



Financial Corner:
April 1, 2016 - December 31, 2016

	Given, YTD (10 months)	Expenses, YTD (10 months)	Giving Over Expenses, YTD (+/-)
Fiscal 2016 (4/1/16 - 3/31/17)	\$1,763,977	\$1,838,897	(\$ 74,919)
Fiscal 2015 (4/1/15 - 3/31/16)	\$1,859,298	\$1,819,008	\$ 40,290

Questions? Feel free to call our Church Administrator David MacFarlane at 678.533.0567



February Prime Time



March Prime Time will feature The Bitsyland Band. Music and humor guaranteed to make you laugh and tap your toes! Fiddle tunes, Pop standards, Gospel, and a touch of Bluegrass.

- Tuesday, March 7, 2017, at 11:30 am.
- \$8.00 - includes lunch.
- Deadline for reservations is March 3rd.
- Call the office at (770) 469-5856.

The Cross Tie Newsletter

February 15, 2017

TouchPoint Ministries Come Together



On February 7, 2017, TouchPoint Ministries held its first annual luncheon and planning meeting after church. TouchPoint Ministries is being formed anew at Smoke Rise by bringing together several personal touch ministries that already form a tapestry of Christian care and watchfulness over dear and vulnerable church members during some of life's most challenging and difficult times. TouchPoint Ministries borrows its name from the TouchPoint team that has been faithfully sending personal prayer cards to home and facility bound members to encourage and brighten days for many years. In

addition to cards, a smaller circle of the TouchPoint team has been visiting church members who live in nursing care facilities near them.

When I arrived at Smoke Rise as the new Associate Pastor, the TouchPoint Team was flourishing under the faithful leadership of Sue Pritchett who organized and tracked the monthly work and personal touch that flowed from this ministry. And I quickly discovered that she was not alone. Smoke Rise also had a bereavement team that took on a similar mission under the leadership of Carolyn Springston. After the loss of a loved one, the Bereavement Team reaches out, sends cards, and walks into the future with those who grieve. It did not take long for me to experience the overlap of the TouchPoint Team and the Bereavement Team when home bound couples suddenly became home bound widows or widowers.

Not so long ago, I was visiting a widow who was nearing the end of life, and she was resting quietly underneath a handmade quilt delivered to her by our Smoke Rise Stitches team. As I thought about the warmth and love of those who reach out to others during life's transitions and most difficult times, the grace-filled tapestry of personal touch ministries at our church became more visible to me. Each of these personal touch teams were faithfully working on one corner of the tapestry, but their ministries were always intersecting and overlapping in ways that made the work of the Spirit dynamic and visible. Out of this realization, each of these teams met together for the first time to plan and celebrate the launch of TouchPoint Ministries.

Under the banner of TouchPoint Ministries, we hope to work together for years to come, building on a foundation of personal care and touch that forms a tapestry of Christian care in times of transition, need, and difficulty. Jesus said that we would be known as his disciples by the love we have for one another. We invite you answer the call and get involved in one of our TouchPoint Ministries. If you are interested in more information, please e-mail bmciel@smokerisebaptist.org, and we will put you in touch with a team where sharing your gifts will be welcome by all.

Rev. Bart McNiel

TOUCHPOINT MINISTRIES

Prayer Cards

Sending personal cards to home and facility bound members to encourage and brighten days

Visitation

Visiting home and facility bound members with smiles, prayers, and personal touch

Grief Support

Reaching out to others after the loss of a loved one and walking with them into the future

Stitches

Sharing the warmth of Christian love with handmade quilts and blankets during difficult time

Family Touch

Connecting working families through fellowship, service, and mutual support

Can I Ask That?



"I didn't want to ask this to the larger group, so can I just ask you?" This is how the conversations usually started. On Sunday nights our high school students have always stuck around talking and asking questions, so we decided to just formalize our time and call it "Can I Ask That?" We've started with a formal list of questions that we are working through, but we are also creating of list of other questions that we want to ask as well. Our goal is to provide a space where students can ask questions that they are asking everywhere else, with the focus being of how these questions impact their faith. It is enlightening to facilitate this group as they ask questions and dialogue with each other about what they believe. It's a formative time when students move from "Can I ask that?" to "I can live that out."

THE CROSS TIE ISSUE 1702P2 SMOKE RISE BAPTIST CHURCH Send feedback, information and updates to: crossie@smokerisebaptist.org

Volunteer in Clarkston?

You can volunteer individually, as a group, on a regular basis, or just once in a while. There will be a training and orientation session Sunday, March 5th after the 11 AM service of worship in Room 223.

SMOKE RISE BAPTIST CHURCH
5901 Hugh Howell Road
Stone Mountain, GA 30087



THE CROSS TIE (USPS 002172)
is published semimonthly by
Smoke Rise Baptist Church
Address Correction Requested

Periodical Postage
Paid at Stone Mountain
Georgia 30086

Submission Deadline: Wed,
4:30pm, week before
publication

Smoke Rise Baptist Church | 5901 Hugh Howell Road | Stone Mountain, GA 30087 | 770.469.5856
www.SmokeRiseBaptist.org

Journeys – Lenten Session Wednesdays at 6 pm

Pastors Lenten Bible Study:
Making All Things New
Patterns of Creation in Scripture



On April 30th at 7 p.m., the Smoke Rise Choir will perform Franz Joseph Haydn's, The Creation. Leading up to this special performance, Dr. Chris George and Rev. Bart McNiel will lead a six week study during Lent titled "Making All Things New: Patterns of Creation in Scripture." The study will explore how God's grand work of Creation is interwoven into scripture and the story of God's reconciling work in the world. Studying patterns of creation in scripture helps us to recognize God's continued creative presence and activity in our world. Invite a friend to join us as we learn together about God's creative word and work among us.

March 8th: The Great Hymn of Creation
Rev. Bart McNiel

March 15th: God's Creative Work in the World
Dr. Chris George

March 22th: Patterns of Creation in the Hebrew Bible
Rev. Bart McNiel

March 29th: In the Beginning: A Christian Creation Story
Dr. Chris George

April 12th: The New Creation and Christian Theology
Rev. Bart McNiel

April 19th: The New Creation and Christian Hope
Dr. Chris George

Lent: A Season of Reflection, Repentance, and Renewal

Lent is a season of 40 days when Christians are encouraged to reflect on faith, repent from sins, and renewal our commitment to Christ's calling in our lives. Some of us may choose to remove or sacrifice something during this season, like chocolate or television, in an effort to refocus our vision on what matters most. Others may want to add a new healthy habit that will enrich our lives like daily scripture reading or exercise. In Lenten, we can continue to embrace Pastor Chris' call to take 15 minutes each day, not "to do," but "to be" in God's presence. Please take advantage of these wonderful opportunities during the Season of Lent:

Ash Wednesday Worship, March 1st at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary—A simple traditional service includes scripture readings, prayers, music, the imposition of ashes, and a short meditation, preparing us the Lenten journey.

Lenten Reflections, Wednesdays, March 8 - April 12. The Church Parlor will be open from 4 PM - 7 PM for a few minutes.—Lent is an inward journey toward understanding ourselves and our Savior. Make time and take time to stop, read scripture, or sit in quiet reflection. God meets us when we are willing to slow down, to be still, and to experience grace.

Family Mission Trip Details

March 3rd – 5th, families from our church will be traveling to Greenville, SC on the Family Mission Trip. While on this trip, we will be serving at A Child's Haven, a child development and family support center. You can help this mission trip in several ways. First, pray for the group. Second, share your spare change. The preschool department is collecting change on Wednesday evenings. For every \$2 donated, they add a "toy" to a toy box on the Nursery hall bulletin board. The toy box is already beginning to overflow. Lastly, you can give to the mission bins in the adult hallway. There are lists of needed items to donate throughout the church. We will be collecting those items from now until March 3rd.

As always thank you for supporting Smoke Rise Family Mission Trip. If you would like to learn more about A Child's Haven their website is achildshaven.org

Room in the Inn

When my daughter Joanna was 12-years-old, she told me that she loved Jesus and she wanted to be baptized and join the church. This would be a time of great rejoicing for a Christian family—except that Joanna has a genetic developmental disability. We wondered if her thinking could be for real. We talked with our pastor who talked with Joanna. His conclusion was that Joanna did indeed understand, and her desire came from a heart touched by God's love. When he baptized Joanna, he quoted Jesus, "Let the little children come to me, and forbid them not; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." Luke 18:16

Joanna's spiritual journey was nurtured by a church that believed even the "least of these" had gifts to share. The special needs class at the church grew. Today it has two classes of over a hundred people with special needs, their families, and caregivers who come with the class members. Many family members and caregivers have been introduced to Jesus' love and to church life for the first time because of this ministry. These young adults with special needs—and special gifts—praise God and share their hope and joy in loving service in the congregation and with others who learn about their outreach.

Last summer, Joanna visited with us and decided she wanted to join Smoke Rise. I was surprised and found myself saying what our family had been told way back in 1993, "But Smoke Rise doesn't have a class for people with special needs." That summer day in 2016, Joanna looked at me with a smile and said, "That's o.k. We can start one." This was not in my plan for retirement, but God and Joanna had other plans.

God smiled at me through Joanna's eyes and said, "That's o.k. We can start one." And so, we have! The Good News Class meets every Sunday in Room 123. If you have been looking for a place of service, this might be the place for you. All you need is a loving heart—and maybe a twinkle in your eye. If you know of a family or an individual who doesn't have a church home because they have a family member who "doesn't fit in," maybe you could tell them about the Good News Class for teens and young adults with special needs at Smoke Rise Baptist Church—where everyone is welcome.

Karen Ripley

Lion King, Jr



The Smoke Rise Academy of Arts drama department will be presenting Disney's Lion King, Jr on March 24-26, in the fellowship hall. This year, both elementary and high school classes are combining efforts for this grand presentation. The elementary cast will perform Friday 7pm and Saturday 3pm. The high school cast will perform Saturday 7 pm and Sunday 3pm. The Academy does not charge admission to the shows; however, this year we wanted to partner with a local organization and share our donations. We are excited to partner with FURKIDS and AARF local animal rescue shelters, in support of our animal theme of Lion King. We are asking for donations of items useful to these shelters and / or cash donations to help offset their expenses. Items most needed include: dog collars, leashes, soft squeaky toys, cat litter, cat nip toys, Friskies Turkey and Giblets (pate) canned food (available at Dollar Tree). Other supplies include: 13 gallon trash bags, 30 gallon trash bags, paper towels, bleach, copy paper and Clorox Wipes. Cash and gift cards are also greatly appreciated. FURKIDS will sponsor a silent auction for a FURKIDS KITTEN BIRTHDAY PARTY at the home of the winner. They will be naming their next litter of kittens after our show characters and will have pictures on display for anyone interested in sponsoring (not an adoption) a LION KING character!

LION KING is a family fun show and we are sure you and your guests will have a grand night of entertainment. Please share the word of our partnership with FURKIDS and AARF. Even if you cannot attend, perhaps you would like to make a contribution to these vital organizations in our local community.

2017-18 Budget Approval Update and Schedule

The Finance Committee has approved the proposed 2017-18 Budget and presented it to the deacons with unanimous approval. The budget will be distributed to church members the first week of March. On two consecutive Wednesday nights (March 15 and 22) from 6-7 pm, Finance Committee representatives will be available in the Conference Room to answer questions on the budget. The church will vote on the budget at a called Church in Conference at the close of Morning Worship on Sunday, March 26.