

## Current Black Jesus Book Club Selection

The book selected for January is Michael Eric Dyson's book, ***Tears We Cannot Stop***. The first meeting to discuss this book is scheduled for Thursday, January 10, 8:30—10:00am.

***WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BOOK CLUB,  
BUT YOU WORK DURING DAYTIME HOURS . .***

And 8:30-10:00am is NOT a good time for you? Here's the good news: The Book Club will schedule its meeting time each month according to those who plan to participate that month. For future book club selections immediately contact either David McNair or Susan Sherard. Explain times that work best for you.

## Annual Meeting: Sunday, January 27

The parish of The Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit will hold its annual meeting ***immediately following*** the Sunday service January 27.

Please plan to attend this ***brief but very important*** business meeting for our parish.

**When is Christmas Dinner like Heaven?**  
*See page 3.*

## Santa's Helpers

The food collected for food-insecure children at home on Christmas break from school was delivered to Mars Hill Baptist Church by Santa's Helpers pictured at right: Danny Wyatt, Pam Stein, Jim Wooddruff, Larry Burda, and Mark Holland. (Not pictured are Nancy and Jim Larkin.)

*(Photo courtesy of Nancy Larkin. The photo was originally in color, but I liked the black-white version.)*



## The Diocesan Youth Epiphany Bonfire



**On January 6 we will be having a big bonfire** as we burn Christmas trees and enter into a new season of the church: Epiphany. Contact Jenna if you would like a ride from Asheville to Black Mountain for this event, or if you will be meeting her there. **Sunday, Jan. 6 at Camp Rockmont, Black Mountain, 4:00-6:00pm.**

## Also on January 6 —

**Potluck After  
the Service!**

**THREE KINGS DAY**, also known as Epiphany, is celebrated in Mexico on January 6 with a tradition originating in Spain. In Mexico Three Kings is the big gift-giving day instead of Christmas Day.

On the eve of January 6 Mexican children put out their shoes. During the night the Three Kings visit, putting gifts in the children's shoes. Holy Spirit Church will celebrate Three Kings Day on Sunday, January 6, with a 2:00 service in Spanish. Potluck after the service! Bring food, enjoy the celebration of Epiphany.

**Check Out the  
Landscape Plan**

Plans have been made for increasing the beauty and functionality of the grounds surrounding the church. A large display board is set up in the church hallway so you may see the details. More information to come!

## When Christmas Afternoon Is Like Heaven

by Lorrie Cooper

**CHRISTMAS DAY** can be a bit of a downer for someone who lives alone, but I had my priceless gift of a dinner invitation. Mid-afternoon I arrived at the home of Larry and Genevieve Burda and rang the doorbell. To my surprise the front door was opened, not by Larry but by Susan Sherard. I walked into the living room and spotted Jane and O.C Edwards, Martie Carson, the Shivers, and others I normally encounter at the Church of the Holy Spirit. A feeling of wonder and warmth filled me while surveying this homey scene populated by many people whom I love.

I was greeted with hugs, my coat was taken, and I stepped into conversations and laughter, discussions of cooking times, and a swirl of random stories. Wine, cheese, nuts, and snacks were offered. Then Martie pulled me back to the porch room in order to behold the pies. A dozen home-cooked pies were spread about the room. Pie-guard duty was being handled by a furry cat lounging on a windowsill, Bobbi Sue (or BS, Gen's nickname for her).

Back in the living room Larry had started a fire in the wood-burning stove. The inevitable football game occupied an enormous television screen. Meanwhile the kitchen increasingly became the center of attention as the meal approached launch time. More wine was poured, more laughter resulted, and the afternoon finally transitioned into dinnertime. The meal was ready, and folks portioned themselves out among a variety of table options.

A blessing was said and Christmas dinner commenced. Then, the *pièce de résistance*: pies were placed on the dining room table, and people stood around making the difficult decision of whether to go with the sweet-potato pie, or the apple pie, or the cream pie, or the . . .

Impossible to choose, so combinations were created. "I'll have a small slice of the . . . along with a thin slice of the . . ." and then an additional decision between ice cream or whipped cream for topping. Coffee was brewed (decaf) and espresso was pumped (caffeinated). And what's that? Late-arriving dessert guests (the Johnsons) were knocking at the front door. After more merriment came a casual cleanup, and then coats began to appear. I reluctantly found my coat and made a final round of hugs. Yes, the afternoon had been like heaven.

As I walked outside to where my car was parked, Larry strolled along. "Thanks for coming," he said several times, as if I had granted them a great honor by attending their Christmas dinner. "Larry," I replied, "Thanks for inviting me. This has been a wonderful afternoon." "Thank you for coming," he said again, firmly, insistently.

Today, relishing the memory of Christmas dinner at the Burda's, I had this thought: when I show up in heaven, will Jesus be like Larry and thank me for coming? Will the humble Son of God express gratitude that I had chosen heaven, bringing to it my unique self, as if heaven were made more wonderful by my being there? But wait — remembering who else was at the Christmas dinner, I can't imagine heaven without them either. Christmas afternoon at the Burda's was, after all, only a small taste of that Great Banquet which will be less about food and more about the presence of the people we love.

## January Youth News

**January 6:** (See page 2 for details.)

**January 13:** 1:00-3:00pm at St. James, Black Mountain; Self Portraits Craft! We will be doing some really cool self-portraits from fabric, while we talk about what it means to be made in God's image.

**January 20:** 1:00-4:00pm at a TBT location; Teaming up with All Souls Youth! We will be joining the All Souls youth group in a fun afternoon of games! More information to come!

**January 21:** MLK March in Asheville!  
Join Jenna as she does the MLK March in Asheville and afterward have lunch! Let Jenna know if you are planning on attending.

**January 27:** No Youth Group. Jenna will be out of town for a Conference.

May blessings be in your path!

—Jenna Sharrits, Youth Missioner  
Asheville Episcopal YouthMinistry  
(828) 691-0711

## A Thank You Note

*David McNair received a thank you note from Sonny Browne, the Canon for Diocesan Life in the Episcopal diocese of East Carolina.*

*Here it is:*

"Thank you to your parish and Bishop for remembering hurricane victims in East Carolina following Hurricane Florence and Michael. Please continue to hold our communities in prayer as we continue the work of recovery for many months ahead. Blessed Advent and Merry Christmas."

## January Birthdays

Regan Burnham.....	3
Barbara Moloney....	3
Bob Magnus .....	4
Pete Edens .....	5
Pam McNally .....	5
Jennifer Woodruff...	6
Michael Smith .....	7
Lynda Miller.....	13
Laura Smith .....	14
Ginny Lentz.....	14
Dave Usner.....	15
Miki Kilpatrick .....	17
Chloe Schneider.....	19
Lin Von Dreele.....	22
Lorrie Cooper.....	22
Carolyn Davis.....	22
Page Mangum .....	25
Heidi Summers.....	25
Dudley Cate.....	26
Sam Shiver .....	26
David Miller .....	27
George Smith .....	28
Jerome Moriarty...	29
Pete Von Dreele.....	30
Ron Pell.....	31

## Another Thank You Note

To those who kindly sent me anonymous Christmas gifts. Thank you. I'm deeply grateful to be part of this very loving community. —Lorrie (your editor)

## Recipient of First Sunday Offering For January

### **The First Sunday Open Offering for January will benefit the Rector's Discretionary Fund.**

This fund allows the rector to respond financially to various needs of parishioners or persons in the community in need on behalf of the parish in a timely, discrete and confidential manner.

Gifts made possible by this fund have varied greatly but have included the following:

- paying a heating or electric bill,
- providing Christmas presents to children who may have gone without otherwise,

- buying a hot meal for a homeless person,
- helping fund a child so he/she can attend a school field trip,
- giving a scholarship to a child and so enable them to attend summer camp at Camp Henry,
- or finance medical care for someone in need.

**This fund is yet another way the Church of the Holy Spirit is the loving hands and heart of Christ to those in our midst,** and to do so in way that honors their dignity by giving in this confidential manner.

This fund is reviewed monthly by the church treasurer and is audited annually by an independent auditor.



*SHOWING THE LOVING HANDS AND HEART OF CHRIST . . .*

## Prison Ministry Appeal

Holy Spirit's prison ministry will end when Jack Angel is released April 19, 2019, unless at least three men step up to be sponsors. With as many as six male sponsors active in our parish at the same time for almost two decades, we are left with only two now, who are both well up in years and unable to continue this ministry on their own.

It has been shown that the chance of someone returning to prison is considerably less likely if he is released through a faith-based reentry program such as what ours has been. Our ministry at Holy Spirit has been a positive experience for everyone involved. One helpful feature about this volunteer ministry for men who work during the week is that most of the activity happens on Sundays, so it's not a burden to men with full-time jobs. Any men interested in being a sponsor should contact Bob Cumbie or Bob Magnus.