



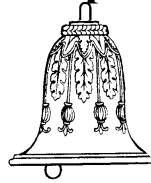
# The Bell

## Mars Hill Baptist Church



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### Concern vs. Complaining

In the course of my life and ministry I have had the opportunity to see and hear about the power of God's church working in the world in which we live. I've heard of a church uniting together to help a recent convert from Islam pay for schooling, bills, and even buy that person a car, all as an outworking of the love of Christ. All these stories are powerful and show what a body of believers can do to the glory of God by showing Christ's love.

Sadly, I've also seen and heard of many destructive elements that have managed to find their way into the walls of the church. A disunited congregation can be hurtful when the people of God cease to have Christ at the forefront of their thoughts and actions. I'm not going to offer any examples here but I can bet that a few come to your mind as you read this.

Of these destructive elements, the one that has some of the greatest potential for harm and, unfortunately, the one that seems to be the most numerous is that of complaints. We've all heard them in one way shape or form concerning any number of things about the church. No church is immune from having them pop up every now and again nor is

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any church completely safe from the potential destruction that complaining can bring about to the congregation and ministry of the bride of Christ.

Now my purpose is not to make you feel bad if you've ever complained or anything like that. My hope is that I could challenge the way we think and act so that we might better glorify God in our lives. It is my desire that we all consider a radical and I think biblical way of voicing our opinions. I've thought about this for a long time and I've come to this conclusion "***The church is not a place for complaining, it is a place for concerns.***" As that thought settles in your mind let me explain what I mean by that.

Let me give you two definitions to start off. Dictionary.com defines the word **complain** as meaning "to express dissatisfaction, pain, uneasiness, censure, resentment, or grief; find fault." Basically what we understand as a complaint, "This soup is too spicy, My bed is uncomfortable, that music is too loud, etc." Complaining, by definition is something we do when we are dissatisfied with something or resent a certain presence in our life.

Very different from that is the word **concern**. Dictionary.com defines the word concern as "a matter that engages a person's attention, interest, or care, or that affects a person's welfare or happiness." Concern is what we have, many times for ourselves, but most of the time for others who are in need. For example "I'm concerned about that cough, I'm concerned about the outcome of the next election," or "I'm concerned about our missionaries overseas." Concern focuses our attention off of us and onto a need greater than ourselves. In concern we esteem the needs of others and look out for the well being of our neighbors and friends.

To me the idea of concern hits at the heart of what the church body is supposed to be all about. The Apostle Paul urges many of the churches that he wrote to esteem and look out after one another. Here are three such examples:

*Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.*  
(Romans 12:10 ESV)

<sup>21</sup>The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." <sup>22</sup>On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup>and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unrepresentable parts are treated with greater modesty,

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<sup>24</sup>which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, <sup>25</sup>that there may be no division in the body, **but that the members may have the same care for one another.**  
(1 Corinthians 12:21-25 ESV)

*See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. (1 Thessalonians 5:15 ESV)*

Overwhelmingly we are called to have concern for one another. Jesus exemplified this, the church in Jerusalem modeled it by providing for each others needs. The apostle Paul commanded the church of Jesus Christ to do the same, but the truth of the matter is, many times we don't.

We fall into the trap of our sinful nature to look out for "number one" at the cost of loving our neighbor as ourselves and seeking to do good for our brothers and sisters in Christ. When we do this, rather than looking out for what is best for our neighbor or one who needs ministering to, we place our own desires, priorities, and frustrations at the forefront of our speech and actions. Hence we have complaints rather than concerns coming from our lips when situations arise that need attention.

Falling into this trap is something that the church of Jesus Christ cannot afford, for it strips away the very love we are to have for one another with a heart that has deep concern for others' spiritual and physical well being. It creates an atmosphere of "me" and "my wants," rather than an environment where we esteem others better than ourselves.

Let me elaborate on that by contrasting concern and complaining:

Complaining is often **self centered** - "I can't stand those people panhandling on the side of the road! It gets me so mad when I have to drive by them when they are begging for money."

- ▲ Concerns are **other centered** - "I wonder what I can do to truly help those that are pan handling on the side of the road. I wonder if there is an organization that helps them find jobs so that they don't have to beg anymore?"



- ⤴ Complaining often **attacks others** - “Son, this is a terrible report card how could you get two D’s and a C? That is unacceptable!”
- ⤴ Concern **looks out for others** - “Son, you brought home some pretty low grades on your report card, and my hope was that they would be better. Is there anything wrong at school or is there anything you need help with?”
- ⤴ Complaining usually **doesn’t care about others feelings** - “This car is an absolute pig sty! You shouldn’t keep your car in such disarray.”
- ⤴ Concern wants **to help others and bring aid to them** - “I noticed your car is pretty messy, would you like some help cleaning it up? I’ve found a couple of things that help me keep my car clean if you would like me to tell you.

Complaining might be able to bring about solutions to a situation, but I question how much we look like Jesus when we do so. My encouragement for all of us today is this, that the next time we find something that we would normally complain about, regardless of whether it is at home, at work, or even in church, we would stop and before we speak truly consider what we are about to say.

In considering our words, I think there are a few questions we could ask ourselves that might help us in these times.

- ⤴ **Am I angry?** - I love a quote I found when I was in high school. It simply says anger is one letter away from danger. I’m not sure who said it, but there is great truth found in it. Solomon put it this way in Proverbs 12:16, *“The vexation {anger, or wrath} of a fool is known at once, but the prudent ignores an insult.”* Like it or not, there will be things in this world that make us upset. It is how we react to them that makes all the difference in the world. We can choose to be as the fool and raise our voices and ultimately bring hurt to others, or we can be as the wise, considering what happened while holding our tongue.
- ⤴ **Is what I am saying a matter of personal opinion or fact?** - I do not like thousand island dressing. I’ve tried it on many occasions and my taste buds simply have not found a liking to that particular salad topping. I do not know whether I ever will, but for right now, I stay away from it. Now how silly would it be for me to say because I don’t like thousand island

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dressing, it should have no place in the kitchens and restaurants of the world? Even crazier, how would it be if I said “I don’t care if you do like it you shouldn’t eat it?” I’d probably get some funny looks, lose some friends, and I might even get recommended for a psychological evaluation. Here’s the thing, stuff like that is done within our homes, our circle of friends, to an extent, within our work-place, and even in our churches. Opinion is elevated to the place of standards, and if something goes against that opinion, the complaints fly. This tears down the unity that is so precious all because of an opinion.

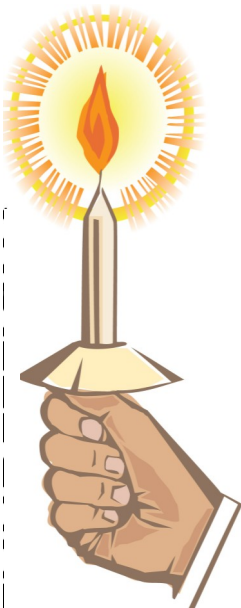
- ▲ **How will my words help others?** - The Apostle Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 5:11 *“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”* I wrote in the last Bell about the power of encouragement, and this question lends itself to that same line of thinking. Words are powerful, and something that should definitely be considered within our words is whether they are helpful or hurtful. If we say something as a complaint or opinion, and the effects are like a hand grenade going off in china shop, then we have neither served our fellow Christians well or brought glory to God. Let us consider what we say, how we say it, and when we say it that in all things God might be glorified.

In conclusion let me say this . I have seen, like most everyone has, the destruction and hurt complaining can bring about. Let me say I have also seen the power and impact that loving concern can have as well. An atmosphere of loving concern is one of the most powerful and uplifting forces that a church can manifest and I can say I have seen that first hand here at Mars Hill as you have poured out that love on me and my family.

I know that because of the uniqueness of my situation at home with Allison and Grace, I can’t always put the time in I need to, or do a much as I might want to at times. Through it all, the questions that have come my way have always been that of concern, support and love for me and my family. Words cannot express the joy and gratitude that I feel because of that concern. Church, you make an atmosphere where the love of Christ is manifested so vividly and it is a joy each day to serve you.

My hope is that everyone who would enter our doors would hear words of concern, that we might continue to fulfill the command of Scripture, *“Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.”* God bless you Mars Hill!

Come celebrate our  
Lord and  
Savior Jesus Christ  
with us as we  
observe the  
Lord's Supper  
by  
Candlelight  
Wednesday,  
December 21st  
@ 7:30 p.m.



Children's Day at Christmas  
Presents

Christmas  
at  
**Bethlehem**  
CULCH

A small, colorful Christmas tree with red, green, and blue ornaments is positioned to the left of the word 'CULCH'. To the right of 'CULCH' is a small green cactus with red spines.

An "Old West" Children's  
Musical about the Coming  
of the Savior

**Sunday, December 18th**  
at 11:00 am



You are invited to the presentation of

**The Heart of Christmas**  
**God's Greatest Gift**  
**Our Greatest Choice**

By the Mars Hill Adult Choir

**On Sunday, December 18th**  
**@ 7:00 pm**

Following the performance, there will be a  
WMU sponsored fellowship.  
Please bring refreshments to share.

## MEALS ON WHEELS HOLIDAY BOXES

Meals On Wheels provides a nutritious meal to homebound individuals Monday through Friday of each week. However, during the holidays we are closed and will not be providing this service. To assist our recipients, we deliver a box of food items which they can easily prepare and eat during this time. Since many of our recipients are elderly and may not have family members, this holiday also brings a little bit of cheer into their homes during this time of celebration. The items which we need are listed below:

Oranges (60)	6 pack applesauce (40)
Raisin packs (40)	Small can beef stew (40)
4 pk. Pudding (40)	Tuna (40 cans)
6 pk. Juice (40)	Chunky soup (40)
4 pk. Fruit (40)	Cereal (40 boxes)
Bread (40 loaves )	Saltine crackers (40 bx)
Vienna Sausages (40)	Jelly (40)
Peanut Butter (40)	Tissues (40 boxes)

These items can be donated by individuals, families; church groups, civic organizations or businesses.

You may donate a portion of a particular item needed or all of an item.

To donate any of these items, please call the Meals On Wheels office.732-6194, extension 14

Donations are due by Friday, December 16, 2011



## Samaritan Relief Ministry Holiday Dinner Boxes

Each year the Samaritan Relief Ministry provides the items needed to create a traditional holiday meal to families who may otherwise not have a special meal. These families are referred by Orange County Department of Social Services, the Department on Aging, Sheriff's Department and pastors of OCIM member congregations.

Turkeys Pie Crust Mix & Pie Filling  
Stuffing Cake Mix & Icing  
Mashed Potatoes Gravy Packets or Jars  
Sweet Potatoes Roasting Pans  
Variety of Canned Vegetables Coffee  
Applesauce Tea Bags  
Cranberry Sauce Salt & Pepper  
Biscuit Mix Flour  
Cornbread Mix Sugar

***Anyone can sign up!***

*Church Groups-Sunday School Classes,  
Circles, Families and Individuals  
School Clubs and Classes  
Businesses and Departments*

To sign up for 10, 25 or 50 of an item,  
please call the Samaritan Relief Ministry  
732-6194 extension 12

**Holiday Donations due by  
Friday, December 16, 2011.**



**SUNDAY**

9:45 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL

11:00 A.M.  
WORSHIP

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3 Parent's Day Out 10:00 am-2:00 pm
4 2-Advent Lord's Supper Toys for Toy Store	5	6 Seniors Break- fast-8:00 am	7 <b>Food for All</b> 6-Supper 7-Youth 7pm-Prayer/Bible Studies 8pm-Choir Prac	8	9	10
11 3-Advent Deacon's Mtg- 8:30 am Child's Play Practice-11:00 am	12	13	14 6-Supper 7-Youth 7-Prayer/Bible Studies 8-Choir Prac	15	16	17
18 4-Advent Children's Day at Christmas-11:00 am Adult Cantata- 7:00 pm	19 H & G Cmte. Mtg- 7:30 pm	20	21 Lord's Supper by Candlelight-7:30 pm	22	23	24
25 <b>MERRY CHRISTMAS</b>	26	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve



# January

## SUNDAY

9:45 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL

11:00 A.M.  
WORSHIP

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Business Mtg. after a.m. service</p>	<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Senior's Break- fast-8:00 am</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>Food for All</b> 6-Supper 7-CIA/MF/Youth 7-Prayer/Bible Studies 8-Choir Prac</p>	<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>7</b></p>
<p><b>8</b></p> <p>Deacon's Mtg- 8:30 am</p>	<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p>6-Supper 7-CIA/MF/Youth 7-Prayer/Bible Studies 8-Choir Prac</p>	<p><b>12</b></p>	<p><b>13</b></p>	<p><b>14</b></p>
<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>H &amp; G Cmte. Mtg-7:30 pm</p>	<p><b>17</b></p>	<p><b>18</b></p> <p>6-Supper 7-CIA/MF/Youth 7-Prayer/Bible Studies 8-Choir Prac</p>	<p><b>19</b></p>	<p><b>20</b></p>	<p><b>21</b></p>
<p><b>22</b></p> <p>Baptist Men's Day</p> <p>Business Mtg. after a.m. service</p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p>	<p><b>25</b></p> <p>6-Supper 7-CIA/MF/Youth 7-Prayer/Bible Studies 8-Choir Prac</p>	<p><b>26</b></p>	<p><b>27</b></p>	<p><b>28</b></p>
<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p>	<p><b>31</b></p>				

## A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS

<u>Date</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>AM Worship</u>	<u>Budget Receipts</u>
10/2	71	70	\$3,315.90
10/9	73	75	\$2,447.25
10/16	72	70	\$3,205.33
10/23	83	92	\$2,508.99
10/30	70	76	\$2,762.78
<u>Total Budget Receipts for Oct.:</u>			\$14,240.25
<u>Averages in Oct.:</u>			
	74	77	\$2,848.05

<u>Date</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>AM Worship</u>	<u>Budget Receipts</u>
11/6	78	84	\$4,256.87
11/13	74	89	\$2,503.05
11/20	74	89	\$2,291.01
11/27	75	78	\$2,356.00
<u>Total Budget Receipts for Nov.:</u>			\$11,406.93
<u>Averages in Nov.:</u>			
	75	85	\$2,851.73

**BUDGET NEEDS WEEKLY: \$3,228.27    MONTHLY: \$13,989.17    QTRLY: \$41,967.52**

### Need Christmas Gift Ideas?

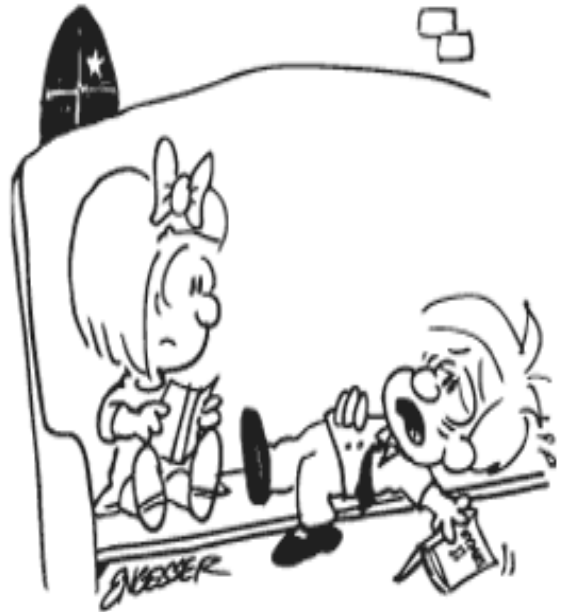


How about a Mars Hill Cookbook with recipes from some of the best cooks in Orange County!!

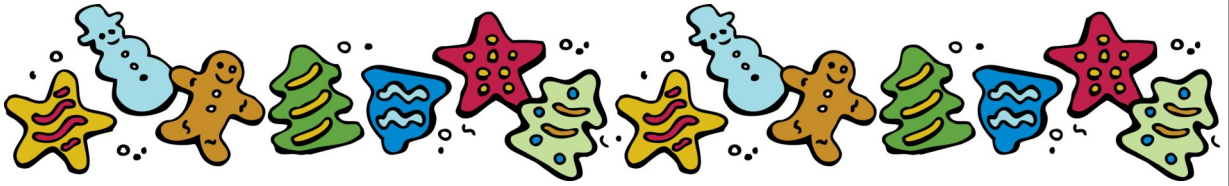
Great gift idea for teachers, neighbors, family and anyone else you would like to bless this Christmas season.

The cost of the cookbook is \$12.00 and the money raised goes to Ukraine and NC-WMU.

If you would like to purchase one, please stop by the church office or contact Leslie Dawson.



"That last 'Glo-ooo-oooh-oooh-oooh-oooh-oooh-oooh-ooria' about did me in."



## USHERS SCHEDULE

Dec. 4 Charles Mincey, Roger Smith  
Dec. 11 Todd Buckner, Dan Berry  
Dec. 18 Calvin Brown, Mark Dawson  
Dec. 25 Jeff Franklin, Tommy Frazier

Jan. 1 Dave Hughes, Ted Laws  
Jan. 8 Fred Miller, Charles Mincey  
Jan. 15 Roger Smith, Todd Buckner  
Jan. 22 Dan Berry, Mark Dawson  
Jan. 29 Jeff Franklin, Tommy Frazier

Feb. 5 Dave Hughes, Ted Laws  
Feb. 12 Charles Mincey, Fred Miller  
Feb. 19 Calvin Brown, Roger Smith  
Feb. 26 Todd Buckner, Mark Dawson

## COUNTING COMMITTEE

December: Ted & Dawn Laws

January: Anna Gross, Norkie Hines

February: Kat Cheek, Brenda Ray,  
Stuart & Patty Horne

## NURSERY LEADERSHIP

Attention Nursery Workers: If you are unable to work your scheduled day; please contact Brenda Ray, Patty Horne or Lindsey Huskins. Thank You.

## DECEMBER

4 Lindsey Huskins, Monica Franklin, Brenda Ray  
11 Patty Horne, Linda Frazier, Brenda Ray  
18 Brenda Ray, Traci Lloyd, Amy Hines  
25 Patty Horne, Nell Walker, Brenda Ray

## JANUARY

1 Brenda Ray, Norkie Hines, Patty Horne  
8 Lindsey Huskins, Edith Berry, Brenda Ray  
15 Patty Horne, Crystal Kirby, Brenda Ray  
22 Brenda Ray, Barbara Merritt, Lindsey Huskins  
29 Lindsey Huskins, Monica Franklin, Brenda Ray

## FEBRUARY

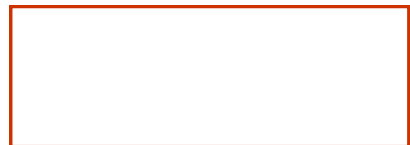
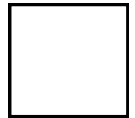
5 Patty Horne, Linda Frazier, Brenda Ray  
12 Brenda Ray, Traci Lloyd, Patty Horne  
19 Amy Hines, Nell Walker, Brenda Ray  
26 Brenda Ray, Norkie Hines, Patty Horne



*Christmas is a time to reflect  
On all that God has done  
It's not a matter of what we get  
But the birth of the Holy One  
It's not about gifts  
With ribbons and bows  
Or Christmas trees  
Tinsel and mistletoe  
The Christmas gift given to us  
Is Jesus Christ's  
Gift of Love*

*By M.S. Lowndes*

**Mars Hill Baptist Church  
1418 NC Hwy. 57  
Hillsborough, NC 27278**



*In the event of emergency conditions such as power outages caused by hurricanes, tornadoes, ice storms, etc. The educational building at MHBC will be available for use as a shelter. Please notify the pastor and/or deacons if such need arises.*