone calls and acts of kindness given to me after my surgery and recovery. This meant so much. I am so blessed to have my family and also be part of such a wonderful, caring church family. God bless each of you. Jaynee Brown

Thank you all so much for your continued support with cards and phone calls. We are so blessed to belong to such a loving and caring church family. Please remember all of our family in your prayers. Thank you and may God bless you! Love, Nancy Wimbish

Thank you: To the members of Mt. Hope Congregation: Thank you for the calls and many cards during my recent convalescence. You have always been a caring congregation and you have never lost that trait. I pray that God continues to bless you. With love, Betty Settlemyre



Three Catawba College alumni were honored during the college's Homecoming Weekend activities as recipients of a Distinguished Alumnus Award on Saturday, October 19. The honorees include 1995 alumna Alison Horner Klopp of Mooresville; 1969 alumnus Edwin Stuart Powell, Jr. of Holly Springs; and 1950 alumnus the Rev. Banks D. Shepherd of Thomasville.

These awards are given annually by Catawba's Alumni Association to individuals who have served

their community, distinguished themselves in their profession, and have served the Catawba College community.

Catawba President Brien Lewis made the presentations, assisted by the president of the Alumni Association Board of Directors, Clarke Leichte '91 of Black Mountain, and vice president of the alumni records and recognition committee, Julie Ramsey Lewis '84 of Charlotte.

Lewis also recognized Tom Childress '64, who retired in May as senior vice president responsible for development and athletics.

The Rev. Banks D. Shepherd

The Rev. Banks D. Shepherd of Thomasville is a 1950 alumnus of Catawba College. He came to the college from his hometown of Whitsett and while a student was a member of the Adelphians, an organization for pre-ministerial students and editor of the college magazine.

From Catawba, he went on to Lancaster Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania, where he earned his bachelor of divinity degree. Twenty years later, he earned his master of divinity degree from this same seminary. He completed post-graduate work at the Human Relations Institute of Fisk University.

He was ordained in June 1953 by the Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Since that time, he has served pastorates in the Piedmont area of North Carolina, including Brookford E & R Charge in Hickory; Boger/St. James charge in Mt. Pleasant, New Gilead UCC in Concord, Smyrna/Bethany Charge UCC in Claremont, Bethany UCC in Winston-Salem, and Beck's UCC in Lexington.

Rev. Shepherd's life has centered on his faith, including his service. He has been active over many decades in social action causes of the Southern Synod E&R and the UCC. He has served as past president of the Southern chapter of the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, a past secretary and president of the board of trustees for Blowing Rock Assembly Grounds, and as director of various camps held at the UCC's Johns River Valley Camp in Collettesville. He authored *New Gilead Church: A History of the German Reformed People on Coldwater* in 1966 during his pastorate at New Gilead UCC in Concord. He served as chaplain of the Lexington Lions Club and served as steering committee and president of the Board for Eastern Catawba Cooperative Christian Ministry.

To commemorate his 1946 graduation from Nathanael Greene High School, he established a Class of '46 Scholarship Fund to encourage future graduates of that school to pursue their college education.

A longtime contributor to the Catawba Alumni Fund, Rev. Shepherd has consistently encouraged his young parishioners to attend Catawba College. Married to wife Eulene, the two are members of First Reformed UCC in Lexington and parents of children David, Howard, Elizabeth and Robert, and grandparents to three.



December Birthdays

- 2nd Cindy Hughes, Rocky Royal
- 3rd Linda Miller, Christine Robinson
- 4th Chelsey Cox, Tim Deaton
- 5th Douglas Clapp, Bennie Gerner
- 7th Carolyn Simpson
- 8th Lauren Moser
- 9th Brenda Hutchen
- 10th Kent Taylor
- 11th David Roberts
- 12th Emily Neal
- 13th Dallas Belvin, Lance Belvin, Jim Brewer,
Stacy Gardner, Cory Underwood, Megan
Underwood, Sherron Whitesell
- 15th Cheyenne Wilkerson
- 16th Jason Hughes
- 17th Barry Andrews, Mary Beth Day
- 20th Elizabeth Craft
- 22nd Denny Ingold, Harold Reece, Sr.
- 23rd Brenda Currie, Todd Chapmon, Jerry
Greeson
- 24th Tracy Brady, Carlene Neese
- 25th Don Kirkman
- 26th Anne Welker
- 28th Philip Brewer, Cathy Gossett, Andrew
Needham, Kenny Taylor
- 29th Darce Greeson, Tamara Paul, J.R. Shoffner,
Jr., Abby Strouth, Kyle Whitesell
- 30th Annie Lee Apple

December Anniversaries

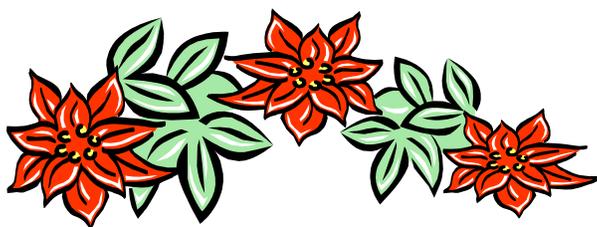
- 22nd Bill & Linda Miller
Goldie & Carol Sawyer



December Events

- 1st Collecting for Urban Ministry
9:45 a.m., Sunday School
11:00 a.m., Worship
- 2nd 6:00 p.m., Decorate the church
- 3rd 6:30 p.m., Garden Club Christmas Party
- 4th 6:45 p.m., Handbell Choir Rehearsal
7:30 p.m., Choir Rehearsal
- 8th Collecting for Urban Ministry
Deadline to order soup
9:45 a.m., Sunday School
11:00 a.m., Worship
- 10th 6:30 p.m., Joint Ladies Meeting
- 11th 6:45 p.m., Handbell Choir Rehearsal
7:30 p.m., Choir Rehearsal
- 12th 7:00 p.m., Consistory
- 14th Pick up Soup for Fundraiser
- 15th 9:45 a.m., Sunday School
11:00 a.m., Worship
12:00 p.m., Lunch and Christmas Program
- 17th 10:30 a.m., Friends & Neighbors
- 19th 7:00 p.m., Consistory/Staff Christmas
Dinner
- 22nd 9:45 a.m., Sunday School
11:00 a.m., Worship – Christmas Offering
3:00 p.m., Youth Christmas Party
- 24th 8:00 p.m., Christmas Eve Service
- 25th Christmas Day
- 29th 9:45 a.m., Sunday School
11:00 a.m., Worhsip





Poinsettia Fund

The Poinsettia Fund - This year instead of Poinsettias, we are giving you the opportunity to donate money in memory or honor of your loved ones. The money collected in this Fund will be divided between Urban Ministry and Meals4Kids Mission. Please turn in your donations along with a completed form by Sunday, December 15. Make your check payable to **Mt. Hope UCC** and place in the offering plate or mail it in to the church office by December 15th.

An insert listing the names of the contributors and those being honored or memorialized will be included in the bulletin on December 22nd.

Name _____

Phone _____

Amount Enclosed _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____



YOU ARE INVITED TO A BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR JESUS

WHERE: MT HOPE FELLOWSHIP HALL

WHEN: SUNDAY DECEMBER 15TH

**TIME: DIRECTLY AFTER WORSHIP SERVICE, LUNCH &
PROGRAM**

TO CELEBRATE THE GREATEST CHRISTMAS GIFT OF ALL

***IN LIEU OF GIFTS, PLEASE BRING CANNED
FOOD ITEMS FOR GREENSBORO URBAN MINISTRY**

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**

A green cross with a white star on top, serving as a decorative element in the Christmas greeting.