

THE HOME PAGE

Volume No. 50

October 6, 2022

Issue No. 37



FROM THE PASTOR Stephen Clyborne

Dear Church Family:

The wisdom writer of Ecclesiastes observed that there is a time for everything: a time to break down and a time to build up, a time to seek and a time to lose, a time to hold on and a time to let go. And it takes a lot of wisdom to know what time it is. In recent months, I have been praying for that kind of wisdom.

Years ago, I started prayerfully considering the possibility of retiring from full-time ministry in the year 2022. Not only would the year 2022 be the centennial year of our church's history, but it would be the year when I would reach retirement age, and it would also mark my twentieth anniversary at Earle Street, and my fortieth year in full-time ministry. Way back then, my hopes were that the church, by 2022, would be at its peak, and I could finish strong. But soon my goals started shifting as our church was forced to adapt to the unprecedented challenges presented by a global pandemic. All this was happening at the same time our congregation voted to do a complete renovation of our sanctuary in preparation for our centennial celebrations. At the same time, our associate pastor announced his resignation, and our church began a year-long search to find a new minister to complete our ministerial staff team. With each successive turn of events, I started shifting my goals and adjusting my benchmarks to reflect the new realities our church was facing. Rather than working to get our church to its peak, I started working instead to help our church rebuild and reimagine its future in a post-Covid world. I wanted to stay long enough for our church to get through the sanctuary renovation with no debt. I wanted to be sure our ministerial staff was complete, and our centennial celebrations were successful and joyful.

And then, this past February, when my life came to an abrupt halt, and I faced my mortality in ways I had never faced it before, my goals shifted again. Instead of trying to finish strong, I was just trying to survive. After a massive heart attack left me with permanent heart damage, quadruple bypass surgery, and twelve weeks of cardiac rehab, I came back to work, hoping that I would have the energy and stamina to extend my ministry with you beyond this year. There are still so many dreams I have for our church and so many unfulfilled goals I had set for my own ministry. But after giving it my best effort for two months now, and after much prayer and many conversations with my family, I have finally reached the conclusion that I can no longer take care of the church I love so much and take care of myself, too. And I now know that, if I cannot take care of myself, I cannot take care of the church. Over the past two months, I have learned that, while I can still do the work and perform the tasks of ministry, I can no longer bear the burden and stress of responsibility required to be the senior pastor of this church. Therefore, with a heart filled with gratitude, I announce my plans to retire effective January 8, 2023.

There will be plenty of time between now and then to say more about what I am feeling. But for now, I need to say that serving this church has been the highest honor of my life. Twenty years ago, this congregation took a chance on me when you called me to serve as your associate pastor; and fourteen years ago, this church took another chance on me when you called me to serve as your senior pastor. Despite all my failures and flaws, you have been so patient with me, so forgiving, and so loving. You have celebrated with Sylvia and me when life was good, and you have supported us when life was hard. We do not believe we could have made it through the past eight months without your overwhelming generosity, constant encouragement, and faithful prayers.

There are no words to express the love I have for the extraordinary staff this church has called together as servant leaders. They are so much more than just colleagues to me. They are loyal, trusted friends to Sylvia and me, and gifts from God not only to our lives but to this church. This church is in such good hands under their guidance. I trust them to take good care of our church, and I am trusting our church to take good care of them.

I began this letter by quoting from the wisdom writer of Ecclesiastes. I close this letter by quoting from another sage, Harry Clyborne, who repeated again and again this piece of wisdom that is not inscribed in the Bible, but is engrained in me: "It is better to leave when they want you to stay than to stay when they want you to leave." In praying about the timing of my retirement, that piece of wisdom has always been in the forefront of my mind. So I hope I am retiring while at least some of you still want me to stay; and even though the day will come soon when I will not be standing behind this pulpit anymore, I assure you that my heart and prayers will always be with you and for you.

With deep love and profound gratitude,
Stephen

JOIN US IN WORSHIP

Sunday, October 9
10:30 am in the Sanctuary
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude: *The Lord's My Shepherd* by the Earle Street Ringers;
Randy Blackburn, zimbelstern

Anthem: *Christ Be in My Waking* by the Sanctuary Choir;
Justin Keck, violin

Scripture: Ephesians 4:7-16

Sermon Series: REAFFIRMING OUR MISSION
AND RENEWING OUR COVENANT

Sermon: "What Do You Want to Be When You
Grow Up?" by Stephen Clyborne

RECENTLY HOSPITALIZED

Judie Buchanan Roland Lee

DEACON OF THE WEEK



Bill Hueble is our deacon of the week. He has been a member of Earle Street since 2000. In addition to his role as a deacon, he has served Earle Street Baptist in various other capacities. Bill and his wife, Andrea, have three children: Megan, Olivia, and James. Bill works as a land broker with Cross Creek Realty.

ATTENDANCE REPORT

Week of October 2, 2022

Sunday School Attendance

On-Campus.....	266
Virtual.....	4
Total.....	270

Worship Attendance

On-Campus.....	327
Virtual.....	210

BUDGET REPORT

Report for October 2, 2022

Weekly Budget Requirements.....	\$25,678
Budget Gifts (this week).....	\$29,987
Budget Requirements to Date.....	\$1,027,102
Budget Gifts to Date.....	\$1,033,868

THANK YOU

Dear ESBC Family,

On behalf of the Paraclete Ministry Team (PMT), we would like to extend our appreciation to the deacons, church members and staff that worked together to deliver communion to our Paraclete Recipients. Your willingness to go to their homes to share time, Christian fellowship and communion with them on World Communion Day helped each of them to be reassured that they are an important part of the ESBC Family.

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

Doug and Vicki Chapman, Jackie Chapman upon the recent death of Doug and Jackie's cousin, Jerry Day.

Candice Lewis, Andrew and Julia Byrley upon the recent death of Candice's father and Julia's grandfather, Roger Burgess.

Monte and Jan McKinney, Paul and Carrie Mussman and family upon the recent death of Jan's brother-in-law, Carrie's uncle, Dick Parman.

Donna and Michael Walker upon the recent death of Donna's sister, Michael's aunt, Joanne Beasley.

FROM OUR DEACON CHAIR

Please continue to pray for Stephen and Sylvia and for our church as we enter this season of transition - - that God will keep our church united and focused on our mission. Our church is in good hands with the staff and leadership we have in place. Now more than ever, we must surround them with our love, cooperate with them in our service, and support them with our prayers. We are so blessed to have them to lead us during this time of transition.

We will follow the process spelled out in our Constitution and Bylaws as we move through this transition process.

- The Deacons will be meeting this Sunday, October 9, to begin discussions about the search for an interim pastor and will keep the congregation informed about that process.
- The Nominating Committee will be meeting soon to initiate the process of forming a Senior Pastor Search Committee. The Nominating Committee will gather congregational input, and considering that input, will form a slate of nominations, to be presented to the congregation for approval by a ballot vote.

We certainly welcome your input and appreciate your prayers, as we pledge to keep you informed along the way. God has a plan for our church, and this is a time for us to trust God, trust the process, and trust each other as we prayerfully move into the future God has in store for us.

Respectfully,
Ron Bridwell
Deacon Chair

FALL CARNIVAL SUNDAY SCHOOL CHECK-IN:		
CANDY BAGS	TRUNKS	
15	LOVES AND FISHES	2
15	NO ONE'S PERFECT	1
8	REFLECTIONS	2
7	SOJOURNERS	1
5	DAILY BREAD	8
5	GLEANERS	0
4	OPEN DOOR	1
4	WELCOME ALL ...	0
2	YOUNG ADULTS	3
1	YOUTH	5
1	ROUND TABLE	3
0	PATHFINDERS	1
0	COME AND SEE	0
0	EARLY BIRD CLASS	0

FALL CARNIVAL SUNDAY SCHOOL CHECK-IN!

Fall Carnival // October 28 5:30-7:30 pm

Thank you for all the donations so far! We are in the final three weeks for candy donations and/or trunk or activity sign ups!

Click the buttons below to sign up for a trunk or donate candy. Remember that the Sunday School class with the most participation in the carnival (candy donations and trunks hosted) will get a breakfast treat on October 30!

DONATE CANDY

TRUNK SIGN UP

XYZ SENIOR ADULT PROGRAM AND LUNCHEON

Thursday, October 27th
11:00 am in the Fellowship Hall

Dr. James W. Davis practices geriatric medicine in Greenville. A graduate of Greenville High School, he earned his MD from the Medical University of South Carolina. He served a residency in internal medicine from 1975 to 1978 at the University of Southern California/LACUSC Medical Center and a fellowship in geriatrics and internal medicine at the University of California (San Francisco) from 1978 to 1980. He has 40 years experience in the field of geriatrics. He will speak on the topic of aging and memory.

Our mission project will be collecting items for Operation Christmas Child.

If you would like to stay for the lunch, please RSVP by Monday, October 24th. Click here to register or call the church office to make your reservation.

BOOK SIGNING
Sunday, October 30
2:00 - 4:00 pm in the
Fellowship Hall



Mark your calendars for a book signing event! Stephen Clyborne will be signing his new book, *No Place Like Home*. This new book is a collection of some of Stephen's sermons. You will not want to miss this opportunity to purchase your signed copy of this special book at a discounted price. Questions? Please contact Judy Lemmons.

LIBRARY NEWS

Feeling the stress of living in 2022? By looking at God and the world in a new way, *The Stressless Life* will lead you to deal with stress in a more manageable way.

In addition, Ken Gire offers thoughts on how to find a supernatural calm when going through stress in *At Peace in The Storm*.

From the Minister Of Music and Worship

Janice Hinnant (ext. 202) – janice@ESBCgreenville.org

Earle Street Ringers—We will meet at 8:45 am Sunday morning to go through the prelude. We will not rehearse on Sunday afternoon.

GLOBAL HUNGER RELIEF

During the month of October, our church collects gifts for Global Hunger Relief, an initiative of the Southern Baptist Convention dedicated to combating hunger and sharing the Bread of Life. This past Sunday, our children passed out “take-out boxes” to our congregation. We encourage you to collect your change over the next few weeks, place it in the box and return in on October 30. Additional “take-out boxes” are available in the 3rd floor lobby. You can also make a gift electronically by giving online by clicking here.

LOCAL MISSIONS OPPORTUNITY PAINTING AT GENERATIONS GROUP HOME

Tuesday, October 11 at 8:30 am

Generations Group is a group home for young boys struggling with abusive behaviors. The mission is to help them break the cycle and transform their lives to become positive, productive, and responsible citizens. We need your help to paint a 5-room house with 2 bathrooms on Tuesday, October 11. All skill levels can help. If you are potentially willing to help or want additional information, please contact Monte McKinney by phone or text at (334) 233-3407 or by email at Monte.McKinney818@gmail.com. The start time is flexible and we will probably schedule another day for those who would like to help but October 11 does not work.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity needs volunteers to participate in the Abraham Interfaith Build. Located in Greenville’s Nicholtown Community (425 Webster Road), the build will be the second of 29 homes to be built in the community. The build started with a wall raising on September 7 and construction began September 9.

The final build dates for the project are:

Thursday, October 13

Insulation, Exterior, and Siding

Saturday, October 15

Exterior and Siding

Thursday, November 3

Interior Doors and Trim

Saturday, November 5

Trim

Saturday, November 19

Shelving and Hardware

Saturday, December 10

Landscaping

Both morning (8:00 am - 12:00 pm) and afternoon (11:30 am - 3:30 pm) shifts are available. Lunch is provided for both shifts. If you are willing to volunteer or just want more information, please reach out to Ed Hogan, ESBC Habitat for Humanity liaison, at ehoganbnc@gmail.com or 864-423-9915.



Join us for a fun day trip to see the gingerbread houses displays at The Omni Grove Park Inn in Asheville, NC. The cost is \$25 per person and you will be responsible for purchasing your lunch. The cost includes transportation by a local tour bus company. The last day to sign up is Monday, October 31st. You can click here to sign up or by contacting the church office. Payment is due when you sign up to reserve your seat!



OCTOBER IS OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOX COLLECTION MONTH

It is time to get all our supplies together for the November 5th churchwide packing party! Join us in this amazing opportunity to bless children around the globe with useful and playful things they may never see otherwise. More importantly, we have the opportunity to spread the stories of Jesus and His love for them! We have 5 weeks to collect, so let's get busy to meet our churchwide goal of 500 boxes. Feel free to bring any items on the list above or join us in collecting the specific items each week.

WEEK TWO COLLECTION ITEMS IVORY SOAP BARS (they float!) SMALL REUSABLE PLASTIC CUPS

Please bring your items and place them in the containers labeled Operation Christmas Child. Want to contribute, but don't want to shop? You can pack a box online for \$25 by clicking this link. This is a great way to get your family, friends, businesses, etc. involved. For more information, please contact Kay Dillard or Tink Baker.