



Atlanta, Georgia

2016 Annual Report

Letter from Our Senior Pastor

Dear sisters and brothers,

Well, it's annual report time again. If it feels like it coincides with the "State of the Union" address, it's probably because it sort of does. And I can say right off the bat that, as a congregation, we're certainly more united and harmonious than the country at large.

And what that means—that we're a place of unity and harmony—is that we're positioned to be a beacon of hope. Whatever divisiveness or difficulty anyone experiences out there—in here we are a place of safety, of love, of acceptance and affirmation, generosity of spirit and kindness. In other words, we are the beloved community that Jesus Christ envisions us to be.

Are we perfect? Of course not. We have foibles and blind-spots, we have places in our ministry where we need to set an aspirational course.

But when it comes to the major things, the community-building, Christ-and-neighbor-serving things, worshipping-God-in-Spirit-and-truth things, I believe we are fundamentally on the right track.

This past year dealt us a couple of surprises – we bid a loving farewell to Drew and Ellen Stockstill, wishing them "Godspeed" in their new life together in Pennsylvania. That means, of course, transition in our youth and mission programs, and we also learned that creating a transformative ministry in the area of children and their families can never be as simple as just hiring the right person – because staff come and go. We have to build a culture that prizes the involvement and nurture of God's children of every age so that excellence in programming is the byproduct of good ministry and our common life together.

That's really what we're doing here: Building a common life together that nurtures each member and prizes the gifts of the Spirit that God has given to each. That's what I hope you'll read between the lines of the accomplishments outlined in each area of reporting in this document. It's not just that we're a few months away from being debt-free, or that our HVAC systems are state of the art, or even that we can report a thriving youth program or that our VBS reached more children than we ever have in recent memory – it's that we're doing this together. We're

doing this together with each other and with Jesus Christ. That's what I mean by common life together that supports all, and celebrates all, and feeds all.

My gratitude to God for each of you only deepens with each passing year.

Your pastor,



The Rev. Dr. Baron Mullis

Clerk of Session's Report

Behind the accomplishments of every ministry team, whose reports follow, stands our congregation. We began 2016 with a membership of 506. Twenty-one individuals and families said 'yes' to our invitation to make Morningside Presbyterian their church home. We said goodbye to Herb Grodemange who entered the Church Triumphant early in the year and also transferred seven members to other churches. In total, then, we added 13 members for an end-of-year total of 519.

We rejoiced with five families who welcomed infants this year and baptized a total of 14 babies. We're already scheduling births and baptisms for 2017, as Morningside continues to grow both in numbers and in age.

The following reports offer more details on individual ministries.

Respectfully submitted,
Daisy Ottmann
Clerk of Session

Finance Committee
Will Barnette and Alex Watts, Co-chairs
Bill Humphries, Treasurer

MPC closed 2016 in good financial health. We ended the year with a surplus of \$27,137 as a result of slightly greater offerings than anticipated along with exemplary stewardship by staff and ministry chairs with regard to expenses. The year saw the loss of two of our program staff members necessitating hiring of interim assistance. Rev. Beth Waltemath and Sarah Are took on most of the ministries of departed Associate Pastor Rev. Drew Stockstill and our own Elder Sarah Tomaka is filling the Children's Ministries role on a part-time basis. Financially, the compensation for our interims was slightly less than the permanent staff for whom they are covering. The prudent expense management did not impact robust program and mission activity such as Vacation Bible School, Morningside Mingle and superb music events.

2016 saw significant progress on projects financed by the capital campaign. Major renovation of the classrooms included HVAC, structural upgrades, painting, along with new furniture and fixtures. Roof and gutters have been repaired. Exterior painting gave a fresh face to our sanctuary windows. The major components of the overall HVAC repair/ renovate/replace project took place this year. Coupled with major electrical/lighting and plumbing/sewers work, our building's infrastructure should be in good shape for years to come – appropriate given our campaign tagline, *Standing and Serving for Generations*. As you know, a very important objective of the campaign has been debt reduction. We are pleased to report \$319,676 in debt

principal payments reducing our obligation from \$496,168 to \$176,492. We are on course to be debt free when we write here next year.

With the financial commitment our members demonstrated to MPC in the capital campaign, we expected that our 2015 and 2016 Stewardship Campaigns would suffer some erosion from previous years. This prediction has been borne out by a modest reduction in pledges, this year from roughly \$772,000 in 2016 to \$724,000 in 2017. Given the benefit of a \$27,000 surplus in 2016, the Finance Committee has proposed and Session has approved a prudent, but highly adequate budget for 2017.

Budgeted expenditures for 2017 are as follows:

- Human Resources: \$475,509
- Facilities: \$118,110
- Other Operations: \$100,843
- Children & Youth: \$27,250
- Mission: \$35,550
- Worship & Arts: \$39,754
- Congregational Nurture: \$8,775
- Evangelism: \$6,235
- Discipleship: \$2,250
- Commitment: \$1,500

In sum, we are pleased to report that MPC remains on sound financial footing and is spending our resources wisely and in line with the priorities expressed by the congregation. In the next several years, the financial picture should continue to improve as we progress through the capital campaign, retire debt, and make needed and ultimately cost-saving improvements to the building. We look forward to meeting the challenges we have for 2017 and beyond with the congregation's continued generous support.

Respectfully submitted,
Alex Watts
Bill Humphries
Allen Burke, 2017 Co-chair

**Discipleship Ministries
Beth Baer, Chair**

Discipleship is divided into three areas: Faith Development (formerly Adult Education), for which Beth Baer was primarily responsible, Affinity and Bible Study Groups, for which Peter Tuuk is primarily responsible and the Learning Center, which is currently inactive. We have not discerned a need for improving the Learning Center or adult library at this time. Therefore we have not allocated any volunteer resources nor allocated any money in the 2017 budget for a Learning Center or adult education project.

Key accomplishments in Faith Development and Affinity and Bible Study Groups are noted below.

Faith Development (Beth Baer)

The Faith Development Committee offered the following 2016 curriculum, featuring a rich and diverse mix of Bible Study, Mission and Spirituality. Class members have continued to accept and perform leadership roles with distinction. We were fortunate to have a new member of MPC's congregation, Michael Morgan, lead us in a joyful study of Advent and Christmas music during Advent. Michael is a renowned church musician, Psalm scholar, collector of English Bibles and Psalters and author of a number of church hymns. We were also pleased to welcome community leaders who educated us about the homeless and refugee communities they serve. Attendance continues to increase and class discussions remain vibrant and engaging.

SPRING 2016 CURRICULUM

Jan. 3 Georgia Legislative Update -- Alex Page

Jan. 10 – Feb. 28 WELCOMING STRANGERS: REFUGEES IN ATLANTA

This eight-week series featured speakers on the forefront of Atlanta's services to refugees and other recent immigrants, including the mayor of Clarkston and representatives from the International Rescue Committee, Peacebuilders Camp at Koinonia Farm, New American Pathways, The Global Village School, Shalom After-School Ministry and a wrap-up by Drew Stockstill and Sarah Smith of biblical underpinnings for discipleship to refugees. (NOTE: This study led directly to MPC's 2017 project to welcome and help establish a home for a family from Syria.)

Mar. 6 – Mar. 20 JUSTICE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

For three weeks, Anna Miles, MPC intern from the Candler School of Theology and member here, facilitated a hands-on workshop on building skills to deal with conflicts in our lives and work.

Apr. 3 – Apr. 17 HOMELESS IN ATLANTA

Our line-up of expert speakers represented our outreach partners at Rebecca's Tent, Clifton Sanctuary Ministries and Our House.

Apr. 24 – May 8 HYMNITY – 3 week series

Member and Princeton Seminary graduate James Klotz returned to us and led an introduction to the newly revised Presbyterian Hymnal. The following weeks, musicologist Randy Romig discussed the vast contributions to our Protestant musical treasury of Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley.

May 15 Faith Development Listening and Feedback: soliciting input on our offerings so far and ideas for the future.

May 22 – June 26 ENCOUNTERING GOD IN TYRANNICAL TEXT: REFLECTIONS ON PAUL, WOMEN AND SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY based on the book by Dr. Frances Taylor Gench

Lively discussion was the hallmark of this six-week series as we were fortunate to have Rev. Drew and Dr. Ellen Stockstill led the class.

SUMMER 2016 CURRICULUM

July 10 – Aug. 14 JOHN'S GOSPEL

A Bible study was led by Rev. Mat Frease, assisted by Beth Baer and the Being Reformed Series "Seeing Jesus in John's Gospel."

FALL/WINTER 2016 CURRICULUM

Aug. 21 – Sept. 25 SEEKING SOCIAL JUSTICE: A CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSE TO INCOME INEQUALITY

This seven-week study was facilitated by Peter Cobb and drew from the Being Reformed Series “Seeking Social Justice” by Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty. Perspectives were offered by Mark Douglas, Professor of Christian Ethics, Columbia Theological Seminary; Sameera Fazili, Senior Visiting Advisor, Federal Reserve Bank; Dr. Sarah Beth Gehl; professional advocates Tom Gehl and Tom Daniel and “A Social Creed for the 21st Century” (now available on our website).

Oct. 2 – Oct. 16 COVENANT

Margaret Hofland facilitated this study of our relationship with God.

Oct. 23 – Nov. 6 SEEKING GOD IN THE COMIC BOOKS

In one of the most unusual studies ever offered, member and writer Van Jensen discussed the history and growing viability of illustrated works both from the Bible and from various hostile perspectives in an eye-opening series.

Nov. 13 – 20 IMAGERY IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Ken Sharpe explored two topics: “Symbology of the Temple of the Sagrada Familia” in Barcelona and “Judaism: A Way of Being.”

Nov. 27 – Dec. 18 PEOPLE, LOOK EAST! -- THE SONGS OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

Our Advent series led by Michael Morgan looked at seasonal music through the ages from the Psalms to the present day, ending with a celebration of “The Noblest Monument of Advent and Christmas Music -- Handel’s Messiah.”

Reading this list, it is hard not to say that at one time or another our Faith Development program offers something for everyone –how about you?

Affinity Groups and Bible Study (Peter Tuuk)

In 2016 Morningside Presbyterian Church continued its heavy involvement in discipleship outside of Sunday worship. The mission of the Small Groups Ministry is to allow members to develop relationships with one-another, to deepen the faith of the participants, and to serve as a starting point for further engagement and service with the church.

Various affinity groups met for the purposes of faith development, discussion of books and culture, service, and growing closer as a congregation. These groups included LGBT and Friends, Men’s Breakfast, Theology on Tap, Women’s Roundtable, RHO Readers, Couples Group, One Gray Hair and Young Adults. As is evident, some of these groups served specific demographics of the congregations while others are open to any participants. Each of these groups developed curriculum and programming suitable to fulfillment of its mission, met regularly, and continues to be active moving into 2017. These groups are led from within their membership with one or several people planning material. The Discipleship committee worked with group leaders to help support planning of curriculum and will continue to do so in 2017.

In addition to these affinity groups, closed small groups continued to be a part of the congregational life at Morningside. These groups of 6-12 people met regularly (typically every two weeks) for bible study, discussion of theological topics, and fellowship. These groups provided an opportunity for members seeking deeper relationship with other congregants to develop those ties and to deepen their own faith. In 2016 two new groups formed from within the MPC membership. These groups continue to regularly meet with curricular support from the Discipleship committee. An opportunity to form even more study groups is offered now in early 2017.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Baer

Children and Families Ministries

Sarah Tomaka, Chair

The Children's Ministry team continued to be busy in 2016, serving many new children. It was a year of transition. After joining the church staff in October of 2015, Director of Children's Ministries Sarah Kate Bumgarner left in mid-September 2016 to assume a position elsewhere. Elder Sarah Tomaka took an interim position to lead the Children's Ministry team through the time required for the search committee to identify and hire a new DCM. Beginning in 2017, Melinda Sandkam will provide additional support on Sundays during the search period.

During the early part of 2016, strides were made to develop a committee that would advise the DCM on various aspects of Children's Ministry. As team leader, Sarah Tomaka was tapped to chair the committee. Ame Frease took on leadership of the Nursery; Amy Millard leads the Preschool age; Katye Watts leads the Elementary age; Suzanne Macpherson leads Fellowship; Liz Sommerfeld leads Mission; and Hillery McNeill and Charles Woolley are working to develop ideas for Families.

Nursery

This room serves infants through 24 months and has been divided into two areas so that mobile children and infants can play separately. The nursery is available from 9:45 to noon on Sundays. Currently we have two paid staff for the nursery and through a SignUp Genius site we schedule up to two volunteers every Sunday. On occasion, it is necessary to go through the Home Staff agency to hire additional staff such as on Easter and Christmas Eve.

Preschool

Ages 25 months through 47 months (i.e., twos and threes) are led by Debbi Loomis as paid staff. Childcare is provided from 9:45 to 11:00, and Sunday School begins at 11:00. She is supported by a volunteer during the Sunday School hour and either has paid support during childcare or combines with the nursery. We are currently trying to hire permanent support due to high enrollment.

Ages four and five (PreK and Kindergarten) remain in worship until Passing of the Peace, then go to Sunday School led by volunteers.

Elementary

Grades One – Five also remain in worship until Passing of the Peace, then go to Sunday School led by volunteers. In the fall, attendance has dwindled particularly with fourth and fifth graders. Feedback from parents has indicated that many children that age prefer to stay in worship.

Curriculum

Sarah Kate purchased Deep Blue from Cokesbury beginning Summer of 2016 and Sarah Tomaka has continued with that curriculum.

Events and Programs

The Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and the Easter Egg Hunt were both the usual popular successes with high attendance. Sarah Kate offered a "Bible Sunday" where our fourth and fifth grade children were given Bibles with their names embossed on the cover. The plan is to continue annually with fourth graders – this happens before the end of school in May.

Vacation Bible School was a huge success this summer. “Surf Shack” was the curriculum and more than 80 children ages four through nine attended. Naturally, this was a very heavily volunteer-driven event. The conclusion was that it was awesome, but maybe four days would be enough. Amanda Lewis has offered to chair the event in 2017.

The next event was Sunday School kickoff – because of the staff change, the original plan to begin Sunday School at 10 so that kids could go to worship was shelved for the time being. However, we introduced children to their rooms which have been given names to identify them.

A children’s program was offered during the October retreat in Montreat. This was led by Sarah Tomaka and Anna Miles. We had six children ranging in age from four to 12. Following the music theme of the retreat, the children combined ideas to compose a poem that they read during Sunday worship.

Fellowship (Suzanne Macpherson) combined with MPC Evangelism to host Fall Family night, the last Food Truck Thursday on Oct. 27. It was very well attended and the neighborhood CHOA Friend’s group joined in to garner support for their programs. This was in lieu of the Thanksgiving Gathering.

Lastly, the Christmas Pageant was held on Dec. 18, followed by our annual chili cookoff. About 40 children participated and Sarah was supported with a large number of parent and MPC member volunteers.

The children continue to be led in our choir programs with Jonathan Crutchfield and Megan Mashburn.

In response to inquiries from some young families in the church, a task force to investigate the potential for a once-monthly early worship service was established. At the December Session meeting, a decision was made to begin an early service on Jan. 8 to run during a trial period to June. These will be called *Second Sundays @8:45*.

Preschool

Morningside Presbyterian Preschool continues to be a strong outreach to our community. Led by Director Melinda Sandkam, the teachers, preschool committee and parent volunteers work together to provide a caring learning environment for just more than 100 students each week. Ali Bradway chaired the Preschool Committee during the 2016 calendar year; Becky Schreiber is the incoming chair. Kim Nuckles continues as our preschool shepherd. This year was the 15-year anniversary of the preschool, and there has been a nice variety of special social events celebrating the anniversary concluding with the FUN-raiser held this year at Druid Hills Golf Club on Nov. 11. The auction was a huge success bringing in funds that will help support the preschool facility, staff and families during the next year. Preschool finances remain solid under Melinda’s leadership.

The preschool hosts prospective parent tours that are strongly attended, testifying to the solid reputation of MPP’s program. After-school activities continue to be a popular addition to MPP’s programming. Summer Camp has grown stronger in recent years with one-week segments drawing in more attendees. As MPP works to offer the best options for our families, there are options for how many days a week children may attend MPP.

The Preschool Committee worked hard to complete a new five-year Strategic Plan for 2017 which was presented to Session in January 2017. The imperatives of this new plan include Enhancing Communication & Technology; Supporting MPP Staff; Review of Curriculum, Enrichment and Diversity Programs; Improvement of Facilities & Operations; and Enriching Our MPP Community & Neighborhood Outreach.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Tomaka

**Youth and Families Ministries
Lisa Jern, Chair**

At a time when many Presbyterian youth groups are shrinking, our Youth Group is growing – five times as large as it was just five years ago, with as many as 30 kids (sixth through twelfth grade) currently participating and an increasing number of visitors attending. We also have an almost exponentially growing group of elementary students. This means that:

- In 2016, MPC's Youth Group could have as many as 43 youth;
- In 2017, we could realistically have 51 youth attending Youth Programs, and
- In 2018, as many as 66 students could be participating in MPC's youth ministry!

More and more, young people are described as rejecting religion. By contrast, our youth are engaged, inquisitive and mission-oriented. Particularly in a community church like ours, in a neighborhood like Morningside, our Youth Program is itself an opportunity for outreach *to* our MPC kids and *in* our Morningside community.

Against this backdrop, the Youth Program experienced a year of change, with Drew Stockstill's departure and the arrival of Sarah Are as our Interim Youth Director. It's fair to say that we "mourned" Drew's departure. But the program and our kids are thriving under Sarah Are's spirit-filled (and fun!) guidance.

The focus of the Youth Program continues to be our Sunday evening programming. Sarah, with guidance from Laura Fillyaw, plans our curriculum and activities weekly. For many of these kids, our Sunday evening program is their only, or at least primary, immersion into the Word of God. The youth are virtually unanimous in wanting to keep the program exactly as is. Other aspects of the program this year were local service projects, a summer weeklong mission trip, the lock-in, the Christmas party, a tree-decorating party, Youth Choir (under Jonathan Crutchfield's leadership) and Youth Sunday. We did not have a confirmation class this year as we're still on a two-year schedule for that, but our 2017 confirmation class has already begun, with 10 confirmands.

Our hardworking Youth Committee continues to support Sarah and our fabulous Youth Advisors in planning social events, organizing meals, coordinating local mission activities and summer mission trips. Tara Parrish co-chaired the Youth Committee in 2016. Members included Rachel Spears (mission), Laura Fillyaw (curriculum), Jill Davis (event planning), Ted Fleming (youth advisor), and Miranda Brownlee (youth advisor). Melissa Lawson was responsible for coordinating meals for our youth on Sunday evenings.

In addition to these practical aspects of overseeing the Youth Program, however, the Youth Committee also met deliberately this year to develop what we considered to be youth ministry goals. In order to be relevant to our youth – and from a mission perspective to youth and their families in the Morningside neighborhood – we must be a nurturing presence to them and their families. We identified the values and experiences that we believe are vital to our youth and our program in order to empower them to be members of the church, to lead and to serve those in need. We want them to consider themselves Jesus' disciples who seek to live lives that glorify God. We want them to *want to* return to church after they've graduated.

Finally, our Youth Committee has identified areas we believe are essential to keeping our youth in church through a goals-based education program. We look forward to working with Sarah Are and others in the coming months on the following goals:

- Introduce more Bible study.
- Schedule more social activities.
- Continue to schedule/calendar regular mission events, in addition to annual mission trip.
- Consider organizing “breakfast with mentor” events.
- Consider having adult members/mentors go to youth non-church important events.
- Schedule youth to read scripture/give liturgy/make youth program announcement during service.
- Explore the introduction of an acolyte ministry.
- Continue to develop/publish calendar.
- Schedule parent/youth advisor “mixer” so that our parents/advisors can get to know each other.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Jern

**Mission Ministries
Jack Klotz and Tony Fishpaw, Co-chairs**

After months of prayerful discussion and Biblical study under the direction and guidance of former associate Drew Stockstill and continuing with interim associate pastor Beth Waltemath, the Mission Committee has adopted a new structure both in its committee as well as the focus and mission. Here is our new Mission Statement:

“The disciples of Jesus at Morningside Presbyterian Church seek to honor His command to be his witnesses and prayerfully discern the will and work of God in the world and in our lives, both as individual believers and as a community of faithful, and boldly join Christ in His mission of reconciliation and redemption.”

Mission Committee Job Descriptions

Co-chairs: Tony Fishpaw and Jack Klotz. The leader of Mission Ministries is responsible to lead meetings, coordinate and support work of committee and work closely with pastor responsible for mission. Chairperson will also be a member of Grants sub-committee and will be responsible for preparing the annual report with the secretary of the committee.

Secretary: Curt Barrett. Prepare notes of meetings and work with chair in preparing monthly report to Session as well as the annual report. Be primary communicator of the mission work of the committee for the Life@, e-News, website, Facebook, bulletin board, and Morningside

Messenger. The secretary will keep track of all letters received from partnering organizations and forward to Clerk of Session.

Financial Liaison and Grants sub-committee: Leslie Prince, Katye Watts, Jack Klotz. This sub-committee will include mission chair and at least two members from the congregation with the purpose of reviewing grant requests from mission partners and organizations. This committee will be responsible for discerning whether new grant requests will be honored and for how long, as well as evaluating current commitments. They will write up check requests, monitor mission budget, prepare annual budget to be approved by the whole committee. The committee may also look for additional sources of funds.

Global Partnership: John Blevins. This person will be the primary contact in our relationships with our global partners. They will help search out, create and maintain long-term partnerships that are built on mutual relationships not work/service based “mission trips.”

Justice Chair: Alex Page. Organize a team of individuals who are passionate about God’s call to stand with the vulnerable in society and work to end systems of violence and oppression in the spirit of Proverbs 31: 8-9 “speak out for those who cannot speak, for the right of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, and defend the rights of the poor and needy.” This person will ensure Morningside remains a voice for the oppressed in the streets and in the halls of the Capitol. This person will create events to keep the congregation informed of the issues facing our community. This person will also represent Morningside at Presbyterians for a Better Georgia meetings and events.

Local Partnerships and Shepherd Coordinator: Tamara Nix. This person will be the primary contact for our local partnerships and ensure that we are meeting the needs of those we have been called to serve. They will ensure that the congregation remains informed and engaged in these partnerships, providing opportunities for growth and deeper relationships. This person will make sure there are shepherds for each partnership, that our shepherds have what they need, are equipped to hand over when the time come, and are appropriately appreciated for their work. Here are our current community outreach partners and shepherds:

Habitat for Humanity: Adrienne Mogge. Morningside partnered with five other churches to build a home for a family of four in the early spring. More than 50 members participated including a group that provided lunch for the entire crew on one Saturday.

Meals on Wheels: Sarah Brownlee. There are 15 Morningside volunteers who deliver meals three days a week to homebound individuals throughout our community.

Rebecca's Tent: Phyllis Grimes. To support the women staying at Rebecca's Tent Shelter, Morningside members served as evening volunteers for a week twice during the winter months. Additional outreach included a collection of \$10 Valentines' Day gift cards, winter coats, gloves and hats for the women as well as financial support.

Senior Citizen Support and Special Projects: Jack Klotz and Lloyd Prince. Morningside volunteers worked with Special Projects to assist seniors with home repairs in conjunction with H.O.M.E.S. to help the elderly to stay in their home and participated in the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service in Decatur. Morningside also partners with the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta on New Church Development projects.

Clifton Sanctuary Ministries: David Johnston. Morningside provided meals six times in the year to the 20 residents as well as assist in graduation for the men. David Johnston continues to serve on the board and Leslie Price is chair of the board. MPC donated \$5000 to the Clifton Capital Campaign which will be used to update their facilities.

Dobbs Elementary School Partnership: Leslie Prince and Tamara Nix. Provide help and support to teachers and students who are challenged as a result of false grading, resulting in students being behind in reading skills. An appreciation luncheon was provided for teachers and tutoring and social outings for the students. This has become a multi-generational effort with Children's Ministries and adults. In December, we began a new outreach of reading with second- and third-grade students one Wednesday morning each month.

In-town Collaborative Ministries: Nancy Collins and Laura Ulep. Quarterly canned food collections provided food for individuals served by In-town Collaborative Ministries. Additional outreach included sorting and delivering food at the food pantry once every other month. In May MPC participated in their Arts and Entertainment fund raiser by donating 75 bottles of fine wine. Rev. Dr. Mullis is on the board as well as members Anthony Owens and Heather Regnault.

Threads: Gail Kitchens. In February MPC did a collection of mittens and gloves for the Threads ministry of All Saints Episcopal Church to support the needy children with warm outer wear in winter.

Journey Men's Shelter: Joe Brady. Once a month MPC provided a meal for the 20 men at Journey Shelter. Many of the groups at MPC not only provided the meal but served the food. Sadly, on Nov. 30 the doors of Journey Men's Shelter closed permanently. We had two members who were on the staff: Bill Smith and Anthony Owens and two members on their board: Miranda Brownlee and Philip Hawkins.

Refugee Family: MPC has signed up to support a refugee family, probably from Syria, that has yet to arrive. We are expecting them any day and will help them to get established through goods and furniture donated by members, as well as financially.

Collections: The youth of MPC collected \$516 and canned goods through the Souper Bowl offering to support hunger in our community.

AMIS: In December our members housed three foreign students who could not travel to their homes over the holidays. This is a program run by the Rev Lisa Majaris and our member Dan Boozer is on their board. During this period we sponsored a lunch for the 20 students in the program.

Mission Trips: Roland Behm. In November, seven folks from MPC went back to New Orleans to work with RHINO (Rebuilding Hope in New Orleans). This year we worked in Baton Rouge gutting one of the 60,000 homes that received major flood damage in May. While in New Orleans the group brought an evening meal to the Belle Reve AIDS Shelter.

Global Missions: John Blevins. While in Africa, John partnered with a microenterprise organization that is part of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa that provides support for single mothers. Handcrafted goods made by these women was brought back by John and sold at

Fellowship Hour. The money will be sent back to these women as a way for them to support themselves. Sales were right at \$600.

Morningside continues to support the New Church Development Commission of the Greater Atlanta Presbytery through monthly donations. A number of the NCDC churches that we have worked with before serve immigrant populations, including Shalom in Clarkston.

Advocacy and Social Justice: Alex Page

Morningside continued providing support to Covenant Network of Presbyterians of which Rev. Dr. Baron Mullis is on the board. Our group also attended an issues forum on Oct. 21 at Columbia Theological Seminary in conjunction with Presbyterians for a Better Georgia which we also supported with a \$1000 donation.

Respectfully submitted,
Tony Fishpaw
Jack Klotz

Evangelism Ministries **Jeff Peters, Chair**

Our goals and objectives are to bring the good news to a wider public – good news that God is at work in the world today through the instrument of the church. Although viewed negatively in its more aggressive and superficial forms, evangelism is an important part of our Christian life. In the words of Jesus as recorded in Luke 4:18, *The Spirit of the Lord...anointed me to bring good news to the poor.* We seek to spread the Word not just through words, but through our deeds, attitudes, and lifestyles. We welcome new members to our church family periodically throughout the year.

A few 2016 highlights:

Communications Committee

With a change in MPC office administrators at the end of the first quarter in 2016, much time and effort this year went toward training our new employee to manage our weekly eNews, the Life@ bulletin insert and production for the monthly newsletter via paper and online. Our communications subgroup also picked up responsibility for posting to Facebook after Rev. Drew Stockstill's departure.

In addition to creating our three regular print and electronic publications, our team continued management of the website. This year saw the addition of a homepage video of our complete Sunday morning service. We also added several new banners to our supply of streetside communications and created external publicity for the "Morningside Sings Rodgers and Hammerstein" musical gala and choral programs in our Sanctuary.

Food Trucks

The Food Trucks Committee produced three events in May, July and October 2016 that were well attended by Morningside neighbors and the congregation. The committee used social media effectively to market the Food Truck events. The committee included Callie Stewart, David Stewart, Brad Strickland, Stephen Roach, Lauren King, Denton King and Leslie Prince.

Morningside Sings Rodgers and Hammerstein

On Aug. 20, the Evangelism Committee presented our third annual Morningside Sings Gala, saluting the music of Rodgers and Hammerstein. The evening integrated the talents of more than 40 Morningside members ranging in age from kindergarten to retirement and raised \$6,385 that was split between Mission Ministries and Music Programs.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Peters

Fellowship Ministries Sandra Ward, Chair

In 2016, the Fellowship Ministry assisted with weekly fellowship Hour, quarterly luncheons and the church-wide retreat. Total expenditures for the year totaled \$15,750 with income from said events being only \$8,380. The greatest shortfall percentage seems to be in monies spent for the quarterly luncheons.

After meeting with Baron, we have decided to hold only two congregational luncheons for 2017 to be in conjunction with very specific church wide efforts – *i.e.*, Celebration of Confirmands, Stewardship Kickoff. More detail on this will follow before Mar. 1.

Additionally, Office Administrator Alicia Oben will provide staff support to the Fellowship Ministry in order to build a more robust committee of volunteers to share the responsibility in 2017.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandra Ward

Worship and the Arts Ministries Susan Oder, Chair

Worship at Morningside Presbyterian is the primary reason we are here. To worship God and enjoy Him forever is why we are Christians and Presbyterians. To that end, the gifts and time of the members of the Worship and Arts Committee enhance our worship services. There are many moving parts to a meaningful and fulfilling worship experience, and there are numerous committee and members who work “behind the scenes” to make that happen smoothly.

Our Sanctuary and Sacraments Committee makes sure that the altar linens are changed to the correct color each Sunday and that there are supplies for Communion, hymnals in the pew racks, forms in the attendance pads and water in the Baptismal Font when needed.

Flower Ministries breaks down the flower arrangements for delivery to our homebound members and decorates the Sanctuary beautifully for Christmas and Easter. These are enormously time-consuming tasks, and the many hours of their time they commit to the church result in gorgeous displays all of us admire.

Led by Jonathan Crutchfield and with support from our Handbell Choir and numerous MPC members who give so generously of their talents, the Music Ministry has warmed our hearts with beautiful sound. The last year has seen an expansion of our Children’s and Youth choirs, additions to the Handbell Choir and several new voices in the Chancel Choir. The addition of two special musical concerts and the continuation of the popular Gala have strengthened this Ministry.

The Ushers have been capably led by Jack Klotz and Shari Tant, who are both retiring to serve in other areas. Robin Hackney will be taking over the leadership of this committee. In addition, our Pew Crew chief, Faye McKaye-Clegg, is retiring. Thanks be to God for all of these leaders who have served faithfully!

The W&A Committee appointed Julie Green as our Events Chair, and she is already planning an Arts Showcase on Feb 18-19. This special event will feature our MPC members' gifts of talent in music, art, drama, needlework, cooking and crafting. Our talents are gifts from God to His glory to be celebrated!

We celebrated three weddings in our Sanctuary last year and are looking forward to more in 2017.

Last year saw the formation of an Arts and Crafts Guild that meets the first and third Mondays to do any kind of handwork and to help, teach and encourage each other. This group made the special drip-catchers for our Moravian Love Feast, and one member has made blankets to be sent to Panama for the babies of the indigenous people there. All are welcome to come and join!

We are blessed to have so many who are willing to help with making our worship services outstanding. Thanks be to God!

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Oder

Operations Ministries
Duncan Spears and David Mogge, Co-chairs

Facilities Committee – Randy Young, Facilities Manager

Adrienne Mogge
Beth Baer
Richard Brownlee
John Watson
Mary Chapman

2016 was a busy year for the church facilities team. Thanks to the generosity of our congregation through the capital campaign now entering its final year, we were able to accomplish some much needed improvements that had been deferred for years due to budgetary limitations.

Significant accomplishments for the past year included:

Installation of new HVAC systems for our Fellowship Hall, Sanctuary, Sunday School and Preschool, eliminating our reliance on window units and the boiler. The higher-efficiency systems should provide the church with energy savings over the coming years as well as more consistent and comfortable conditions. The new systems should also reduce the use of the old boiler (except in the event of extended freezing conditions). The system serving the choir area has some useful life remaining and funds will be reserved for its upgrade in the coming years. Importantly, the HVAC project came in under budget.

Painting of the exterior windows. The exterior windows around the church were in need of repairs and painting and a major effort was made to get all the windows scraped, caulked and painted.

Sunday School Classrooms and Bathrooms received a facelift. The Sunday School classrooms were renovated with new smooth ceilings, lighting, built-in cabinetry, and paint. The former Women's and Men's restrooms on the Sunday School hall were also renovated and have both been designated unisex restrooms, with the former Women's restroom providing handicap access. The children's classrooms and corridor were also outfitted with sensors to automatically turn lights on and off.

Other facilities activities and accomplishment this past year included:

We continued to be mindful of our landscape and wooded property in 2016 with periodic cleaning of debris from the wooded areas and selective pruning and removal of trees that presented a potential hazard. Our landscape company has continued to perform well each week in maintaining our overall landscape appearance. And our member volunteers continued to maintain a watchful eye in improving our outdoor appearance.

Systems and equipment improvements were made. We continued to monitor and make selected improvements in our computer network, including upgrades in speed to some of our wifi zones. A lease package was implemented for individual printers in each of our offices, improving our technology troubleshooting and the cost of printing. We also purchased a new refrigerator for the kitchen and purchased new cleaning equipment to support our Sexton's efforts. Our elevator control system was also upgraded.

Our Sexton continued to diligently respond to increased activities and responsibilities. He continues to perform the tasks, repairs and improvements that keep the Church's doors open and good-looking. Maintaining and improving the beauty of our church property and building continues to be our facilities staff priority in order that Morningside Presbyterian Church may continue to fulfill its mission. We appreciate the comments received from visitors as well as church members about how well-cared-for our property appears.

2016 was also a year of planning for several exciting 2017 projects. We are planning to construct a new Columbarium and Memorial Garden, renovate Fellowship Hall and rebuild the Sanctuary sound system to state-of-the art. We expect to also focus on several other needed projects that will include electrical, masonry and roofing repairs and improvements.

And finally, we celebrated our annual Operations expenditures by closing out 2016 at 2.4 percent under budget. Our facilities manager, Randy Young, has gone beyond the call of duty this year and worked diligently and tirelessly to hold the budget in line and make sure all of our significant projects successfully moved forward.

Respectfully submitted,
Duncan Spears

**Human Resources Committee
Ellen Landers and Greg Wolters, Co-chairs**

The Human Resources Committee is responsible for supporting the staffing needs of the church, with the exception of selecting a pastor and associate pastors, which are positions called by the

congregation. The committee's work includes setting policies, managing disciplinary or performance concerns, overseeing annual benefit and salary budgets, and acting as a sounding board for future plans or concerns of the church regarding personnel or leadership.

We continue to be blessed with the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Baron Mullis as our Senior Pastor and Head of Staff. For 2016-2017, our associate pastor role is split into two part-time interim roles. Rev. Beth Waltemath serves part-time, assisting Dr. Mullis with Worship as well as Mission and Adult Education. Sarah Are serves the other part-time position as our Interim Director of Youth Ministries. Dr. Jonathan Crutchfield continues to serve as Organist and Choirmaster and make meaningful contributions to the music program at MPC and leads the Children's Choir with the assistance of Megan Mashburn. Melinda Sandkam directs the Morningside Presbyterian Preschool. With many years of experience as MPP Director, Sarah Tomaka is serving as the Interim Director of Children's Ministry. Other crucial staff members include Alicia Oben, *Office Administrator*; Randy Young, *Facilities Manager*; and Victor Carballosa, *Sexton*.

MPC is engaged in two critical searches for permanent leadership for the Associate Pastor role and the Director of Children's Ministries. Dedicated search committees are in place and conducting searches for the right person to fill each of these roles. We look forward to these additions to our highly talented leadership team during 2017.

The Human Resources Committee includes several members from the Session as well as the congregation at large. Many committee members bring professional expertise in human resources management as well as other human resource-related fields. 2016 committee members included Ali Bradway, Caroline Tanner, Martin Dunlap, Rob Payne, Bill Humphries, Duncan Spears, and Daisy Ottmann. Baron Mullis provides support and input to the committee.

We are fortunate to have so many dedicated and caring people to own the operations of our church and its ministry. It is exciting to see us grow, invest, and minister to our congregation and community under the leadership of such an outstanding staff.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen Landers

Commitment Ministries
Kim Nuckols and Marshall Hunter, Co-chairs

Throughout 2016, the Commitment Committee continued to be challenged to hit our aggressive goal of a 2 percent increase, especially compared to the successful and significant fundraising records in 2014 in addition to the continuation of capital campaign payments coming from our members.

After thorough discussion in preparing the 2017 Commitment Season campaign, the Committee and church leadership decided to keep a more general theme to the season. With a 2015 focus on the Children's Program and a 2016 focus on Mission, we had two years in a row with a very tangible, yet very specific goal. For the 2017 Commitment Season, we instead focused on Morningside Presbyterian Church being much like our own homes – a place of belonging, a place where we not only worship but also gather together in so many ways. We have all chosen Morningside as a home for our hearts, therefore this place of love and warmth also brings with it

responsibilities. Just as we invest in our homes, we must invest in Morningside. The theme of the campaign was taken from Matthew 6:21— “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Based on much positive feedback, this was a theme that seemed to resonate amongst the entire congregation.

There were eight members of the 2017 Commitment Committee:

Marshall Hunter, Co-Chair	Peter Cobb
Kim Nuckols, Co-Chair	Emily O'Brien
Kelly Anderson	Alex Watts
Van Jensen	Nancy Collins

The Commitment Committee only had one kick-off meeting, and the remainder of the communication was through email. The committee once again focused on stewardship of our donors. Pre-campaign, the committee wrote handwritten thank you notes to 119 MPC significant donors (top 25 were written by Baron).

Communication about Commitment began the week of Sept. 26, and Commitment Season officially kicked-off on Oct. 1 with an impactful minute message from Duncan Spears, followed by Minute Messages over the next few weeks from Tom Daniel, Katye Watts, and John Young. Commitment Sunday was Oct. 30. This year, bulletins were stuffed with pledge cards, but also with “I HAVE PLEDGED” cards so all members could be a part of walking their card to the front during the worship service, whether they had previously made their pledge or not. Throughout Commitment Season, the committee used both email and phone communications to encourage 334 potential donors to pledge. In December, the Commitment Co-chairs took over all communication with any members left who had not yet pledged.

As of Dec. 31, we had received 166 pledges totaling \$717,158. Of these, 15 were new pledges. Also, this amount reflects a net decrease amongst past pledgers of \$31,086 compared to last year. We are still hopeful that there remains about \$15,000 (conservatively) in pledges to come from members. We also generally raise through plate offerings and auxiliary revenue about \$90,000 dollars annually. That would bring us to \$822,000 expected in 2017.

We would like to express our gratitude to members of Session and MPC Staff for their leadership and active participation in this year’s Commitment Season.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Nuckols
Marshall Hunter

Planning Committee
Bobbie McCrackin, Chair

2017 VISION: GROWING IN WELCOME, SPIRIT, AND SERVICE
STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES 2012-2016 PROGRESS REPORT

From the Strategic Planning Committee: Bobbie McCrackin, Chair; Rev. Mullis, Duncan Spears, David Mogge, Bill Humphries, Cindy Humphries, Peter Tuuk, Philip Hawkins, Jeff Peters, Jonathan Crutchfield, Sarah Tomaka

Executive Summary

Morningside's professional staff, lay leaders, and many volunteers from the congregation have accomplished the majority of the "strategic imperatives" of the 2017 Vision, which was adopted in 2012. The table below highlights major elements of progress in each of these areas.

Of special note are the caliber of staff filling new positions as well as those replacing existing staff, the success of the capital campaign in reducing debt and enabling significant infrastructure improvements without cutting into annual commitment and the funding of the church's operating budget, the range of and interest in new programs along with deepening of existing programs like adult Faith Development and committed groups, and the vision for taking our already outstanding music program to the next level. Even projects which are not fully implemented as of year-end 2016 are well in train.

The one imperative for which progress is harder to gauge and perhaps reflects less in the way of accomplishment despite a range of efforts on the part of various committees is Imperative (4), deepening engagement and enhancing spiritual vitality. Interestingly, this area is the one in which the church "scored" the lowest in the survey taken almost five years ago. Importantly, it is intrinsically more difficult to measure than the other areas. The Session will address this issue as part of its role in formulating the church's next strategic plan.

Imperative	Major accomplishments	Next steps	Responsible groups
(1) Align staffing with growth & changes in congregation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added full-time associate pastor position plus full-time children and youth director • Project manager job description developed/approved • Replaced long-serving administrative assistant and recruited interim associate pastor and children/youth director • For further details, see Human Resources Committee report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill vacancies that occurred due to turnover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.R. Committee • Senior Pastor
(2) Improve physical, information technology, & financial infrastructure	IT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff have church-owned (vs. personally owned) computers • Security enhanced • Web site fully functional for current needs including online pledging/tracking, 	IT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore further enhancements as needed and afforded Physical plant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade Fellowship Hall; address other infrastructure needs as final money from 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities Committee • Commitment Committee • Evangelism Committee (communications)

	<p>membership directory, worship attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wi-Fi available throughout church <p>Physical plant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made sanctuary more welcoming to those using wheelchairs by modifying several pews • Converted “parlor” to youth meeting room • Commissioned master plan for space allocation, vetted with congregation to determine near-term priorities, implemented major near-term priorities (preschool bathrooms, lower level hallway, & classrooms, HVAC, window painting) • See Facilities Committee report for further details <p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful capital campaign enabled retirement of immediate term debt and is allowing major infrastructure needs to be met • Despite drain on members of capital campaign, annual commitment campaign garnered sufficient resources to continue meeting operating budget needs • See Finance Committee and Commitment Committee report for further details 	<p>capital campaign comes in</p> <p>Financial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase annual giving to allow for salary adjustments, funding for facilities contingencies, additional programs especially for music & art, mission • Collect remaining pledges for capital campaign 	
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<p>(3) Expand programming to meet needs of growing, diverse congregation, supported by strengthened lay leadership</p>	<p>New Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-annual Service of Healing and Hope • Special intra-week classes (Bible study, theology, poetry, small groups) • Established annual Morningside Sings Gala, with significant evangelical and financial outcomes as well as engagement of some 40 congregation members from diverse age groups • Annual service of Blessing of the Animals • More frequent outside speakers for Faith Development adult class • Added children and youth mission programs • Developed strategic vision and framework for mission activities • For more details see reports of Mission, Children & Youth, & Discipleship Committees <p>Leadership Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established position of co-chair for most Session committees and expanded committee membership • Leadership training for deacons conducted resulted in new strategic plan and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership training for Session scheduled for January 2017 • Create a leadership manual for carrying out ongoing committee responsibilities and update annually by outgoing committee chair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior pastor with H.R. Committee liaison • Clerk of Session • All committee chairs
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	revised structure for Diaconate		
(4) Deepen engagement and increase spiritual vitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional programs offered (see above) • Maintained existing and established additional small groups • Explored other programs, e.g., Stephen Ministry • Experimented with and refined “Morningside Mingle” social events • In cooperation with Session to verify membership rolls, Deacons began ongoing efforts to follow up with those not seen recently or in special need • Began work to define “Morningside brand” to identify what differentiates our church from others in the neighborhood, denomination • For further details see reports of Board of Deacons, Faith Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informally monitor small groups, special events, and mission activities to determine if participation levels meet expectations • Assess effectiveness of current communications, including website; explore use of social media • Create a resource list of members who can provide basic guidance on diverse needs of congregation members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipleship Committee • Board of Deacons • Events Committee • Mission Committee • Evangelism Committee (communications) • Planning Committee
(5) Strengthen music & arts ministry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outstanding music director recruited and has already advanced Morningside’s long-standing excellence in music • We now have 3 choirs, and young people are participating in Chancel Choir • Added a handbell choir with strong participation across age ranges and making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain choir robes for youth choir • Worship committee’s designated member to serve as liaison for implementing this vision and plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music director • Worship Committee

	<p>increasingly sophisticated presentations during worship and at external venues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special liturgical and popular music programs are being offered as well as teaching opportunities, e.g. Sacred Harp, Coro Vocati concert • Initiated an arts event scheduled for February 2017 to celebrate the arts and our artists • In partnership with Central Presbyterian, planning a large weekend of workshops February 24-25, 2017 for area Presbyterian churches, focusing on role of music in worship • Celebrating the 500th anniversary of the reformation by participating with other churches in a music program on Oct. 28, 2017, at Peachtree Rd. United Methodist Church • Music director has developed a vision, long-term strategic plan, and potential near term actions • For further details see draft Vision for Music and Arts, submitted in QII 2016 by Jonathan Crutchfield, and Worship Committee report 		
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Respectfully submitted,
Bobbie McCrackin

**Board of Deacons
Cindy Humphries, Moderator**

The deacons welcomed new members Joe Brady, Leslie Prince, Tish Woolley, and Ellen Behm. Ellen Behm was voted in as vice-moderator and Tish Woolley was voted in as secretary. The deacons continued their focus on congregational care and nurture and implemented some new ways of reaching out to Morningside members.

The deacons continued their outreach to several homebound members and began a regular schedule of serving communion to them with Rev. Dr. Mullis.

The deacons participated in the Hope and Healing Service as prayer partners with those in need. The prayer list is constantly updated and the deacons reach out to those on the list on a regular basis. A corporate prayer is written by one of the deacons every Sunday that includes prayers for those on the list as well as prayer needs for those who do not wish to be on a public prayer list. Each deacon has committed to reading this prayer daily.

Bread for the Journey is a project that began this year. The deacons designed an ornament with a picture of the church on one side and the verse “God be with you ‘til we meet again” on the other. This ornament is given to church members who have moved away.

The Morningside Mingle was hosted by the deacons this year at the home of Tony Fishpaw and Kent Balch. Nearly 75 people attended this social event in October. Particular attention was given to the inclusion of new members.

A team is working on a resource directory that will include contact information of members who are willing to share their expertise with the congregation. This work will continue into the New Year.

The annual leadership retreat was held at a member’s home in the North Georgia mountains. The deacons focused on the meaning of spiritual leadership and reflected on the Book of Order’s definition of deacon. This meaningful retreat was led by Rev. Drew Stockstill, Philip Hawkins, and Joe Brady.

Plans for a congregational picture directory were put into place this fall. Photo sessions will begin in 2017 and, hopefully, it will be completed by spring.

The deacons continue to be on call for Sunday services, as well as for other services that are scheduled at Morningside. The deacons also provide the food and set-up for Fellowship Hour twelve times during the year.

It was a privilege to serve as moderator of the Board of Deacons in 2016.

Respectfully submitted,
Cindy Humphries

Morningside Presbyterian Church
Church Officers 2016

Clerk of Session: Daisy Ottmann

Treasurer: Bill Humphries

Elders (Members of Session)

<u>Class of 2016</u>	<u>Class of 2017</u>	<u>Class of 2018</u>
Beth Baer	Ellen Landers	Tony Fishpaw
Will Barnette	Kim Nuckols	Marshall Hunter
Lisa Jern	Susan Oder	David Mogge
Jack Klotz	Jeff Peters	Sarah Tomaka
Bobbie McCrackin	Peter Tuuk	Sandra Ward
Duncan Spears	Alex Watts	Greg Wolters

Board of Deacons (Diaconate)

Moderator: Cindy Humphries

Vice-Moderator: Ellen Behm

<u>Class of 2016</u>	<u>Class of 2017</u>	<u>Class of 2018</u>
Sarah Brownlee	Philip Hawkins	Ellen Behm
Sarah Chatel	Cindy Humphries	Joe Brady
Robin Hackney	Sanda Means	Leslie Prince
Georgia Marshall	Katrina Weis	Tish Woolley