

# BRANCH'S BAPTIST CHURCH

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Office Hours: Monday—Friday  
9:00am-12:00pm, 1:00-4:00pm

## STAFF

*Rev. Mat Brown, Pastor*

*Rev. Michael Gibson, Minister of Music*

*Rev. Joe Edwards,*

*Rev. Dorryce Ann Rudd,*

*Minister of Youth & Child Development*

*Minister of Visitation & Sr. Adult Ministries*

# The Columns



## January 2012

Newsletter of Branch's Baptist Church

**Branch's Baptist Church**  
3400 Broad Rock Blvd.  
Richmond, VA 23234

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

# The Incarnational Church

by *Mat Brown*

In John 20:21, Jesus appears to his disciples on Resurrection Day and he gives them this commission: **“As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”** Since Jesus is the Incarnation of God, we, the church, are to be the Incarnation of Jesus Christ in our world. Symbolically we are His body! And Jesus sends us into the world to BE good news wherever we go!

In practical terms being incarnational means two things. I want to address the first this month and then part two in next month's columns article. So, first of all being incarnational means we must act in welcoming ways toward the strangers who come into our midst. Imagine this scene. You've been invited to go to a meeting of the Elk Lodge. When you arrive there is nowhere to park and no signs as to which door to enter. Fortunately, the friend who invited you is waiting for you by the side door. He is wearing his Elk Hat and a special sash. When you walk in he crosses his fingers and says “Muganawooga” and then salutes the Elk head staring back at you. As you walk to your seats you happen to step on a special emblem that is made into the tile. Several people stand up and start berating you because you have violated their custom of not stepping on the seal. During the meeting you have to go to the bathroom so you get up to sneak out and as you do the leader who is at the podium reprimands you and says “Sit down.” Let me ask you. Would you feel welcomed? Would you want to go back? Would you want to join this group? Probably not.

The sad truth is...maybe they don't really want you to be a part of their Lodge. Maybe they have enough members and don't want to grow any

larger OR maybe you have the wrong skin color OR you are too noisy OR ... for whatever reason they don't really care whether you have a good experience or not. Their main concern is that everyone who comes must adhere to their FORMS AND RITUALS. They are saying by their actions, “Conform! Be like us! If you don't, then you are not welcomed.”

So often that is how people feel when they come to church. Many of them do not know where to go, how to act or what our customs mean. Instead of fussing, griping and berating them, why don't we try to help them get what they need? We can explain in a kind way why we do things (or don't do things) but, we should NEVER make them feel unwelcomed! Unfortunately, that HAS happened here at Branch's. That breaks my heart. Let me ask you. What would Jesus have done? Nowhere in the Gospels do we see Jesus saying, “Conform! Be like us! If you don't, then you are not welcomed.” There is a group in the New Testament, however, that does have that attitude – The Pharisees!

Now, let's visit a different Elk Lodge – one that has an attitude more like Jesus. This Elk lodge wants to gain new members and the first thing they do is make you feel welcomed from the moment you pull into the parking lot. Signs and guest parking keep you from feeling lost. Your friend meets you he has decided to forgo wearing his special attire that week so that you won't feel conspicuous about the way you are dressed. They have a welcome center just inside the door where friendly people smile and give you a packet of information. Before you go into the meeting room, your friend ex-

*(Continued on page 2)*

# Music Crescendos

by Mike Gibson

“Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.” Psalm 150:1,6 (NIV)

It's a brand new year! So many new and exciting things to do this year to praise and glorify our Lord through music. This past year of music and ministry was great and glorious but our worship and praises to God continue to flow with a new and vibrant life. We serve a great God and He is so worthy of our devotion, praises and singing.

All our music ministry groups start back this month with their regular rehearsals from now to the end of May. In May we will have a Spring Great Night of Praise. All the music ministry groups will be sharing in a great music concert.

If you are looking for a ministry to serve here at Branch's, then I encourage you to come and join one of our music groups (Chancel Choir, Reflections Choir, Praise Team, Festival

Ringers, Joyful Ringers, High Praise and the special music ministry. I assure you, that you will be blessed and your participation will help strengthen Branch's ministries.

Kevin Spence, chairman of the audio/visual ministry, is always in need of new sound and power point technicians for the worship service. This is such an important part of our weekly worship experience. Contact Kevin or myself and let us know of your interest in training to become a technician.

Let me know if you have any questions about the music ministry or if you are interested in coming to join with us as a volunteer director, singer, instrumentalist or in the special music ministry.

May you have the most blessed and prosperous New Year.



*(Incarnational, continued from page 1)*

plains to you about the funny rituals – like what “Muganawooga” means and why they salute the Elk. He forgets to explain why they step around the special emblem on the floor and you happen to walk across it on the way to your seat. The Elk members don't get upset. Instead, they treat you with grace and they consider that you didn't know better or were not paying attention. In a kind way after the meeting a member explains why the symbol on the floor has such significance to the

Lodge. During the meeting when you got up to go to the bathroom they were not offended and didn't rebuke you for doing so. Wow! What a nice group of people. You felt welcomed and they accepted you as you were. Now there is a Church (I mean a Lodge) you might want to visit again. You might even want to become a part of that group!

## Deacon Ministry

by Gail Harris, chair

Every new year many of us start out with resolutions. One of those is we often resolve to “get organized”. One of the challenges of our busy lives today is to be organized so we can “get it all done.” There are a number of organizers and calendars available to help us schedule the precious hours of the day. Other aids - cell phones/ iPhones/androids/twitter give us instant communication with anyone anywhere. We can stay connected and stay on top of life. All this allows us to come closer to being able to “get it all done”. We can no longer get away from it all because now we can take it all with us. Sometimes we need to be challenged not to “get it all done” but to slow down and reflect on what it is we are trying to accomplish. Are we headed in the right direction with our families, our work, our church, our community, and our personal lives? Our God has his own “daily planner”. The psalmist wrote about what God would have us do in Psalm 105:

*Give thanks to the Lord. Call on His name. Make known among the nations what He has done. Sing to Him, sing praise to Him. Tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in His holy name. Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and His strength. Seek His face always. Remember the wonders He has done, his miracles, and the judgments He has pronounced.*

As we welcome in another New Year may we all resolve to “head in the right direction” and to use the gifts God has blessed us with to further the kingdom of God.

**THE DEACONS WISH A  
HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL**

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**NO Deacons Meeting  
in January 2012**



# Branch's Senior Adults Thursday, January 26th @ 10:30am

Come to our next meeting in Kincheloe Hall



Happy New Year Seniors! We hope one of your resolutions for 2012 is to join Branch's Seniors each 4th Thursday of every month. We'll look for you at our next meeting in Kincheloe Hall for a great program featuring Jeannie Brickey followed by a great potluck. Brave the elements and be there. You won't regret it.



# Memories of Lola

The daughter of Lola Clifford is compiling a remembrance scrapbook of her mother. If you have a memory that you would like to share please jot it down on a 3x5 card and send it to:

**Linda Davis**  
10631 Jennings Lane  
Amelia VA 23002



**January 22nd**  
**5:00pm Potluck**  
**6:00pm Meeting**

Committees chairs ~ please email your annual reports to [office@branches.org](mailto:office@branches.org) no later than January 16th

## Proposed Revisions to Constitution and Bylaws Fellowship Forum January 8, 2012 at 9:00am in Kincheloe Hall

to discuss proposed revisions to the Constitution and Bylaws. Copies of the proposed revisions have been distributed to the congregation. Please contact Gail Harris if you are still in need of a copy. Please feel free to call, email, or stop one of the Constitution and Bylaws members in the hall if you have any questions, comments, or recommendations. We would like to have responses to your questions/concerns/recommendations available prior to the Fellowship Forum so they can be presented at that time.

- Charlie Hundley, Chair – [hundleyhome@comcast.net](mailto:hundleyhome@comcast.net) (379-8459)
- Bill Sheltman – [charlessholtman@verizon.net](mailto:charlessholtman@verizon.net) (777-9490)
- Pam Smith – [pamandrhatt@yahoo.com](mailto:pamandrhatt@yahoo.com) (271-7647)
- Gail Harris – [cgrharris@comcast.net](mailto:cgrharris@comcast.net) (356-0296)



Michelle Worley, daughter of Kevin and Janet Spence, thanks the Branch's Church family for the thoughts, prayers and gifts. She and baby Azriel are doing wonderfully.

**Happy New Year**  
**2012**

## A VOICE FROM THE GRAVE



Did you know in our church cemetery we have a small Angel with a broken wing? Many years ago Mr. Bernard Dyer and I were working in the cemetery and Mr. Dyer told me that he knew that small angel was located in Maury cemetery. In fact, there were two of them over there and one day this one with the broken wing just showed up in our cemetery. We have never known, who, what or why!

# Outreach Meeting

## Thursday, January 12th @ 6:30pm

*in the sanctuary*

This is an open meeting for us all to consider how we can share God's love with our community. We hope to see you there! If you have questions, please contact Rachel Contreras at 804-405-1325.

# YEAR END OFFERINGS

The IRS has ruled that contributions may be deducted in 2011 if they are placed in the offering plate by December 25, 2011, or if mailed, postmarked by December 31, 2011. All gifts placed in the offering plate on January 1, 2012, must be deducted in 2012 regardless of the date of the check.



## New Addition

Azriel Noel Worley ~ born November 18th

Parents: Michelle & Brian Worley  
 Grandparents: Kevin & Janet Spence  
 Great Grandmother: Barbara Spence

# Lotte Moon Christmas Offering

Branch's Goal: \$12,000  
 collected: \$9,918



remember  
 our  
 homebound

**Mildred Brown**  
*birthday ~ 12/31*

**LW Barden**

**C. Alfred Glass**

### FINANCIAL REPORT

#### For the Month December 2011

Budget Req'd thru 12-18-11	\$	32,739
Actual Budget Rec'd thru 12-18-11	\$	36,543

#### Year to Date December 18, 2011

Budget Required	\$	552,917
Actual Budget Received	\$	493,635

#### Branch's Baptist Church Condensed Financial Budget Year-to-Date as of November 2011

<u>Account Description</u>	Actual YTD	Budget YTD	Over/(Under) Budget YTD
Regular Offering	455,674	523,815	(68,141)
<b>Expenditures:</b>			
World Programs	39,648	44,790	(5,142)
Personnel	260,165	284,825	(24,660)
Educational Ministries	19,154	25,823	(6,669)
Service Ministries	23,031	31,338	(8,308)
Building & Equipment	99,477	117,897	(18,420)
Debt Retirement	15,229	15,230	(1)
Miscellaneous	388	275	113
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>457,092</b>	<b>520,178</b>	<b>(63,086)</b>
<b>Net Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(1,418)</b>	<b>3,637</b>	<b>(5,055)</b>

# January *activities*

**Sunday, January 1** ~ services

**Monday, January 2**

\*\*office closed\*\*

NO Deacons Meeting

**Tuesday, January 3**

**Wednesday, January 4** ~ activities resume

**Thursday, January 5**

**Friday, January 6**

**Saturday, January 7**

**Sunday, January 8** ~ services

9am Const./Bylaws Revision Forum ~ KH

**Monday, January 9**

10am Personnel Cmte.

**Tuesday, January 10**

**7pm Finance Cmte. ~ CR**

**Wednesday, January 11** ~ activities

**Thursday, January 12**

6:30pm Outreach Mtg. ~ sanctuary

**Friday, January 13**

**Saturday, January 14**

**Sunday, January 15** ~ services

Columns Deadline

**Monday, January 16**

**Tuesday, January 17**

10:30am K. Collins WMU

**Wednesday, January 18** ~ activities

Bon Secours Care-A-Van

**Thursday, January 19**

7pm Church Council

**Friday, January 20**

**Saturday, January 21**

**Sunday, January 22** ~ services

5:00pm Potluck

6:00pm Annual Business Meeting

**Monday, January 23**

**Tuesday, January 24**

**Wednesday, January 25** ~ activities

**Thursday, January 26**

10:30am Sr. Adults ~ KH

**Friday, January 27**

**Saturday, January 28**

**Sunday, January 29** ~ services

**Monday, January 30**

**Tuesday, January 31**



## **Mondays**

11:30am Reflections Choir

## **Tuesdays**

1:30pm Adult Fitness

2:30pm Coffee & Prayer w/ Pastor ~ CR

6:30pm Festival Ringers

## **Thursdays**

9am Computer Class

**Deadline for the February  
issue of The Columns is  
January 15th.**

## **SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**

### **Sunday Services**

**9:15am Prayer Time**

**9:45am Sunday School/Bible Study**

**11:00am Worship Service**

### **Wednesday Activities**

**5:30pm Family Supper**

**6:30pm Kids Worship, Praise Team**

*Youth, Prayer Meeting,*

*Festival Ringers, Broad Rock Café*

**7:30pm Chancel Choir, FWFriends**