



MT 25

“...as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” (NRSV)

Matthew 25:40

**St. John’s Baptist Church
Charlotte, North Carolina**

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In our St. John's Covenant, we make a commitment to be a Servant Church:

"United in the faith that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, revealed in history, disclosed in the scriptures and experienced in human life, we do solemnly and joyfully make this covenant together."

"We will be a servant church, recognizing the infinite worth of every person and believing that Christ has called us to active involvement on behalf of human brotherhood."

St. John's Church Covenant

Adopted March 22, 1922

Revised June 10, 1973

As members of St. John's, we serve with our prayers, our resources, our time and our energy. This booklet outlines some of the opportunities offered to the people of St. John's for serving in our community and our world.

At the end of this booklet, there is an "Offering to Serve" page on which you can indicate your interest in finding out more about how you might serve in one of the paths of service described in the following pages.

Greetings Servant Church:

We are part of a church which takes seriously our relationship with The Living God of Love. Because we have committed our lives to follow Jesus' teachings as his 'disciples,' obedient learners, each of us is a servant. This booklet helps you be a servant.

In your relationship with The Living God of Love, you must be a servant. This is the example Jesus lived for you and he teaches you to be a servant. Jesus affirmed the Jewish view of life that the two most important commandments of God are – Love God and Love your neighbor.

Because you love God and your neighbor, you serve them. You cannot love without serving. However, it is possible to serve without loving. When you are in a loving relationship, serving is natural, instinctive and unforced. So it is in your Christian faith.

You serve God by worshipping God as your primary relationship. You serve God by nurturing your relationship with God through humility; by being an actively faithful steward of resources entrusted to you; by joyful witness; and by loving your neighbor.

You serve your neighbor in a myriad of ways. You serve your neighbors as you seek to understand them from their perspective; by being patient with them; by forgiving them; by praying for them; etc. Jesus presents many teachings about ways for you to love God by serving your neighbor.

In Matthew 25, Jesus gives clear instructions on ways to love God by serving your neighbor. Jesus presents this insight in a story about a final judgement where people are evaluated by whether or not they served 'the least of these.' Persons are rewarded by The Living God if they feed the hungry, provide water for the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the poor, care for the sick and visit the prisoner. In our commitment to be a servant church, St. John's embraces Jesus' teaching referring to Matthew 25. We use MT25 to express how we serve together to love our neighbors locally and globally.

Our logo for MT25 is a photographic depiction of a window in the sanctuary of 16th Street Baptist Church of Birmingham, Alabama. After white supremacists murdered four girls in a bombing of 16th Street Baptist Church, on September 18th, 1963, the people of Wales gifted to them this stained glass window of a black crucified Jesus Christ. This image reminds us that our efforts of service in obedience of Jesus' teachings help to heal the world and unite us with the people of God – past, present and future – across cultures, races, socio-economic differences. Because we love God, we love our neighbor. And, because we love our neighbor, we serve our neighbor. We are a servant church!

Shalom,
Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD, Senior Minister

Children and Family Ministries

A Child's Place

This agency supports children, families, our schools, and the community by intervening at the point of crisis when a family loses their home. St. John's members collect Easter outfits for children served through this organization as a way to provide a self esteem boost during a time of extreme need and uncertainty in their lives. Services we render include

- organizing and promoting the annual drive in the spring each year.
- donating new or very gently used outfits for elementary aged girls and boys.
- delivering the outfits at the close of the donation drive.

Baby Bundles

Baby Bundles, an organization started by three young Charlotte mothers who experienced the loss of a baby, partners with community agencies to provide baby essentials for around 1,400 of the more than 6,000 babies born annually to mothers living in poverty in Mecklenburg County. By providing some of the necessities for a successful start in the world, Baby Bundles gives a "baby shower in a bag." We can support this work by

- building bundles at their office.
- donating new or gently used items such sizes 0 to 12 months outfits, onesies, pajamas, bibs, blankets, books, and developmental toys.



Crisis Assistance Ministry

This ministry focuses on preventing homelessness and preserving dignity by assisting families in a time of crisis because of illness, loss of job, or other unexpected events. The services include financial assistance for rent or utilities, as well as help with clothing and household and furniture items. In addition to an allocation of funds from our annual budget, we can support this ministry by

- assisting with filing and office work.
- sorting donated clothing.
- organizing a group for a clothing sorting event.
- delivering to Crisis Assistance the donations accumulated in the barrels in our collection room.



QC Family Tree

QC Family Tree is an intentional Christian community begun in 2005 by Greg and Helms Jarrell. The Jarrells and their family live in Enderly Park, an area that suffers from economic hardship and limited opportunity. They form relationships with their neighbors and assist them in seeking justice in housing and other social issues. We support their work with a financial contribution from our annual budget and by

- providing fellowship and a meal for the community periodically. The meal is served at the Jarrell's home. Time is coordinated with the Jarrells.
- (See Freedom School listing under **Education Ministries** for information about this summer program led by QC Family Tree.)

Highland Renaissance Academy Uniforms

This elementary school has a high number of children from low income families. Each year in August we begin collecting new school uniforms for girls and boys to be distributed by the school to children in need. We can help by

- donating shirts, pants, jumpers, socks and underwear for boys and girls.
- assisting with the drive in August each year and with delivering the uniforms to the school before the beginning of the school year.
- (See **Hunger Ministries** for information about the weekly food packs for children from low income families in this school.)

Education Ministries

Freedom School

During the summer break from school, St. John's serves as the host church for Freedom School, which is a reading and enrichment program for elementary aged students. A literacy curriculum from the Children's Defense Fund is used in the morning sessions and enrichment activities are provided in the afternoons. Individuals and groups can help by

- reading to the students.
- assisting with enrichment activities.

Head Start

This government funded program helps preschoolers begin the transition to the public school system and makes its home at St. John's for the school year. St. John's members are able to greet the children with warm smiles any day during the week. Other service opportunities include

- reading to the children.
- providing breakfast treats or snacks for teachers as an expression of appreciation and encouragement.

Heart Math Tutoring

St. John's members join others across the city in mentoring elementary students at one of several local schools, using a tutor-friendly curriculum. Training and support from an on-site coordinator is provided. To date, students in the program have met 98% of program goals set with guidance from UNCC and CMS. You may consider helping by

- volunteering for 60 minutes once a week at one of 23 schools near you.

Right Moves for Youth

This a school-based program that serves students in grades 6-12, collaborating with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, the Police Department, the County Sheriff's Office and other community partners, using a weekly group mentoring model to empower students to graduate from high school with a plan for their future success. Volunteers can help by

- assisting paid staff for one hour a week in group sessions, establishing a supportive relationship with the students.
- enriching the career awareness of the youth by offering a tour of your factory or place of business.



St. John's Weekday School

Our Weekday School provides a safe and loving opportunity for children 6 months to 5 years of age. Caring, qualified adults convey God's love to each child. We can offer support by

- reading stories to the children.
- showing hospitality by providing occasional treats or snacks for staff.
- assisting with bulletin board display.



Healthcare Ministries

Alcoholics Anonymous

This group meets every Wednesday evening in Lasater Hall. The stated purpose of this international mutual aid fellowship is to “stay sober and help other alcoholics achieve sobriety.” In addition to providing meeting space we can extend hospitality by

- providing snacks for a Wednesday night meeting.

Care Ring

This non-profit organization serves the low income and uninsured by providing a low cost clinic. Physicians provide free care to indigent patients and a nurse follows first time mothers through pregnancy and the first two years of the child’s life, offering nutrition and parenting education. Opportunities to serve include

- assisting with health fairs and special events.

Charlotte Rescue Mission

This non-profit, residential program has a long history of reaching out to the homeless and those battling addictions. We help by

- planning, preparing and serving a meal for residents.
- enjoying fellowship with residents by eating, playing games, and participating in activities.
- leading arts and crafts.
- tutoring and reading with residents.
- organizing and promoting our annual “Undie Sundays” drive to collect new underwear and socks for men served in this program.



National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

This is a non-profit, grassroots, self-help and advocacy organization for families and friends of people with mental illness. St. John’s supports NAMI with office and meeting space. Volunteer support can be

- attending one or more of the meetings, held at St. John’s, to offer encouragement and hospitality.
- walking in the annual awareness walk.

Homelessness Ministries

Charlotte Family Housing

CFH provides services to homeless families. With offices and one of their housing facilities located in our building, their mission is “to empower families to achieve life long self-sufficiency through shelter...and supportive services.” We partner with this ministry by

- providing hot meals for three nights during the week in each quarter that St. John's is committed to provide food (for up to 20 residents, about half of whom are children.)
- serving as coordinator for a group preparing a meal.
- serving as a receptionist one or two evenings a month (5:45pm-8:15pm) while staff members are in a meeting. This includes answering the telephone or doorbell.
- assisting in the annual Jubilee Store, where Charlotte Family Housing clients are able to shop at reduced cost to provide Christmas gifts for their families.

Hope Chapel

Every Sunday morning, from 7:00am to 8:30am, we hold a worship service at this chapel located near the Men's Shelter downtown.

Those who serve in this ministry assist by

- making coffee and greeting the guests.
- playing the piano for the worship service.
- donating good casual and work clothing. (Donation barrel in the St. John's Collection Room)
- donating new men's underwear and socks. (October "Undie Sundays" Drive)



Men's Shelter

On the third Friday of each month we provide for 100 to 300 homeless men a hot meal consisting of fried chicken, green beans, potato salad, rolls and banana pudding. The steps in this ministry covered by St. John's members include

- buying the chicken, potato salad, beans and rolls at a wholesale distributor and delivering to the shelter before 12:00 p.m. on the third Friday. (Cooking is done by shelter staff. Expense is reimbursed)
- serving on a crew of 5 to 7 people to work with the shelter staff on setting up for the meal, serving the food, and greeting the men as they come through the line. (5:30-7:00 pm)
- serving on a crew of banana pudding makers. (Maximum of 4 times per year)
- coordinating servers and banana pudding makers from a roster of volunteers.

Room in the Inn

Every Friday night during the winter months (December 1-March 31), St. John's collaborates with Caldwell Presbyterian to provide a warm bed and a hot meal for 12 homeless men. This ministry involves

- setting up our gym with 12 mattresses, sheets, blankets, and pillows, and a prepared bag of toiletries.
- preparing men's bathroom with towels, shaving cream, shampoo and body wash or bath soap.
- preparing and delivering to the lounge kitchen Friday afternoon 12 bag lunches for our guests to take as they leave Saturday morning.
- driving the church van to transport 12 guests from Urban Ministry Center to St. John's on Friday evening and from St. John's to the Transit Center on Saturday morning.
- participating on the team that prepares and serves a hot meal for the 12 guests and 3 hosts (15 total).
- serving as overnight hosts with our guests, serving breakfast, and cleaning up lounge, kitchen, and men's room after guests depart. (2 to 3 hosts needed each week)
- picking up on Saturday or Sunday the linens used, laundering them, and returning to the RITI closet the following week.

In addition to the weekly tasks for the Room in the Inn the following ongoing tasks are performed to support this ministry

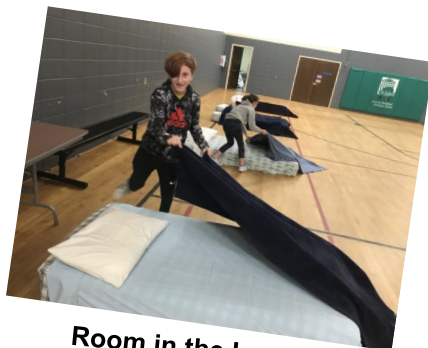
- donating small bars of bath soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and shampoo.
- preparing individual toiletry bags from above donated supplies.
- donating new men's underwear and socks to be distributed as needed.
- donating gently used twin size bed linens.
- serving as your Sunday School contact for this ministry.



St. John's Youth Serving Our Community



Charlotte Family Housing



Room in the Inn



Crisis Assistance Ministry



Charlotte Rescue Mission



Baby Bundles



Friendship Trays



Habitat for Humanity



Our youth participate in missions in many ways!

Hope Chapel



Adopt-A-Stream Clean Up



Hunger Ministries

CROP Walk

In addition to providing space for the offices of the Church World Service's CROP program, St. John's has, for many years, had walkers who participated in this effort. Seventy-five percent of funds raised during the annual CROP walk go to fight poverty and hunger across the globe by providing disaster relief and supporting development efforts toward decreasing the causes of hunger. Twenty-five percent of the funds benefit efforts to address hunger in our own community. We offer hands on help by

- walking and recruiting donors to support the Walk.
- organizing and promoting the annual Walk.
- hosting a meal/event between the worship service and the time of the Walk.
- photographing and documenting the Walk.
- helping to tally the donations at the end of the Walk.



Friendship Trays

For many years St. John's has supported Friendship Trays, an organization that delivers daily hot lunches to elderly or shut-in persons. We can provide hands on assistance by

- working once a week, or once a month, to pack lunches in the Friendship kitchen.
- driving a route to deliver the packed lunches.

Highland Renaissance Academy Backpacks

This elementary school has a high number of students from low-income families. Throughout the school year we provide 15 packs of nutritious food for the school to distribute on Fridays for needy students to have for the weekend. Sunday School classes select a food item from a prescribed list and agree to supply that item for the school year. The tasks in this ministry include

- coordinating with school staff on the implementation of our services.
- coordinating with Sunday School classes for the purchase of quantities of a specific item for the food packs.
- serving as your Sunday School class liaison for this ministry.
- shopping twice a month at Second Harvest Food Bank to supplement items provided by Sunday School classes.
- packing 15 bags by Wednesday of each week. (Packers serve once a month.)
- picking up the 15 food packs from the church and delivering them to the school no later than Thursday of each week.



Loaves and Fishes

Emergency food assistance is provided through a network of 20 pantries in the county and several mini-pantries on area college campuses. People in crisis are referred by churches or community agencies. The pantries are organized so that clients “shop” for food that meets their individual needs and preferences. Those who serve in this ministry help by

- staffing one of the pantries once a week or once a month.
- organizing and promoting the annual food drive.
- donating items during the drive, or throughout the year.
- delivering to a local pantry items accumulated in the Loaves and Fishes barrel in our Collection Room.
- sorting donations at the Loaves and Fishes warehouse after a large, city-wide drive.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina

This food bank strives to eliminate hunger in our community through the distribution of food and through education and advocacy. They collect and organize surplus non-perishable food items from grocery stores, restaurants, and other food service businesses and distribute to organizations that work directly with those in need of food assistance. We can help by

- sorting, inspecting, and stocking food contributions in their warehouse.
- packing boxes and backpacks of food items for distribution.



“...for I was hungry, and you gave me food.”

Matthew 25:35

Urban Ministry Sandwiches

On the second Tuesday of every month St. John's sandwich makers gather to make 200 bologna and cheese sandwiches for men served at the Urban Ministry Center. The tasks involved in this ministry include

- purchasing the bread, the bologna, or the cheese and delivering it to the church before the sandwich makers gather at 12:00 noon. (Expense is reimbursed)
- serving on an assembly line in the church lounge to make and bag the sandwiches, from noon to about 1:00pm.
- delivering the completed sandwiches to Urban Ministry Center on N. Tryon St.



Peace Building Ministries

Baptist Peace Fellowship

With offices located in our building, this group links Baptists who envision a world of peace rooted in justice to one another. Resources and training are provided to educate and inspire people of faith to transform their beliefs into practical actions. In addition to our providing space for their offices, St. John's volunteers have the opportunity to help by

- **hosting visitors from out of town who attend conferences and training.**
- **serving as a liaison to stay informed of their work.**

Circles of Hope

Desiring to create a better understanding across racial divides, St. John's has partnered with other churches throughout our city. When Circles of Hope is working effectively, members of these busy congregations meet periodically to invest in peace through better inter-racial understanding.

Center for Community Transition

This group strengthens the community by helping those with criminal records navigate paths toward healthy and productive lives. Volunteers help by

- **serving as mentors for women transitioning from prison back to community.**
- **providing a meal, an art project, or other enrichment for children of incarcerated parents.**
- **conducting mock job interviews or helping with resume writing.**

Habitat for Humanity

Believing that home ownership transforms lives, promotes dignity, and enhances self esteem, Habitat for Humanity provides opportunities for people to work together to improve the quality of life in our community. Every other year in June St. John's youth and adults build a home on John's Island in South Carolina. Individuals, youth, and adults can support Habitat by

- participating in the Youth Auction for raising funds for the youth mission trips.
- volunteering on the building project, either in Charlotte with the pre-assembling or accompanying the group to John's Island.
- working on the layout crew.
- volunteering at the Habitat Restore or at Julia's bookstore and coffee shop.
- donating items to Habitat.



Immigrants and Refugees

Refugee Support Services

This is a non-profit, post resettlement organization that helps newly arrived refugees make Charlotte their new home. The organization helps connect individuals and families with American friends who establish a welcoming and supportive relationships. We can help by

- attending one of their Refugee 101 sessions to learn about refugees and about the program.
- joining a group from St. John's for a Thursday morning session at RSS, bringing snacks to share and a welcoming smile to people who sometimes encounter rejection in the community.

Immigration Court Observer Project

This project is managed by Advocates for Immigrant Rights, a national organization which has found that the presence of observers in local Immigration Courts helps ensure fairness in the court process. We can help by

- serving as an observer in the local immigration court (3-4 hours a month; no legal experience needed but training required).

Nyarweng Primary School, South Sudan

In 2001 St. John's established a mentoring program to pair young refugees from South Sudan with mentors who assisted them in acclimation to life in the United States and in Charlotte. Those relationships have evolved from helping to ones of mutually enriching friendships across cultural lines. Through one of these men, Lubo Majak, and his mentors, Leslie and Phillips Bragg, St. John's has been a primary catalyst and funder for the building and operating of a primary school in South Sudan. The school has grown to serve over 500 students. Individuals and groups support this ministry by

- sharing the word about the school, such as via hosting a meal or an event for friends and neighbors where Phillips Bragg will make a presentation about the school and its ongoing needs.



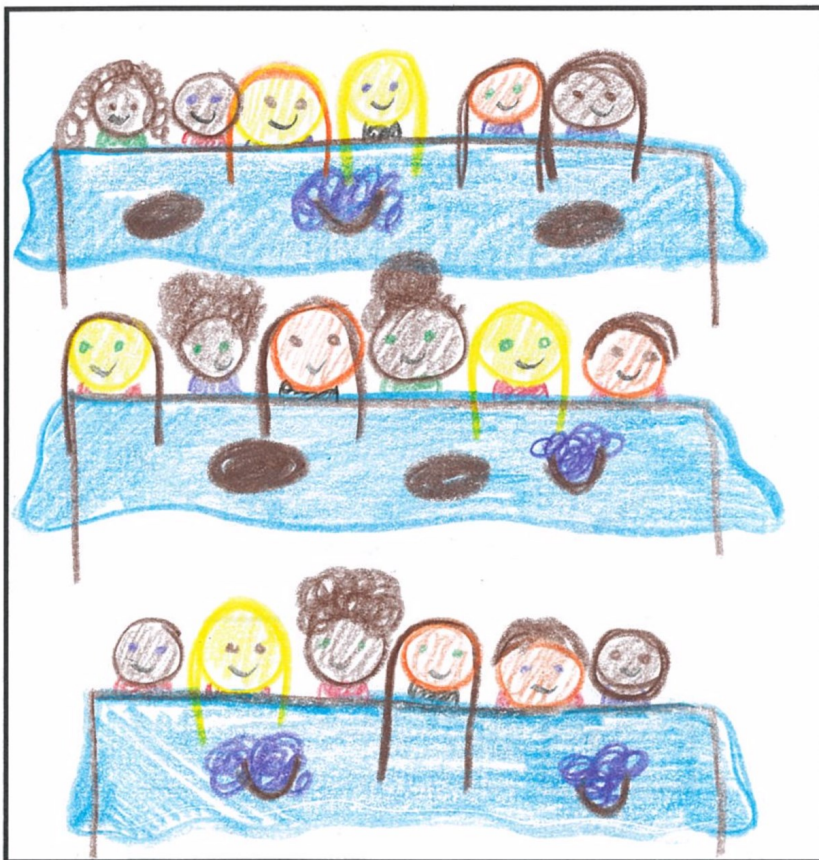
Pride Parade Ministry

Our participation in this annual event, which shows support for the LGBTQ+ community is one way we demonstrate that we believe "God Loves Everyone" and that we are a welcoming and affirming church. You can help by

- convening a group from the St. John's family to walk and or staff the St. John's tent at the Parade.
- helping tie-dye shirts to sell at the tent.
- attending the Interfaith Pride Service.



Throughout the year, the South Sudanese Worshipping Community and Together in Christ International Ministries from Sierra Leone and Liberia use the St. John's chapel for worship. Our lives are enriched by the presence of these fellow Christians.



On October 6, 2019, we celebrated World Communion Sunday with our fellow Christian congregations. The above drawing is one child's depiction of the shared worship experience we had with our South Sudanese, Sierra Leone, and Liberian friends.

Collaborative Partners

The needs in our community are many and varied. A range of organizations seeks to minister to all who are in need. At St. John's the Mission Resource Team allocates funds to some of these non-profit groups and names a liaison with each to keep us informed of their work, even where we do not at present have hands-on service opportunities.

- **Alliance of Baptist** is a faith community comprised of laity and clergy of diverse theological beliefs, ministry practices, sexual orientations, and gender identities, knit together by love for one another and God. <https://allianceofbaptists.org>
- **Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptist (AWAB)** is a group of individuals, organizations, and congregations that are committed to advocating and encouraging the full inclusion of lesbian, gay, and transgender persons into the lives and ministries of Baptist churches. AWAB.org
- **Baptist Peace Fellowship** is the largest network of Baptist peacemakers in the world. They celebrate and support the peacemaking work done by Baptist churches in the four countries of Canada, the United States, Puerto Rico and Mexico. <http://www.bpfna.org>
- **Baptist Retirement Homes** is an organization committed to providing quality care and a meaningful way of life for retired individuals. <https://www.brh.org>
- **Baptist Women In Ministry** is a catalyst in Baptist life, drawing together women and men, in partnership with God, to illuminate, advocate, and nurture the gifts and graces of women. <https://www.brh.org>
- **Baptist World Alliance** promotes fellowship and cooperation of Baptists in ministry across the globe. Offices are located in our St. John's building. <https://www.brh.org>
- **CBF National** is a Christian network of individuals and churches working together to spread the hope of Christ. It has partners all over the world and supports a wide range of missions and ministries. <https://cbf.net>
- **CBF North Carolina** is a fellowship of Baptists in North Carolina, sharing a commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, sensitivity to the Holy spirit in their midst, and a reverence for God's Word. Oneness is expressed through a devotion to historic Baptist principles of faith and practice. <https://cbfnc.org>
- **Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy** helps people in the Charlotte region who desperately need legal services, but cannot afford them, to ensure their rights to fairness in financial security, healthcare, housing and opportunity. <https://charlottelegaladvocacy.org>
- **Community Culinary School** provides workforce training and job placement assistance in the food service industry for adults who face barriers to successful employment. <https://communityculinary.org>
- **Counseling Center at Charlotte** offers services to persons having difficulty with life situations. The center provides a safe space for individuals, couples, and families to heal in an understanding, faith based setting. <https://www.counselingcenteratcharlotte.com>

- **Elizabeth Communities of Faith** is a partnership of six churches and two hospital chaplaincies in the Elizabeth neighborhood of Charlotte.
- **Hospitality House of Charlotte** offers the comforts of home for families of a loved one dealing with a medical crisis. <https://www.hospitalityhouseofcharlotte.org>
- **Mars Hill University** is a private, four-year liberal arts institution located in the mountains of western North Carolina. The university offers 35 majors and includes a school of nursing and graduate schools in education, criminal justice, and management. Three of the South Sudanese of our community graduated from Mars Hill, with scholarship assistance from the university. <https://www.mhu.edu/about/>
- **Meck MIN (Mecklenburg Ministries)** was founded in 1987 as a non-profit organization to promote interfaith collaboration and to foster understanding, compassion and justice. It has more than 100 houses of faith, representing more than a dozen faith traditions.
- **NC Council of Churches** was founded in 1935 and is a statewide ecumenical organization promoting Christian unity and working towards a more just society. <https://www.ncchurches.org>
- **Sowing Seeds of Hope** St. John's initially connected through CBFNC with Cecelia Beck, who lives in a neighborhood in Shelby, NC that has many economic and educational challenges. She seeks to form encouraging relationships with neighbors, focusing much of her ministry on children. She takes them to church and provides enriching activities, feeds them and addresses other basic needs.
- **The Relatives** provides a safe and supporting short-term home for children and teens in crisis. The staff works with the youth, their parents and a network of community partners to guide the youth through a better path forward.
- **UBA (United Baptist Association)** was formed among local Baptist churches wanting to promote cooperation across racial and cultural lines for ministering in places of need in Charlotte In recent years it has become the primary supporter of Hope Chapel. Currently the churches involved are St. John's, Park Road Baptist, Carmel Baptist, and Greater Mt. Sinai Baptist.
- **Wake Forest University Divinity School** is a graduate, professional school that is Christian by tradition, Baptist in heritage, and ecumenical in outlook.
- **Wingate University** is a comprehensive, independent and growing university, offering 35 undergraduate majors as well as graduate and professional programs. One of the South Sudanese of our community recently graduated from Wingate. <https://www.wingate.edu>

Offering of Service Page

I am interested in learning more about how I might serve in one or more of these areas of ministry:

_____ Children and Family

_____ Education

_____ Healthcare

_____ Homelessness

_____ Hunger

_____ Peace Building

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

You may detach this page and place it in the offering plate or drop it in the designated box in Mallory's office. Someone from the Mission Resource team will contact you to talk about the details of this ministry or ministries in which you have indicated an interest. Your opportunity for service will be matched with your sense of calling and your time availability.

"...offering ourselves for God's work in the world."

-St. John's Church Covenant

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